

Program Review:
Collegium of Integrated Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Florida Gulf Coast University

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1. Program Description

1.a: Filling a demand - a community analysis: In 1995 and 1996, the College of Arts and Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University commissioned a study of employer preferences for college graduates. The aim of the student was to identify community needs, from the point of view of prospective employers, and to design curriculum that would address these needs. The findings of this study, based on interviews with employers in Tampa, southwest Florida, and Miami, revealed that employers prefer college graduates with strong oral and written communications skills, critical thinking abilities, the capacity to make connections between different bodies of knowledge, the ability to adapt to change, and also the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues. The Collegium of Integrated Learning was designed in light of these studies. In its original form, the Collegium consisted of eighteen hours of upper division courses that all students in the College of Arts and Sciences had to complete in order to graduate. Fifteen of the eighteen hours consisted of interdisciplinary courses focused on contemporary issues. These were:

- Issues in Culture and Society (IDS 3301)
- Issues in Politics and Economics (IDS 3302)
- Issues in Science and Technology (IDS 3303)
- Issues in Environment and Ecology (IDS 3304)
- Issues in Art, Media and Literature (IDS 3305)

To complete the Collegium, students took the Integrated Senior Core Seminar (IDS 4910). At this point in time, the Collegium is in transition. The size of the curriculum has been reduced from eighteen to twelve credit hours. A new gateway course, Foundations of Civic Engagement (IDS 3300), has been introduced. The Collegium now consists of the following courses:

- Foundations of Civic Engagement (IDS 3300)
- Issues in Culture and Society (IDS 3301)
- Issues in Science and Technology (IDS 3303)
- Integrated Core Senior Capstone (IDS 4910)

1.b The mission of the Collegium has remained consistent over time. To a very large extent, it remains strongly rooted in the community analysis conducted by the College of Arts and Sciences in 1995-1996. Here is a key passage from the Mission Statement:

The Collegium of Integrated Learning consists of 12 credit hours of core courses designed to create a community of inquiry. Students and faculty work together to explore the cultural, social, historical, philosophical, moral, scientific, and humanistic roots of contemporary issues and how they have developed across time. Issues and topics center around five general areas. Individually and in teams, and in collaboration with faculty from various disciplines, students develop an integrated context by examining issues through a variety of perspectives and

methods (history, sociology, philosophy, and literature, for example) and are required to formulate their own interpretations and responses to the issues.¹

The interdisciplinary nature of the Collegium corresponds to the employer preference that students are able to draw connections between different bodies of knowledge. The emphasis on team work corresponds to the employer preference for students that are able to work collaboratively. Here is another critical passage from the Mission Statement:

The inquiry- or problem-based learning approach calls on students to learn in a manner in which they may not be accustomed. The courses are organized in interdisciplinary ways; stress engaged learning rather than passive lecturing; expect broad and fundamental knowledge in history, social sciences, natural sciences, and humanities; require critical, creative, systematic, and collaborative thinking; and depend on the ability to find and intellectually defend connections among multiple points of knowledge.²

The emphasis on problem based learning is meant to develop students' critical thinking capacities. The Collegium's focus on collaborative thinking is meant to develop students' communication skills. As the passage makes clear, Collegium courses are grounded in discussion rather than lecture. The Mission Statement's emphasis on engaged learning draws heavily on students' communication skills in a variety of ways: class discussions, collaborative projects, oral presentations, and quite extensive amounts of written work.

As important as they were, the mission of the Collegium is not wholly rooted in employer preferences. Equally important was the College of Arts and Science's conviction that the purpose of liberal education is distinct from simply training students to practice a particular profession or occupation. The goal of liberal education is to prepare students to participate effectively in a democratic society, to be able to respond intelligently to waves of social, economic, political, cultural, and technological change currently unfolding, and to spark in students a sense of intellectual curiosity that will encourage them to become life long learners.

