



## Critical Thinking in Post-factual Times: A Challenge for Post-secondary Education

Elaine Spencer<sup>1</sup> , Carlen Lavigne<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

*Teaching critical thinking skills is an interdisciplinary concern; mature analytical abilities are key to student education and future success in any area. In a rapidly changing political climate inflected by radically conservative rhetoric and suspicions about “fake news,” “biased media,” “social justice warrior” professors and “alternative facts,” classroom management strategies become ever more important when asking students to confront cradle ideologies and questions of privilege/oppression. This cross-disciplinary co-presentation will examine effective teaching techniques for both encouraging student political engagement and imbuing critical thinking skills. The discussion will acknowledge the unique context of teaching in south central Alberta while also suggesting teaching tools for more generally dealing with sensitive political subjects in post-secondary courses, as well as incorporating preliminary snapshot research designed to evaluate success.*

*Keywords: critical thinking; post-secondary education; rhetoric; classroom politics; alternative facts*

---

<sup>1</sup> Red Deer College (Canada)

<sup>2</sup> Red Deer College (Canada)