**Critical Thinking (aggregate results)**

Assessment Type: GEC Year/Term: 2010 / 2

High Impact Practice: none noted

Level: 4 100-level courses; 7 200-level courses: BIOL 101, GEOL 102, PHIL 101, SSCI 101, CHEM 204, ECON 201, GEND 220, HIST 202, MUS 201, THEA 261, WR 222

Learning Outcome: Critical Thinking Measurement Scale: 1-3

Assessment Method/Tool: Rubric Sample size (aggregate): 272

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| **Communication Performance Criteria** | **Developing****(# of students)** | **Adequate****(# of students)** | **Proficient****(# of students)** |
| **1. Identifies and explains issues** | 38 | 14% | 59 | 22% | 175 | 64% |
| **2. Recognizes contexts and assumptions** | 52 | 19% | 95 | 35% | 125 | 46% |
| **3. Acknowledges multiple perspectives** | 25 | 9% | 61 | 22% | 186 | 69% |
| **4. Evaluates evidence to reach conclusions** | 58 | 21% | 90 | 33% | 124 | 46% |
| **Averages****(based on 272 student sample size)** |  | 15.75% |  | 28% |  | 56.25% |

**Institutional Benchmark:** 85% Institutional benchmark goal for

 Percent of students meeting

 “Adequate” or “Proficient” levels

**Percent Achieving Benchmark:** 84.25% Actual percent of students meeting

 “Adequate” or “Proficient” levels

**Analysis:** The following disciplinary areas were represented in this sampling of the Critical Thinking learning outcome: BIOL 101, GEOL 102, PHIL 101, SSCI 101, CHEM 204, ECON 201, GEND 220, HIST 202, MUS 201, THEA 261, WR 222. There was good balance of samplings from each of the divisions in the College of Arts and Sciences.

In the selection of assignments and understanding of the criteria, faculty were normed in two groups and encouraged to select an assignment for their assessment near the end of the term. All but three participants selected an assignment/exam either at mid-term (4th or 5th week) or near the end of the course (9th or 10th week). Three participants employed the rubric as a screening tool for their courses. A high percentage of students performed at adequate or proficient levels upon entry into two of the courses, while in the third, a high percentage of students performed at developing levels.

Faculty who assessed Critical Thinking criteria at mid-term noted that student were at the developing stage for criteria #2 and #4. Those faculty report emphasizing these criteria throughout the revision process, which resulted in improvements, but these improvements were not included in the data collection for this sampling.

**Closing the Loop:** Overall, students participating in this sampling of the GEC Critical Thinking outcome performed slightly below (84.25%) the institutional benchmark of 85% performing at Adequate or Proficient, a decrease of 4.75 percentage points from Spring 2008 (89%) when this outcome was last assessed. In 9 of 10 courses, about 20% of students were at the developing stage for Criterion #4. “Evaluates evidence to reach conclusions” and for Criterion #2. “Recognizes contexts and assumptions.” In 3 of 7 200-level courses, the percentage of students performing at the developing stage for Criteria #3 and #4 was markedly higher.

**Recommendations:**

* Meet w/ GEC Sampling Team early during Fall Orientation Week
* Norm faculty on criteria and select assignments situated near the end of term; recommend using rubric as screening tool pre- and post- so that summative data is being collected for the sampling period.
* Add the Writing Center Director to the team to provide a contact and resource for assignment design that addresses skill building from a disciplinary perspective in the areas of “contexts and assumptions” and evaluation of evidence.