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CRITICAL THINKING AS AN ASPECT OF THE PROFESSIONAL CULTURE OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS

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The transformation of higher education in Ukraine under the conditions of globalization, European integration, and the growing complexity of cultural processes requires new approaches to professional training of humanities specialists. One of the key competencies that determines the quality of modern higher education is critical thinking, which acts not only as a cognitive skill but also as an essential component of professional culture. This issue becomes particularly relevant in the training of cultural studies specialists whose professional activity involves the interpretation of complex cultural phenomena, analytical work with symbolic systems, and the ability to operate within interdisciplinary intellectual environments. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of critical thinking in the formation of professional culture of future cultural studies specialists within the framework of the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) educational model, based on the experience of implementing the educational programme Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences at Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University. The study examines the pedagogical potential of interdisciplinary education, student-centered learning, and research-oriented teaching methods as factors contributing to the development of critical thinking as a professional competence.

The research applies a комплекс of theoretical and empirical methods, including analysis of pedagogical and cultural studies literature, competence-based approach, curriculum analysis, comparative analysis of educational models, as well as generalization of teaching experience at the Department of Cultural Studies, Philosophy and Museology. Particular attention is paid to the integration of inquiry-based learning, discussion-based pedagogy, academic writing practices, and interdisciplinary course design as instruments of critical thinking formation. The results demonstrate that critical thinking within the LAS model should be understood as an integrated intellectual and cultural competence combining analytical reasoning, interpretative skills, reflexivity, intellectual autonomy, and academic communication abilities. It is proven that interdisciplinary curricula significantly enhance students' ability to identify causal relationships between cultural processes, evaluate sources critically, and construct evidence-based arguments. The study also shows that the development of critical thinking is closely connected with the formation of professional identity, academic integrity, and research culture.

The article argues that the Liberal Arts and Sciences model creates favorable conditions for developing critical thinking due to its structural characteristics: flexibility of curricula, integration of humanities and sciences, emphasis on discussion and analytical writing, and the cultivation of intellectual responsibility. The experience of implementing LAS principles in the Cultural Studies programme demonstrates that critical thinking becomes not only a learning outcome but also a structural principle of educational design. The conclusions emphasize that the development of critical thinking should be considered a strategic objective of cultural studies education, as it ensures the formation of adaptive, intellectually independent, and socially responsible specialists capable of navigating complex cultural realities. The study highlights the

importance of further development of interdisciplinary teaching strategies and research-based learning environments in Ukrainian higher education institutions.

Keywords: *critical thinking, professional culture, cultural studies education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, interdisciplinary and competence-based education, higher education pedagogy, cultural analysis, LAS-model.*

Introduction. The rapid transformation of contemporary society, characterized by intensive information exchange, cultural globalization, technological development, and hybrid forms of communication, significantly changes the requirements for professional training in higher education. Under such conditions, universities are expected not only to transmit knowledge but also to form intellectual competences that enable graduates to navigate complex social and cultural realities. Among these competences, critical thinking occupies a central place as a fundamental intellectual tool necessary for professional activity in knowledge-based societies.

The growing attention to critical thinking in educational discourse is connected with the recognition that traditional knowledge-transfer models of education are insufficient for preparing specialists capable of responding to complex professional challenges. Modern higher education increasingly focuses on competence-based approaches that prioritize analytical skills, reflexivity, intellectual independence, and the ability to evaluate information critically. This shift reflects broader changes in educational philosophy from reproductive learning toward transformative learning models.

The formation of these competences is closely connected with the concept of professional culture. Professional culture is typically understood as an integrated system of knowledge, values, norms, behavioral models, and intellectual practices that determine the quality of professional activity. Within this framework, critical thinking should be considered not merely as an academic skill but as an essential structural element of professional culture that shapes decision-making processes, ethical responsibility, and intellectual autonomy.

The Liberal Arts and Sciences model originates from classical European university traditions and has been significantly developed within American higher education. Its contemporary implementation in European educational systems is often associated with the Bologna Process and the internationalization of education. LAS education typically emphasizes breadth of knowledge, interdisciplinary integration, development of transferable intellectual skills, and the cultivation of reflective thinking. In the Ukrainian context, the implementation of LAS principles represents an innovative direction in higher education modernization. Ukrainian universities increasingly recognize the importance of interdisciplinary education, flexible curricula, and competence-oriented teaching methods. Within this transformation, cultural studies programmes appear particularly suitable for LAS integration due to their inherently interdisciplinary nature, combining elements of philosophy, history, anthropology, art studies, sociology, and media studies.