The goals of the Collegium of Integrated Learning are closely aligned with the mission of both the College of Arts and Sciences and Florida Gulf Coast University as a whole. A relevant section of the University Mission Statement notes that:

Florida Gulf Coast University continuously pursues academic excellence, practices and promotes environmental sustainability, embraces diversity, nurtures community partnerships, values public service, encourages civic responsibility,

¹ Quoted from the Florida Gulf Coast University homepage, <http://www.fgcu.edu/cas/Collegium/mission.html>

² Quoted from the Florida Gulf Coast University homepage, <http://www.fgcu.edu/cas/Collegium/mission.html>

cultivates habits of lifelong learning, and keeps the advancement of knowledge and pursuit of truth as noble ideals at the heart of the university's purpose.³

The Collegium of Integrated Learning has been a place in the curriculum where many of the educational objectives in the University Mission Statement have been intensely pursued. Collegium courses have addressed issues of environmental sustainability, cultural diversity and civic engagement with the aim of cultivating habits of life long learning. It is particularly relevant here to note the Collegium's commitment to civic engagement. Florida Gulf Coast University has always been a strong advocate of public service. One notable indication of this is the university's service learning requirement, which requires all students to perform prescribed number of hours (depending on the class level of the student) of community service in order to graduate. The new gateway course in the Collegium, Foundations of Civic Engagement, incorporates service learning into its academic curriculum.⁴ These service learning projects represent important community partnerships, they encourage students to assume civic responsibility, and they infuse this responsibility with one of the key virtues of the liberally educated person: the capacity to think critically.

1.c Governance. To understand the challenges associated with governance of the Collegium, one must recognize the Collegium is different from a typical academic department or program: it is the property of the entire College of Arts and Sciences. As a result, governance of the Collegium lies in the hands of several different actors: the Collegium Program Leader, the Division Chairs, and the faculty as a whole.

In the past, a Collegium program leader was assigned the task of scheduling Collegium classes, hiring qualified adjuncts to teach these courses when necessary, and ensuring the alignment of Collegium classes with the nine central learning outcomes of Florida Gulf Coast University: aesthetic sensibility, a culturally diverse perspective, an ecological perspective, community awareness and involvement, ethical responsibility, effective communication, technological literacy, information literacy, and the development of problem solving abilities.⁵ To assure coverage of key outcomes, each course in the Collegium was assigned a "marquee" outcome. Consider several examples: for Issues in Culture and Society (IDS 3301) the marquee outcome was a culturally diverse perspective; for Issues in Politics and Economics (IDS 3302), community awareness and involvement was a marquee outcome; and for Issues in Ecology and Environment (IDS 3304) the development of an ecologically diverse perspective was a marquee outcome. Faculty members had (and continue to enjoy) broad leeway in designing Collegium courses with the important caveat that the course systematically address the marquee outcome. The Collegium leader met with Collegium faculty to review syllabi and to

³ Quoted from the Florida Gulf Coast University homepage, <http://www.fgcu.edu/info/Mission.asp>

⁴ For an overview of the Foundations of Civic Engagement, see my Fall 2003 course syllabus, available at <http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/rcoughlin/ids3300f03.htm>

⁵ For discussion of undergraduate university learning outcomes, see: <http://www.fgcu.edu/Planning/Accreditation/Regional/documents/UndergraduateStudentLGO.pdf>

assure the Collegium's continued alignment with the university's undergraduate learning outcomes.

In Academic Year 2002-2003 there was no program leader for the Collegium of Integrated Learning. In the fall of Academic Year 2003-2004, I was appointed program leader of the Collegium. Over the course of the previous year, I worked with colleagues to develop Foundations of Civic Engagement. My objective is to facilitate a broad re-thinking of the Collegium in terms of the focus of the Foundations course. This undertaking will be discussed in greater depth in section three of this report, which undertakes a SWOT analysis of the Collegium. Here it is sufficient to note that the responsibilities of the program leader have changed from assuring the alignment of the Collegium with university learning outcomes to facilitating a comprehensive reform and review of the Collegium.

