# Week 1 Assignment

## Ciara Valdoria

### Write a brief summary: “What is critical thinking?”

Critical thinking involves analyzing and evaluating one’s own thoughts to improve oneself. Our thoughts affect our feelings and desires, and consequently, our behavior. Thus, thinking critically may help us align our feelings and desires to the actions that we may want to do in the world. One can be a selfish or fairminded critical thinker, depending on how egocentric or sociocentric they are. It is a skill that can be cultivated with practice and reflection.

### Write a brief summary: “How is the conception of critical thinking presented here different from conceptions of critical thinking that I have previously encountered?”

When I think about critical thinking, I think about “thinking about our thinking” and using that feedback from ourselves to improve our lines of reasoning. Although I am already familiar with the concept of how our thoughts affect our feelings and desires, and how we can change our thinking to change our behavior, I did not previously relate this to *critical thinking*, and instead related it to self-development or self-help.

Previous encounters of critical thinking involved learning about logic, logical fallacies, and arguing effectively. I think it is my first time to encounter the intellectual standards, virtues and barriers to critical thinking as presented in the texts.

### Write briefly: “How can you apply this module’s content to your daily life?”

As Richard Paul mentioned in his talk in the conference, there is no domain of human thinking nor discipline that critical thinking cannot be involved in. All disciplines presuppose critical thinking, because to reason, to make judgments, to present facts, and to question, involves thinking.

The text that stood out the most to me in this module was the text on intellectual virtues. Among other things, in my daily life and teaching, I can reflect on what I really know and how my biases influence my thinking, reflect on whether I behave the way I say I believe, and think about the effectiveness of strategies that I use to solve complex problems. The feedback I get from these reflections may help me be more aware of biases, find different strategies to help my students, and help me show up with more integrity.

### Write briefly: “Your name, your title, your school, your motivation for taking this course, what you hope to learn in it”

My name is Ciara and I’m a teacher, teaching students with special educational needs at School of the Nations, Macau. I was interested in taking this course for both my personal and professional development, as I wanted to learn more about the philosophy of thinking and how I can apply it to better my life and my teaching.