The educational programme *Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences*, implemented at Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University, represents one example of such innovation. The programme aims to integrate classical cultural studies education with LAS principles, emphasizing critical thinking, analytical writing, interdisciplinary research, and intellectual communication. The programme also reflects contemporary trends in European higher education aimed at developing adaptable specialists capable of lifelong learning.

Literature review. A review of scientific sources on the issue of critical thinking as a component of the professional culture of future specialists demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of the study, which combines pedagogy, cultural studies, and modern educational practices. The theoretical foundations of the concept of “critical thinking” are revealed in the works of O. Karpenko (2020) and O. Pometun (2018), where it is interpreted as a complex cognitive and metacognitive process that involves the ability to analyze, evaluate information, and form reasoned judgments. Further development of the concept is presented in the study of L. Kravchenko and O. Ilchenko (2025), which emphasize its integration into the structure of professional training of future specialists. The historical and pedagogical context of the formation of cultural education is

revealed in the works of O. Chernyavska (2020), L. Kravchenko and M. Stepanenko (2014), as well as L. Kravchenko and N. Karapuzova (2009). These studies demonstrate the evolution of training specialists in the cultural and educational sphere and emphasize the importance of worldview and value components, within which critical thinking is a key competency. The issues of the professional development of a cultural scientist and the formation of his or her competencies are highlighted in the works of I. Hurova (2017), V. Dmytrenko (2020), as well as V. and V. Dmytrenko (2022), where special attention is paid to socio-cultural design, legal support for activities and the structure of professional training. In this context, critical thinking appears as a tool for effective decision-making and professional reflection. Modern research focuses on the impact of digitalization and innovative educational technologies on the formation of critical thinking. In particular, O. Luk'yanenko (2023) and A. Lytvynenko (2022) consider digital tools as a means of developing the analytical skills of a cultural scientist, while the works of O. Lukyanenko and co-authors (2022–2025) emphasize the importance of interdisciplinarity, artistic analysis, and language training. The studies of R. Vynnychuk, T. Bakka, O. Bohomaz, L. Krupina, and O. Snigovska (2022); R. Vynnychuk, O. Terekhovska, V. Vasenko, G. Babak, and O. Protas (2022); L. Kravchenko, N. Bilyk, V. Onipko, T. Plachynda, and A. Zavitrenko (2021) complement this approach by considering critical thinking in connection with media competence, professional mobility, and hybrid forms of learning.

Materials and methods. This study is based on a qualitative research design combining theoretical analysis, curriculum analysis, and reflective pedagogical case study methodology. Such a design allows for a comprehensive examination of critical thinking development as both a theoretical construct and a practical educational outcome within the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) educational model. The research follows an interpretative educational research paradigm, which focuses on understanding educational processes through analysis of practices, structures, and pedagogical experiences.

The study also incorporates elements of design-based educational research, since it examines not only theoretical assumptions but also their implementation through curriculum development and teaching practices. This approach is particularly appropriate when studying innovative educational models, where theoretical frameworks and practical implementation develop simultaneously. The research logic is based on the assumption that critical thinking should be examined not only through psychological models of cognition but also through the analysis of educational environments that make its development possible. The competence-based approach serves as the primary analytical framework because modern LAS education is structured around learning outcomes rather than content transmission. Within this framework, critical thinking is considered a transversal competence integrating cognitive, communicative, and research abilities. This approach allows the analysis of how critical thinking is operationalized through programme learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, and assessment strategies. Particular attention is paid to how analytical skills, argumentation abilities, and interpretative competences are embedded into curriculum design.

Since the LAS model is inherently interdisciplinary, the study applies an interdisciplinary analytical perspective combining insights from pedagogy, cultural studies, philosophy of education, and curriculum theory. This allows examination of how the integration of different disciplinary perspectives contributes to intellectual flexibility.

Results of the research. The analysis of the educational programme *Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences* demonstrates that critical thinking is not treated as an isolated competence but rather as a systemic educational outcome embedded in the programme philosophy, curriculum structure, course design, and interdisciplinary learning pathways. The programme reflects the contemporary understanding that professional culture in the humanities increasingly depends not only on knowledge acquisition but on the ability to critically interpret cultural processes, evaluate information, and construct evidence-based interpretations. At the conceptual level, the programme explicitly defines the integral competence of graduates as the ability to critically reflect on cultural

processes in global and local contexts through interdisciplinary knowledge and research approaches. This formulation itself demonstrates that critical thinking functions as a foundational professional attribute rather than an auxiliary educational goal.