The Program Leader plays no role in faculty evaluation. This function is carried out by Division Chairs. Participation in the Collegium is widely regarded as an important responsibility for faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences. Faculty participation in the Collegium is not mandated by our evaluation documents, but participation in the Collegium is widespread. In the evaluation process, faculty develop a Professional Development Plan (PDP) that lays out their goals and objectives for the coming academic year. At the end of the year, they write an annual report that documents the extent to which the goals and objectives outlined in the PDP were achieved. Faculty also use annual reports as an occasion for analyzing and improving their teaching, research and service practices. Faculty participation in Collegium figures very prominently within the PDPs and Annual Reports of numerous faculty members. Through approving PDP and evaluating Annual Reports, division chairs play a significant, albeit highly decentralized role in the governance of the Collegium.

Finally, the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty as a whole has undertaken important decisions with respect to the Collegium. The faculty has chosen to reorganize the Collegium on two occasions. In the Spring of 2000, the faculty voted to reduce the number of credit hours required for completion of the Collegium from eighteen to twelve credit hours and to reorganize Collegium requirement. In the Spring of 2002, the faculty approved the development of Foundations of Civic Engagement. The Collegium has been discussed on numerous occasions in faculty meetings and retreats. The academic success of the Collegium is dependent on securing the ongoing support of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty.

1.d. Program Overview. As noted above, completion of the Collegium of Integrated Learning is required of all students graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences. In recent years, Florida Gulf Coast University has experienced considerable enrollment growth. This has generated increased demands on faculty resources. Because of budget shortfalls at the State level, the College of Arts and Sciences has been unable to hire enough faculty to keep up with enrollment growth. College of Arts and Science faculty are attempting to contribute to the university's general education program, maintain and develop their respective majors, and sustain the Collegium. In the context of growing

demands and limited resources the question arises: do we have enough faculty resources to sustain the Collegium of Integrated Learning? This dilemma is, of course, a major threat to the Collegium. It is taken up in the SWOT analysis presented in section three.

1.e. Measures of Program Quality. While there is a need for additional measures of program quality, assessment of the Collegium does occur within the Integrated Core Senior Capstone.

From 1997 to 2000, the Collegium undertook external assessments of student learning in the Integrated Senior Capstone course. In the external assessment, students were given problems based on a contemporary issue to work out. Over a course of a two-hour period, students had to work out solutions to this problem using their abilities to think critically, communicate effectively and operate collaboratively. In addition, the task they were given focused on a specific learning outcome – such as ethical responsibility or a culturally diverse perspective – over which students had to demonstrate intellectual mastery. This program constituted an external review of student learning because Capstone faculty recruited juries of community leaders (clergy, educators, school board members, business people, retired professionals, elected officials, and the like) to evaluate student learning. Community leaders were assigned a particular group of students (usually four to five) to observe and evaluate. Students received direct feedback from community leaders. Community evaluations also helped to determine student grades in the Capstone seminar.

Since 2000, assessment of the Collegium has been based on final collaborative projects that students undertake within the Capstone seminar. There is no feedback mechanism at present to assure that assessment of student learning plays a systematic role in refining the Collegium. These feedback mechanisms exist at the molecular level of individual faculty reflecting on student evaluations of teaching and on their general experience of teaching in the Collegium in general and in the Capstone in particular.

A major barrier to progress here is our incomplete understanding of the learning outcomes that the Collegium of Integrated Learning is supposed to address. The outcomes are understood in very general terms. More faculty time and resources are needed to elaborate a detailed understanding of each learning outcome – which could then be operationalized in a way that would enable us to more meaningfully measure student learning. This is a challenge that we have faced for a long time and which we are now beginning to address in terms of the design of the Foundations of Civic Engagement class. I will return to this point in section three, the SWOT analysis.

1.f. Course offerings and curricula. As indicated above, there was a process of syllabus review at an earlier point in the history of the Collegium in order to assure the course syllabi were addressing marquee learning outcomes. This process of syllabus review has been discontinued. Obviously, a process of syllabus review needs to be reconstituted. It should be based on more explicit understandings of what our learning outcomes are and hence on much clearer notions of how particular course contents address these learning outcomes.

