Overview
I’m pleased to report that things are progressing well with our implementation. Inquiry ARC (inquiry-apply-reflect-communicate) continues to be met with enthusiasm on campus, and our most recent application cycle drew a range of high quality proposals. My sense is that it is our pilot instructors’ enthusiasm for the student experience in the classroom that is key to the program’s success thus far. We have had exceptionally talented and hard-working educators and team members. The concept of the Inquiry ARC has worked well to not only capture some of the best practices in critical thinking pedagogy, it also adapts well to a variety of classes. The model has also proven to be a fine opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration among instructors, and it has further served as a useful space for faculty/staff collaboration.

SP 2013 Pilot Educators
Our current pilot group of 8 educators successfully completed professional development workshops and their courses are underway. In our February 14 check-in, they reported that things were progressing well in their classes. The group was enthusiastic about Inquiry ARC, but also noted the challenge of incorporating new techniques and language into their teaching.

FA 2014 Pilot Educators
The most recent application cycle for FA 2013 Inquiry ARC academic courses was completed on 22 February, and a subcommittee met on 27 February to review applications and make recommendations. Our goal for fall and spring semesters (2013-14) is to bring in a total of 20 new participants to the program. We received 24 applications for the fall semester alone. The following departments, programs and areas were represented: University Writing Center, Literature & Language, Mathematics, Honors, HUM, Biology Department, Education, Music, Mathematics, Sociology and Anthropology, Residential Education, Political Science, Ramsay Library, SAIL, Economics, Philosophy, Health and Counseling. The committee recommended accepting 12 new applicants for FA 2013 and deferred 4 applications to our pending call for the co-curricular classroom. Four of the remaining applications were repeated applicants and were accepted as such.

Assessment Update
The assessment committee has met twice this semester and has made progress with their review.

- Review of course materials revealed some shortcomings in our process, and a revised “Materials Checksheet” has been drafted in response.
- The team continues to modify and narrow various rubric models. The latest iteration, developed from feedback from our pilot educators, links Inquiry ARC with critical thinking values and provides a simplified model that we hope will be adaptable by all participating instructors.
- The team revised the plan for testing seniors for baseline data with the California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI), and will test in fall and spring in 2013-14 instead of spring alone as originally planned. Details still need to be reviewed, but we plan to use HUM 414 and LS 479 classes to capture this data.
- Preliminary data from Student Rating of Instruction (SRI’s) shows a promising increase in selected categories in Inquiry ARC courses when compared to non-Inquiry ARC averages. See attached for details.
Programming Updates:

- Inquiry ARC hosted a roundtable discussion and reception for interested participants on 8 Feb. 2013. It was well attended (22 people), and fall 2012 pilot educators shared their insights and experiences with potential applicants.
- Speaker plans for the fall include social psychologist Jonathan Haidt. Inquiry ARC is working in cooperation with Center for Diversity Education’s Deborah Miles and City of Asheville Council’s Marc Hunt and groups across campus to identify funding for this event. Haidt is an internationally known speaker on “Civil Discourse,” and will be doing work specific to critical thinking while on campus.
  We are also hoping to bring Terry Roberts (or another representative of the Paideia Institute) to campus sometime in fall 2013.

Professional Development:

- Mary Lynn Manns attended the Dec. 2012 SACS conference, where she presented a well-received workshop for QEP Directors. Most recently, she attended the Berkeley, CA Institute for Critical Thinking, and we’re currently planning a summer workshop where she can share her insights. Other members of the Inquiry ARC team who attended SACS in December, included Jessica Dunsmore (who presented on assessment) and Lorena Russell.
- Laurie Miles attended a Jan. AAC & U conference in Atlanta GA on developing electronic portfolios on campus. We will be working with Laurie to help extend this useful technology (“Mahara”) into our Inquiry ARC classes.
- We hope to support five faculty and staff for attendance at the University of Louisville’s May Inquiry to Action (i2a) Institute on critical thinking. We will host a roundtable in the fall where they can share what they learned about teaching critical thinking.
- The new Inquiry ARC website has been officially launched: [http://inquiryarc.unca.edu](http://inquiryarc.unca.edu). You’ll find detailed reports there on items mentioned in this report as well as a record of meeting minutes.

Concerns:

- Because we seek to implement the program in curricular and co-curricular settings with both faculty and staff, how can we best accommodate a range of needs while retaining and building community?
- How to develop assessment for co-curricular learning experiences that might not produce grades or student artifacts?
- Currently we provide stipends for instructors to employ Inquiry ARC two times in their classes, and the third time we don’t expect them to participate in assessment. Is this model sustainable?
- Program implementation has functioned in large part on developing faculty and staff interest and participation. What is the best way to appeal more directly to the students?