A detailed examination of the curriculum structure shows that this objective is implemented through three interconnected educational cycles: the general training cycle, the professional training cycle, and the Liberal Arts and Sciences cycle. The latter plays a particularly important role in forming intellectual flexibility, since it exposes students to interdisciplinary perspectives and encourages analytical transfer between different domains of knowledge. The first year of study is especially important because it establishes the intellectual foundations upon which critical thinking development is built. Courses such as *University Education and Academic Writing*, *Philosophy*, and *Critical Thinking and Logic* create a methodological basis for analytical reasoning, academic argumentation, and structured thinking. These courses introduce students to the principles of academic discourse, logical analysis, and epistemological awareness, which later become essential for professional reasoning.

At the same time, LAS courses such as *Axiology in a Globalized World*, *Cultural Models of Family and Marriage*, and *Astronomy and Myth* demonstrate the interdisciplinary nature of the programme and its emphasis on interpretative thinking. For example, the course *Astronomy and Myth* illustrates how scientific knowledge and mythological thinking intersect in cultural history, encouraging students to compare rational and symbolic modes of explaining reality. Such intellectual comparisons directly contribute to the development of analytical pluralism – an important feature of mature critical thinking. Similarly, the course *Science and Culture* creates opportunities for examining how scientific paradigms influence cultural narratives, while *Futurology* encourages students to evaluate scenarios of social development through analytical reasoning rather than speculative assumptions. Courses such as *Environmental Anthropology* also contribute to critical thinking by demonstrating the complex relationships between ecological systems, cultural practices, and ethical responsibility. An important structural feature supporting critical thinking formation is the integration of academic writing and discussion practices throughout the programme. The presence of courses such as *University Education and Academic Writing* indicates that the programme recognizes writing not only as a communication tool but as a cognitive practice through which analytical reasoning develops.

The professional training cycle further reinforces these abilities through courses such as *Theory of Culture*, *History of Ukrainian Culture*, *History of World Culture*, and *Fundamentals of Artistic Analysis and Expert Evaluation of Cultural Objects*. These courses require students to apply theoretical models, interpret cultural texts, and evaluate artistic phenomena using analytical criteria. This demonstrates the transition from general intellectual training toward discipline-specific analytical competence. The course *Theory of Culture* appears particularly important because it introduces students to different theoretical approaches to understanding culture, such as structuralism, functionalism, semiotics, and postmodern theory. Exposure to multiple theoretical perspectives requires students to compare conceptual frameworks and evaluate their explanatory power. Such intellectual activity directly strengthens comparative reasoning abilities.

Another important course is *Digital Humanities*, which reflects the modernization of cultural studies education through the integration of digital analytical tools. This course potentially strengthens critical thinking by introducing students to data interpretation, digital archives, and computational approaches to cultural analysis. The inclusion of such courses demonstrates the programme's orientation toward contemporary research practices.

The programme also demonstrates a strong connection between critical thinking development and applied professional competences. Courses such as *Socio-cultural Activity*, *Fundamentals of Socio-cultural Design*, and *Cultural and Creative Industries* require students to apply analytical reasoning to practical cultural management situations. This reflects the understanding that professional culture requires not only theoretical knowledge but also the ability to make informed decisions in complex social environments. The course *Everyday Culture of Ukraine* also deserves particular attention because it focuses on the analysis of daily cultural practices. Such courses help

students understand that culture is not limited to high art but includes everyday symbolic practices. Analytical work with such material develops observational skills and the ability to identify implicit cultural meanings.

A particularly important feature of the programme is the possibility for students to select interdisciplinary LAS focus tracks beginning in the second year. These focus areas represent a key structural mechanism through which critical thinking is strengthened, since they require students to apply cultural analysis within new disciplinary contexts. The programme offers several LAS focus tracks, including Focus 1 Natural Sciences (minor programme *Integrated Life Sciences: Chemistry, Bioecology, Culture*), Focus 2 Physical and Mathematical Sciences (minor programme *Integrated Sciences: Mathematics and Culture*), Focus 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences (minor programme *Social Sciences: Human Behavior and Culture*), and Focus 5 Pedagogical Sciences (minor programme *Teachers' Training and Culture*).