2. Program Implementation

2.a. Benchmarks. How do we evaluate student and faculty performance in the Collegium? Our learning outcomes should be the critical benchmark for both students and faculty. As indicated above, however, our benchmarks lack precision. The problem here is not that faculty never think about what they are doing in the Collegium, but rather that faculty do not deliberate together about the Collegium. Attached is a partial list of faculty publications and presentations on the Collegium (appendix A). These offer a benchmark of the extent to which faculty – sometimes along with student participation – have thought deeply about their teaching activities within the Collegium. As a result, the Collegium includes numerous excellent courses. In the future, as faculty engage in sustained collective deliberation about the Collegium as a whole, the program will gain greater coherence and focus.

An important part of faculty deliberation centers on relating course contents to the university's learning outcomes. At an individual level, numerous courses make this connection in very specific terms. Here, for example is the statement of learning outcomes from Professor Nora Demer's syllabus on Issues in Science and Technology:

“Upon completion of this course, students should have gained experience and an increased proficiency in the following **University Student Learning Outcomes**:

University Goal #8: Technological literacy. Develop knowledge of modern technology: Process information through the use of technology. Collaborate with others using technology tools.

University Goal #7: Problem Solving. Understand the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of knowledge. Apply critical, analytical, creative and systems thinking in order to recognize and solve problems. Work individually and collaboratively to recognize and solve problems.

University Goal #6: Information Literacy. Identify and locate multiple sources of information using a variety of methods. Analyze and evaluate information within a variety of disciplinary and professional contexts. Participate in collaborative analysis and/or application of information resources.

University Goal #4: Effective communication. Know the fundamental principles for effective and appropriate communication, including reading, writing, speaking & listening skills. Organize thoughts and compose ideas for a variety of audiences, using a full range of communication tools and techniques. Participate in collaborative projects requiring effective communication among team members.”

As appendix A demonstrates, Professor Demers has written extensively on the development of her version of IDS 3303. She has precise notions of what she wants to achieve in this course. The difficulty is that her ideas and the ideas of other faculty

members that participate in the Collegium of Integrated Learning lack any significant inter-subjective currency within the College as a whole. Because of this, the work of the Collegium is brilliant in spots but it is not cumulative.

Faculty need to have occasions for deliberation on what the program's learning outcomes really are and how, in light of these shared understandings, they can be usefully assessed. What we need are faculty workshops. Fortunately, the College of Arts and Sciences has recently begun to provide resources for these workshops. Last summer (2003), we conducted our first faculty workshop on Foundations of Civic Engagement. This summer another workshop is being planned on this course. The plan is to both train faculty on how to teach the Foundations course and to solicit faculty input into the refinement of this course. Undoubtedly, we need to convene workshops on each of the courses within the Collegium in order to clarify the outcomes that each course should address and in order to articulate the linkages that we should be emphasizing *between* these courses.

2.b. Entering students. Several important observations can be made about the way in which general enrollment trends have changed over the course of Florida Gulf Coast University's existence and what these changes mean for the place of the Collegium with the College of Arts and Sciences overall curriculum.

When FGCU opened, it was designed as essentially a finishing school. Most students, it was assumed, would matriculate to FGCU from community college or as transfer students. But recent enrollment trends have belied these expectations. In recent years, we have attracted large numbers of freshmen, many of whom live in on-campus dormitories. These changes are prompting us to think about student learning over a four-year period as opposed to a two year upper division experience. The College of Arts and Sciences has been a focal point for this work. We have developed a freshman experience program. We are in the process of re-thinking our general education program. As both of these programs are developed, College of Arts and Sciences faculty also have to consider what sorts linkages can be drawn between the Collegium of Integrated Learning and the general education program. Civic engagement and critical thinking are two learning outcomes that are developed in the general education program. The Collegium should attempt to build on the work that is being done in the general education program.

2.c. Desired outcomes. This report has focused on the Collegium's learning outcomes at some length. To reiterate, we have a set of nine learning outcomes around which the Collegium has been organized. There remains a need for greater common understandings of what these outcomes really mean. What, for example, do we really mean by ethical responsibility? How would we measure the extent to which this outcome has been achieved? Individual faculty members certainly have compelling understandings of this and other learning outcomes, but, as noted above, these need to be more widely shared understandings. It should be added that the degree of difficulty in reaching shared understanding in a college wide program such as the Collegium is much higher than in the case of particular degree programs. The size of our faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences has nearly doubled since we opened in 1997. Faculty members are also pulled in a number of different directions: toward the development of their programs and

majors, toward servicing general education requirements, and toward the very substantial tasks of university governance (and these are especially heavy in a setting of a new university where faculty must develop new policies from the ground up).

