Critical Thinking Initiative

Incorporate higher order thinking skills and foster critical thinking across the curriculum.

Rationale

Higher order thinking skills are indicated as areas of challenge in the CCSSE data and a possible reason for an above average number of students below 2.5 at transfer institutions. A well-defined, academically rigorous program that emphasizes reading and writing, and requires students to think critically and creatively, to synthesize, integrate and apply information to new and different situations, could provide many opportunities for students to develop and apply critical reasoning. Increased attention to reading and writing activities across the curriculum could also help in improving College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) scores.

Relevance

This initiative promotes academic integration and responds to gaps identified in:

- CCSSE data that relate to higher order thinking skills.
- Accountability data related to transfer success.
- Accountability data related to CLAST scores.
- Faculty forums.

Outcomes

- Improved student engagement as measured by CCSSE items related to mental activities.
- Improved critical thinking skills as measured by California Critical Thinking Skills Test.
- Improved student learning as measured by student performance on revised course assessments.
- Improved learning as measured by the quality of randomly selected student papers.
- Improved success of transfer students as measured by the percentage of students above 2.5 GPA and the percentage of students below 2.0 GPA.
- Improved faculty satisfaction with students' ability to think critically and creatively as measured by a faculty survey.

Critical Thinking Briefcase

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