These tracks represent an important innovation because they institutionalize interdisciplinarity rather than treating it as an abstract principle. Students are required to study courses outside their primary disciplinary field, which encourages intellectual adaptation and the ability to transfer analytical methods across domains. For example, within Focus 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences, students may take courses such as *Sociology of Culture, Social Movements and Cultural Transformations, Anthropology of Religion and Beliefs, Psychology of Culture, and Behavioral Economics: Choice, Irrationality, and Society*. These courses expand the analytical toolkit of cultural studies students by introducing empirical social science methods and behavioral analysis perspectives.

Courses such as *Migration and Multiculturalism* and *Culture and Advertising: Manipulation and Symbols* also provide important opportunities for developing media literacy and ideological critique. These competences are increasingly important in contemporary information environments characterized by hybrid communication and symbolic influence strategies. The presence of courses such as *Cognitive Neuroscience* and *Psychology of Creativity* further demonstrates the programme's commitment to exposing students to scientific approaches to understanding human behavior. Such exposure strengthens epistemological awareness by showing how different disciplines construct knowledge using different methods. The pedagogical sciences focus also plays an important role in the development of critical thinking, particularly for students interested in educational and cultural mediation careers. Courses such as *Artificial Intelligence in the Culture of Education, Semiotics of Pedagogical Innovations, Worldview Foundations of Creative Pedagogy, and Education in a Multicultural Society* demonstrate how educational environments themselves can be analyzed as cultural systems. The inclusion of courses such as *Philosophy of Gender in Cultural Space* and *Culture of Educational Relationships* also demonstrates the programme's attention to ethical and social dimensions of professional culture. These courses encourage students to analyze power relations, cultural norms, and identity constructions, which directly contributes to the development of critical social awareness. Another important course in this track is *Artificial Intelligence in the Culture of Education*, which introduces students to the cultural implications of technological change. Such courses contribute to critical thinking by encouraging evaluation of technological determinism and the social consequences of digital transformation.

The Natural Sciences focus also deserves attention because it introduces cultural studies students to scientific literacy. Courses within the *Integrated Life Sciences* track potentially help students understand how scientific knowledge is constructed and how it interacts with cultural narratives. Such understanding is important in an era when cultural professionals increasingly engage with science communication and environmental issues. Similarly, the Physical and Mathematical Sciences focus introduces students to analytical thinking through courses related to mathematics and scientific modeling. Even limited exposure to formal reasoning contributes to intellectual discipline and strengthens the ability to evaluate arguments logically.

The programme also demonstrates that critical thinking development depends not only on curriculum content but also on pedagogical formats. The presence of internships, cultural teaching practice, and sociocultural practice demonstrates the importance of experiential learning. Such

formats allow students to apply analytical reasoning in real professional environments, strengthening the connection between intellectual skills and professional behavior. Internships such as *Productive Culturological and Museum Studies Practice* create opportunities for students to engage with cultural institutions, where they must analyze audiences, evaluate exhibition strategies, and participate in cultural communication. These activities demonstrate that critical thinking is also a practical competence required for professional effectiveness.

The programme also integrates research-oriented learning through coursework and qualification projects. The requirement to complete qualification work demonstrates the emphasis on independent analytical research as a culminating educational experience. Such projects require students to formulate research questions, select methodologies, analyze sources, and present structured conclusions. The analysis also demonstrates the importance of gradual complexity progression. During the first year, courses emphasize general intellectual competences and interdisciplinary awareness. During the second and third years, the focus shifts toward professional specialization and applied analysis. By the fourth year, students are expected to demonstrate intellectual independence through research and professional practice.

An important result of the analysis is the observation that critical thinking is most effectively developed when it is reinforced across multiple courses rather than confined to a single subject. For example, argumentation skills introduced in *Critical Thinking and Logic* are reinforced in *Theory of Culture*, practiced in *Academic Writing*, and applied in research projects. This demonstrates the importance of curricular coherence. The research also shows that student choice plays an important role in intellectual development. The LAS model allows students to construct individual educational trajectories through elective courses and focus tracks. This flexibility encourages intellectual responsibility and increases motivation, which are important psychological conditions for critical thinking development.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between interdisciplinary exposure and tolerance for ambiguity. Students working within LAS environments gradually become more comfortable with complex questions that lack simple answers. This intellectual tolerance is an important indicator of mature critical thinking. The programme also appears to contribute to the formation of academic identity. Students participating in interdisciplinary courses and research projects gradually begin to see themselves not merely as learners but as emerging professionals capable of independent analysis. This shift in self-perception represents an important aspect of professional culture formation.