2.d. Faculty qualifications and scholarship. We have a very high percentage of faculty with their terminal degrees teaching Collegium courses. For example, this semester (Spring 2004) we are offering twenty one sections of Collegium courses. Only *two* of these sections is staffed by a faculty member that lacks a terminal degree in his or her field of study. In addition, full time faculty participate extensively in the Collegium. Of the twenty-one sections of Collegium courses being offered this term, fifteen are staffed by ranked, full-time members of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty.

Another aspect of faculty qualification can be seen in terms of student evaluations of teaching (see data on student evaluations).

There has been considerable scholarly work – in the form of both professional publications and presentations – by Arts and Sciences faculty that focuses specifically on their work within the Collegium (see Appendix A for a partial bibliography). One of the strengths of the Collegium certainly, is faculty qualifications and scholarship.

2.e. Library resources. On the whole, library resources to support the Collegium of Integrated Learning are adequate. Because the Collegium addresses contemporary issues, it does not require access to expensive journals that publish cutting edge knowledge within the various disciplines. Library personnel have also been instrumental in helping to development approaches to information literacy, one of our nine university learning outcomes. In particular, Dr. Nora Demers has collaborated with library staff to produce several publications of information literacy in the context of the Collegium (see Appendix A).

2.f. Other resources. An emerging resource for the Collegium of Integrated Learning is, quite simply, the community. With the development of Foundations of Civic Engagement as a gateway course of the Collegium, we have initiated a process of systematically incorporating service learning into the Collegium of Integrated Learning. A sample list of service learning projects that have been proposed and, in many cases, undertaken, is included in Appendix B. These projects offer us the opportunity to build strong connections with community leaders in Southwest Florida.

2.g. Student performance/accomplishment. We plan to provide examples of student performance/accomplishment from each of the Collegium courses. This will be a very useful task for us to undertake. As noted above, there has been much good work that has been done in the Collegium, but not enough college-wide discussion about what we, as faculty, are trying to accomplish with our students.

3. *A SWOT Analysis of the Collegium of Integrated Learning*

This SWOT analysis will examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Collegium of Integrated Learning.

3.a. Strengths. The strengths of the Collegium of Integrated Learning are considerable. We have many committed faculty who have developed a wide assortment of excellent courses. A sampling of course syllabi for each of the different sections of the Collegium is infused in Appendix C. We need to pull together the pedagogical practices and concepts embedded in these documents and make them part of a shared faculty culture that sustains and nourishes the Collegium.

The mission of the program remains highly relevant: the ability to think critically, make connections between different bodies of thought, work collaboratively and communicate effectively remain essential aspects of a liberal education. Another strength of the Collegium is that the faculty remains committed to the goals of the Collegium. This is manifested in the high percentage of full time, ranked faculty who teach in the Collegium semester after semester. It is also manifested in the sense of many faculty that the Collegium is the reason why they chose to teach at Florida Gulf Coast University in the first place. In the minds of many faculty members, the College of Arts and Sciences' commitment to interdisciplinary learning distinguished FGCU from other academic institutions where departmental specialization and insularity prevailed over the interdisciplinary teaching and learning. The College of Arts and Sciences promised to be a unique and rewarding learning community for faculty. An important strength of the program is the continued resilience of this vision of what higher education can be.

3.b. Weaknesses. We do not have a strong enough governance structure. The role of program leader is not well institutionalized and, as a consequence, not well understood within the College. Lack of leadership within the program has been manifested in the tendency for faculty to work independently of one another and for college wide deliberation on the Collegium to be infrequent and often superficial. Indeed, the College of Arts and Sciences has *never* established a minimally workable or coherent governance structure for the Collegium.

