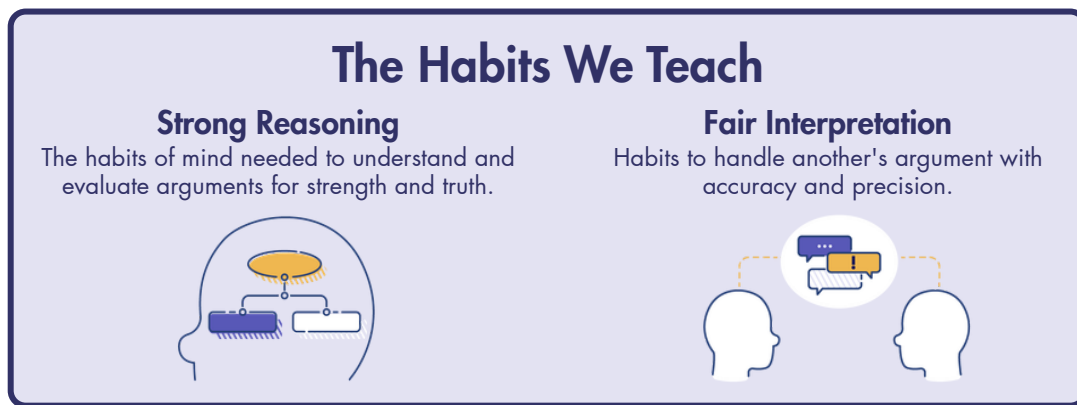


ThinkerU | The Course

The Thinker Course is an online mini-course in reasoning developed by Thinker, an education nonprofit organization. Students take a short diagnostic, then work through nine lessons of mastery-based practice with immediate feedback. Thinker is accommodating free Course access for ICDC study participants and their students.

How it Works

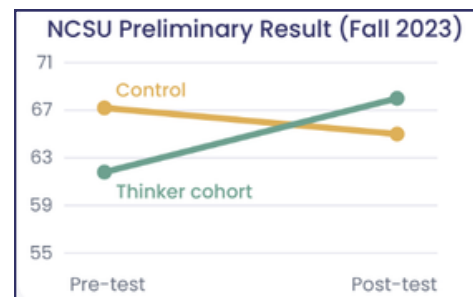
The Course promotes institutional outcomes related to critical thinking, writing, ethical reasoning, and disagreement—without adding instructional burden or curriculum overhaul. The Course runs alongside your existing readings and discussions, often assigned as homework. The custom learning system gives each student as much tailored practice as they individually need to master critical thinking habits.



What the Research Says

Independent studies show that The Course produces measurable gains in student learning:

- A longitudinal study at NC State found **nearly a 17% improvement** over the baseline for students using The Course, rising even further when paired with an in-person course.
- Large lecture courses at Notre Dame show **similarly strong pre- to post-test gains (12-16 point increase on 100-point test)**, with moderate to large effect sizes ($d = 0.62-0.85$).



Course Quick Facts

93% Retention Rate

Faculty return year after year

Low Instructor-Touch

No added instruction or grading

6-9 hours to Complete Core

Self-paced and adaptive

41,000+ Learners since 2020

70+ partner colleges in 2024-5 alone

Tailored Learning

Students practice until proficient

9 Core Lessons / 2 Modules

Fully modular and customizable



A Sample of Skills Taught

- 1 Identify the main claim of a passage and the reasons offered for it.
- 2 Evaluate whether an inference is strong: does the evidence actually support the claim?
- 3 Map the structure of a complex argument so the relationships among its claims are visible at a glance.
- 4 Supply the missing, unstated assumptions on which an argument depends.
- 5 Reconstruct an opposing argument so accurately that its defenders would accept the restatement.

The Nine Lessons

- Lesson 0 - Thinker Course Overview
- Lesson 1 - Define "Argument"
- Lesson 2 - Identify Components
- Lesson 3 - Make Inferences
- Lesson 4 - Evaluate Inferences & Premises
- Lesson 5 - Find Independent & Sub-Premises
- Lesson 6 - Find Co-Premises
- Lesson 7 - Clarify Arguments
- Lesson 8 - Fill in Co-Premises

What Faculty Say

*"My students at Camden County come in with strong opinions shaped by real experience—jobs, families, communities. What they often lack is a framework for turning those convictions into arguments. **Thinker gives them that.**"* – David Slakter, Professor, Camden County College

*"The Course 'didn't just teach my students some basic critical thinking skills... [it] helped make them more charitable, more fair-minded, better at evaluating not only the positions of others but their own positions as well. As someone who has struggled to teach critical thinking in my classes, **this course was a godsend.**'"* – Reid Comstock, Assistant Professor, UT Austin

What Students Say

"This skill is not only useful for [this] class, but is also a basic skill that is used throughout everyday life, sometimes without even realizing it."

"I've learned the value of challenging beliefs... and not accepting information at face value."

"I even used these skills in a recent paper I wrote for another class!"

"I feel like I switched from being a passive listener to an active one because this course was like a cool toolkit to deconstructing arguments and putting my own thoughts into it."

How to Learn More

Visit learn.thinkeru.org to explore The Course, chat with our staff, and register for a webinar.

Our Nonprofit Mission

*Thinker is a 501c3 built on a simple insight:
Civil discourse depends on how people think before they speak.*

