Executive Summary on Faculty Pedagogy, 2012-2013
QEP Assessment Team

Each semester participating Inquiry ARC instructors submit a Faculty Materials Checklist (attachment 1) along with supporting documents such as course syllabi and assignments. Assessment team members review those materials to better understand how instructors communicate with their students about Inquiry ARC and critical thinking and how they approach the task of teaching in ways that will enhance students’ critical thinking skills. Information from these reviews is used to improve the Inquiry ARC faculty development program which is designed to prepare instructors to teach using the Inquiry ARC approach.

The Fall 2012 review indicated significant discrepancies between the information provided on the Faculty Materials Checklist and the corresponding course materials. Not surprisingly, most faculty members checked every box on the checklist indicating that they had (a) complied with the requested procedures for developing their course as an Inquiry ARC course and (b) communicated the features of the Inquiry ARC approach to their students in their course materials. The only information confirmed for 100% of courses was a description of the Inquiry ARC approach. Percentages for the remaining elements assessed follow.

55-67% of materials for these courses included
- Activities designed to use the Inquiry ARC approach
- Activities designed to enhance critical thinking
- Clear alignment of Inquiry ARC with activities designed to enhance critical thinking

Less than 50% of course materials included
- Inquiry ARC SLOs
- A definition of critical thinking
- A critical thinking SLO
- Resources/support information on critical thinking
- How students received feedback on their critical thinking skills

Based on these findings, the Assessment Team made minor revisions to the Faculty Materials Checklist and recommended changes to the coverage of pedagogical issues in the faculty development program. Specifically, the team recommended that the workshops emphasize the importance of including SLOs, or links to SLOs, on syllabi, the importance of clearly articulating how coursework/course activities align with aspects of Inquiry ARC pedagogy and the need to assess critical thinking skills as well as course content acquisition in student materials.

Implementation of the recommendations from Fall 2012 led to a marked improvement in how well faculty communicated about the Inquiry ARC component to their students. Examination of faculty materials from Spring 2013 indicated that 80-100% of course materials included all of the required information with the exception of information on how students would receive feedback on their critical thinking skills (present in 70% of course materials). The team recommended additional emphasis of this point in future professional development sessions.
Faculty Materials Checklist
Please attach a copy of related course materials, including a syllabus, handouts, rubrics, and/or assignment sheets to this reporting sheet.

In your attached materials, please mark the appropriate text to indicate WHERE and HOW you communicated the following information to your students.

- Identified the course as an Inquiry ARC class
- Defined the components of the Inquiry ARC approach
- Identified the Inquiry ARC student learning outcomes
- Defined critical thinking as it applies to your course
- Identified a critical thinking learning outcome
- Identified how students would demonstrate their critical thinking skills
- Indicated how the particular activities, assignments, projects aligned with Inquiry ARC components (Inquire, Apply, Reflect, Communicate)
- Provided resources and support information to students for critical thinking
- Provided feedback to students about their critical thinking performance

Please describe in a short paragraph what worked well and what was challenging about teaching this course as an Inquiry ARC course (pedagogy, assessment, etc.)