At the same time, the analysis confirms that successful critical thinking development requires supportive academic environments. Students must experience classrooms as spaces where questioning is encouraged and intellectual risk-taking is accepted. Courses emphasizing discussion and peer review appear particularly important in this regard. Some challenges also remain. Students entering the programme often demonstrate educational habits formed in more traditional school environments focused on reproduction rather than analysis. This requires instructors to gradually introduce analytical complexity and provide scaffolding for discussion and writing tasks.

Despite these challenges, the overall structure of the programme demonstrates strong alignment with international LAS principles. The integration of interdisciplinary courses, student choice, research practice, and competence-based learning outcomes creates conditions in which critical thinking becomes a natural outcome of educational design rather than an artificial addition.

Overall, the results of the study demonstrate that the *Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences* programme provides a structurally coherent model for developing critical thinking as a component of professional culture. This is achieved through interdisciplinary curriculum design, integration of research practices, flexible learning pathways, and pedagogical emphasis on analytical reasoning. The findings suggest that the LAS model may serve as an effective framework for modernizing humanities education in Ukraine by aligning it with competence-based European educational paradigms while preserving strong disciplinary foundations in cultural studies.

Conclusions. The conducted research confirms that critical thinking should be understood not simply as a general educational skill but as a core structural element of the professional culture of future cultural studies specialists. The analysis of the *Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences* educational programme demonstrates that the formation of this competence becomes most effective

when it is embedded not only in individual courses but within the entire architecture of the educational model, including curriculum structure, interdisciplinary pathways, pedagogical methods, and research practices.

The study demonstrates that within the Liberal Arts and Sciences paradigm, critical thinking functions simultaneously as a cognitive competence, a methodological culture, a communicative practice, and a professional value. Such a multidimensional understanding allows us to conceptualize critical thinking as a meta-competence that integrates analytical reasoning, interpretative ability, reflexivity, and evidence-based argumentation. This conclusion contributes to the theoretical discussion on competence-based education by demonstrating that in humanities education critical thinking is best understood not as a discrete skill but as an integrative intellectual disposition forming the basis of professional reasoning.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the conceptualization of critical thinking as a component of professional culture specifically within cultural studies education. While previous research often examines critical thinking as a general educational objective, this research demonstrates its disciplinary specificity in the training of cultural analysts. Cultural studies as a field requires the ability to interpret symbolic systems, decode cultural narratives, analyze ideological constructs, and evaluate cultural transformations. Therefore, critical thinking in this context acquires distinct characteristics connected with interpretative plurality, contextual reasoning, and methodological reflexivity.

Based on the conducted analysis, critical thinking in cultural studies education can be theoretically modeled as consisting of five interconnected components. **Analytical component**, which includes the ability to identify structures, relationships, and patterns within cultural phenomena. **Interpretative component**, which involves the capacity to contextualize cultural texts within historical, social, and ideological frameworks. **Evaluative component**, which includes the ability to assess sources, distinguish evidence from opinion, and identify manipulation strategies. **Argumentative component**, which involves the ability to construct logically coherent and evidence-based positions. **Reflexive component**, which includes awareness of one's own interpretative assumptions and intellectual limitations. This five-component structure may be considered a theoretical contribution because it specifies how critical thinking operates within cultural studies as a professional field rather than treating it as an abstract cognitive ability.

The research also allows the formulation of a pedagogical model explaining how critical thinking develops within the LAS educational environment. The analysis suggests that the most effective model may be described as a **structural-integrative model of critical thinking formation**, which includes four mutually reinforcing pedagogical dimensions.

The first dimension is **curricular integration**, which ensures that critical thinking learning outcomes are distributed across multiple courses rather than confined to isolated subjects. The study demonstrates that the integration of analytical learning outcomes across courses such as *Critical Thinking and Logic*, *Theory of Culture*, *Academic Writing*, and interdisciplinary LAS courses creates cumulative competence formation. The second dimension is **interdisciplinary intellectual exposure**, achieved through LAS focus tracks. Exposure to natural sciences, social sciences, and pedagogical studies appears to strengthen intellectual flexibility and reduce disciplinary rigidity. This dimension is particularly important because it encourages students to transfer analytical methods between fields, which represents a key characteristic of advanced critical thinking. The third dimension is **dialogical pedagogy**, which includes discussion-based seminars, debates, peer review practices, and collaborative learning formats. The study confirms that critical thinking develops most effectively in intellectual environments where students must articulate, defend, and revise their ideas in interaction with others.

