

COMPETENCY: CRITICAL THINKING

General Education

Guiding Principle: The goal of instruction in “critical thinking” is to help students become capable of critical and open-minded questioning and reasoning. An understanding of argument is central to critical thinking.

Definition: Critical Thinking competency
Ability to examine issues and ideas and to identify good and bad reasoning in a variety of fields with differing assumptions, contents and methods.

Criteria

1. Information Acquisition:

- Identify questions, problems, and arguments.
- Differentiate questions, problems, and arguments.

2. Application

- Evaluate the appropriateness of various methods of reasoning and verification.
- State position or hypothesis, give reasons to support it and state its limitations.

3. Analysis

- Identify stated and unstated assumptions.
- Assess stated and unstated assumptions.
- Critically compare different points of view

4. Synthesis

- Formulate questions and problems.
- Construct and develop cogent arguments.
- Articulate reasoned judgments.

5. Communication

- Discuss alternative points of view.
- Defend or criticize a point of view in view of available evidence.

6. Evaluation

- Evaluate the quality of evidence and reasoning.
- Draw an appropriate conclusion.

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The above bullets represent the full spectrum of criteria that may define this competency. For the purposes of qualifying a state-guaranteed general education course that requires this competency, the institution must demonstrate that the course substantively addresses most, not necessarily all, of the stated criteria.