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Critical Thinking as Information Literacy: A Model for the Core Curriculum?

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Outline

- Core Curriculum/Revisions
- Description of Critical Thinking Skills
- Comparison of Georgia Southern University's Critical Thinking & ALA's Information Literacy Definitions
- Critical Thinking in the Core:
 - Georgia Southern University
 - Two other USG Universities:
 - North Georgia College & State University
 - Georgia College & State University
- Questions/Comments
- Lingerin Questions

USG Core Curriculum

The following are specific Core areas:

- Area A1: Communication Skills
- Area A2: Quantitative Skills
- Area B: Institutional Options
- Area C: Humanities, Fine Arts, and Ethics
- Area D: Natural Sciences, Math, and Technology
- Area E: Social Sciences
- Area F: Lower-Division Major Requirements

Background: Core Curriculum Revision 2010-2011

- All 4 -year institutions must make the following revisions:
 1. Develop learning outcomes and assessments plans for each area of the core.(Areas A-E)
 2. Incorporate the 3 new overlay requirements- US Perspectives (US), Global Perspectives (GL), and Critical Thinking (CT)- into the Core.

Description of Critical Thinking Skills:

- active, independent, and self-directed thinkers and learners who apply their thinking skills and innovation to solve problems.
- confront ambiguous situations and go beyond traditional approaches to devise more useful and favorable solutions.
- effectively identify, analyze, evaluate, and provide convincing reasons in support of conclusions.
- have the ability to consider and accommodate opposing points of view.
- have the ability to interpret inferences and develop subtleties of symbolic and indirect discourse.
- have the ability to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.
- have the ability to identify the audience, intent, value, and disciplinary perspective of potential sources of information.

University System of Georgia Core Curriculum Evaluation Committee. (2009).

Core curriculum policy, final recommendation. Retrieved August 26, 2001, from

<http://www.kennesaw.edu/cetl/resources/chairs/documents/2009-2010/CorePolicy2009-05-18.pdf>

Critical Thinking Assessment at Georgia Southern University

Critical Thinking SLO:

Students will interpret, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas using a logical and ethical framework.

Assessment of Critical Thinking SLO:

Proposal from the CCR Task Force stated critical thinking would be assessed in the Econ 2105 course, *Economics in a Global Society*

1. Faculty-designed multiple-choice test built around 5 case studies
2. Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal®
3. Still evolving

Comparison of Information Literacy & Critical Thinking

ALA's Definition of Information Literacy:

“The ability to know when information is needed and to access, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically.”

Association of College and Research Libraries. (2000).

Information literacy competency standards for higher education. Chicago: ALA. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/standards.pdf>

Critical Thinking at Georgia Southern University:

“Students will interpret, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas using a logical and ethical framework.”

University System of Georgia. (2011). *Current institutional cores*. Retrieved August 26, 2011, from http://core.usg.edu/documents/current_institutional_cores/

Critical Thinking in the Core: Seven USG Schools

Please refer to the chart on the
handout

Questions/Comments:

- Should Information Literacy be emphasized in the core curriculum and its assessment?
- Can a one-course assessment plan adequately capture students' knowledge of critical thinking/information literacy?
- Can a multiple-choice test adequately capture information literacy and/or critical thinking?
- Should there be multiple sites for assessing critical thinking and/or information literacy?

Lingering Questions:

- Should statements about information literacy be available at various university sites, such as academic and administrative units, for those universities that have information literacy as a key component of general education?
- Why is this information so difficult to find?