The fourth dimension is **research-oriented learning**, which includes inquiry-based assignments, research projects, and analytical writing. These practices allow students to transition from knowledge reproduction to knowledge production, which represents a key transformation in intellectual development.

In general, the study demonstrates that the *Cultural Studies. Liberal Arts and Sciences* programme represents a structurally coherent example of how critical thinking may be systematically

developed through interdisciplinary curriculum design, research-oriented pedagogy, and competence-based education. The programme demonstrates that critical thinking emerges most effectively not through isolated training in logic but through sustained engagement in analytical academic culture.

The main conclusion of the research is that within the LAS model critical thinking becomes not simply a learning outcome but a defining characteristic of professional culture. This suggests that the future of humanities education may depend on the extent to which programmes are able to transition from knowledge transmission toward intellectual formation.

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Conflict of interest.

Absent.

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КРИТИЧНЕ МИСЛЕННЯ ЯК АСПЕКТ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ МАЙБУТНІХ СПЕЦІАЛІСТІВ

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Трансформація вищої освіти в Україні в умовах глобалізації, європейської інтеграції та зростаючої складності культурних процесів вимагає нових підходів до професійної підготовки фахівців гуманітарних наук. Однією з ключових компетентностей, що визначає якість сучасної вищої освіти, є критичне мислення, яке виступає не лише як когнітивна

навичка, а й як суттєвий компонент професійної культури. Це питання набуває особливої актуальності під час підготовки фахівців-культурологів, чия професійна діяльність передбачає інтерпретацію складних культурних явищ, аналітичну роботу із символічними системами та здатність діяти в міждисциплінарних інтелектуальних середовищах. Метою цього дослідження є аналіз ролі критичного мислення у формуванні професійної культури майбутніх фахівців-культурологів у рамках освітньої моделі *Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS)*, спираючись на досвід впровадження освітньої програми «Культурологія. *Liberal Arts and Sciences*» у Полтавському національному педагогічному університеті імені В. Г. Короленка. У дослідженні розглядається педагогічний потенціал міждисциплінарної освіти, студентоцентрованого навчання та дослідницько-орієнтованих методів навчання як факторів, що сприяють розвитку критичного мислення як професійної компетенції. У дослідженні застосовується комплекс теоретичних та емпіричних методів, включаючи аналіз педагогічної та культурологічної літератури, компетентнісний підхід, аналіз навчальних програм, порівняльний аналіз освітніх моделей, а також узагальнення досвіду викладання на кафедрі культурології, філософії та музеології. Особливої уваги надано інтеграції дослідницького навчання, дискусійної педагогіки, практик академічного письма та міждисциплінарної розробки курсів як інструментів формування критичного мислення. Результати демонструють, що критичне мислення в рамках моделі *LAS* слід розуміти як інтегровану інтелектуальну та культурну компетентність, що поєднує аналітичне мислення, інтерпретаційні навички, рефлексивність, інтелектуальну автономію та академічні комунікативні здібності. Доведено, що міждисциплінарні навчальні програми значно покращують здатність здобувачів виявляти причинно-наслідкові зв'язки між культурними процесами, критично оцінювати джерела та будувати аргументи на основі доказів. Дослідження також показує, що розвиток критичного мислення тісно пов'язаний з формуванням професійної ідентичності, академічної доброчесності та дослідницької культури.

У статті стверджується, що модель підготовки *Liberal Arts* створює сприятливі умови для розвитку критичного мислення завдяки своїм структурним характеристикам: гнучкість навчальних програм, інтеграція гуманітарних та природничих наук, акцент на дискусійному та аналітичному письмі, а також культивування інтелектуальної відповідальності. Досвід упровадження принципів *LAS* у програмі з культурології демонструє, що критичне мислення стає не лише результатом навчання, а й структурним принципом освітнього дизайну. У висновках наголошено, що розвиток критичного мислення необхідно розглядати як стратегічну мету культурологічної освіти, оскільки воно забезпечує формування адаптивних, інтелектуально незалежних та соціально відповідальних фахівців, здатних орієнтуватися в складних культурних реаліях та підкреслено важливість подальшого розвитку міждисциплінарних стратегій освіти і науково-орієнтованих навчальних середовищ у закладах вищої освіти України.

Ключові слова: критичне мислення, професійна культура, культурологічна освіта, гуманітарні науки та вільні мистецтва, міждисциплінарна та компетентнісна освіта, педагогіка вищої школи, культурний аналіз, модель *LAS*.

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