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

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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
- Lingering 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/](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?