Because we have not developed effective governance structures, faculty expectations with regard to the Collegium have become ever more uncertain as time has elapsed. At the beginning of the College's existence, it was assumed that all faculty were both eager to contribute to the Collegium and responsible for doing so. This was because participation in the Collegium was a salient feature of the job descriptions to which College's inaugural faculty responded. At this point in time, the Collegium was viewed as the heart of the liberal studies degree. It would nourish the disciplines and the disciplines would nourish it. Over time, however, new colleagues have joined the faculty with minimal commitment to or even understanding and awareness of the Collegium. Debate continues within faculty as to whether all faculty should be required to teach or otherwise support interdisciplinary courses. Some have argued for making this requirement a part of our evaluation documents. Others have argued that a separate

Collegium faculty should be established. Resolving this ambiguity is part and parcel of the larger task of establishing a more effective governance structure.

The Collegium cannot run itself. We cannot have a program in which individual faculty members invent their own approaches to the Collegium and then expect the program as a whole to possess internal coherence and consistency. We have tried this approach for six and one half years, and it has yielded several individual components of the Collegium that are well conceived and well implemented, but an overall program that needs greater direction and focus. This fragmentation of the Collegium is perhaps its major weakness.

3.c. Opportunities. Until recently, there has never been any definitive pathway through the Collegium. Students could take Collegium courses in whatever order they desired. This made it impossible to formulate a developmental approach to the student learning outcomes that the Collegium has attempted to address. This lack of structure in terms of the sequencing of Collegium reinforced the fragmentation of faculty work on Collegium. We are, however, in the process of rectifying these historical weaknesses through the development of Foundations of Civic Engagement. The Foundations offers us the opportunity to re-organize and re-energize the Collegium. In particular, the Foundations course offers us the following opportunities:

Because we are committed to taking a unified approach to the Collegium, we have been able to tap into faculty development resources in the form of workshops preparing faculty to teach the Foundations class. We did a workshop last summer and will be conducting another workshop this summer. These workshops are important opportunities for focusing our work around several important themes. These include critical thinking and civic engagement as central learning outcomes for the Collegium. We have developed a very detailed conception of critical thinking, based on the work of Richard Paul and Robert Nosich. We have also begun to distinguish beginning and refined levels of ability in critical thinking (see Appendix D), which can provide the kind of robust articulation of student learning outcomes that we need to develop in order to effectively assess student learning.

Another opportunity for the Collegium are the kinds of connections that we are establishing with the community as we incorporate service learning into the Collegium. This is a move that strengthens both service learning and the Collegium. As an hours-based requirement, service learning has often lacked a significant academic framework. As a result, it has been more about service than about learning. With Foundations, we have begun to develop a compelling academic framework, which has two major features. The first is the use of critical thinking – in particular, the elements of thinking, developed by Paul and Nosich – as a template for how students engage in service learning. Service learning within the Collegium is thus being restructured within the Collegium as the practical application to critical thinking. The second aspect of this framework concerns the way in which we structure student reflections of service learning experiences. A central component of the Foundations curriculum are theories of civic engagement that draw on the work of classical and contemporary theorists of civic engagement. We ask students to apply the major concepts of civic engagement to both case studies of civic

engagement (drawn from the Civic Practices website (www.cpn.org) and to their own service learning experiences. As a result, students think through concepts of civic engagement not only in terms of the internal logic of these concepts, but also in light of lived experience.

Yet another opportunity that is emerging from the Foundations course are the connections that we are cultivating with community leaders. Our approach to service learning is redefining our understanding of the learning community. The learning community is becoming a triad of faculty, student, and community interaction organized around an underlying model of critical thinking and civic engagement to guide both thought and action. We are very interested in formulating a community advisory board for the Collegium of Integrated Studies. In doing so, we believe we can energize the Collegium as an academic enterprise that connects higher learning and civic engagement.

Aside from the work that we are doing with the Foundations course, there is a great deal of intellectual capital on the Collegium that has been developed through faculty experimentation over the years and which has not been properly understood or appreciated with the College of Arts and Sciences. The Collegium can be strengthened immensely by reviewing our past practices and identifying best practices. In particular, there are opportunities to develop much clearer understanding of learning outcomes and effective assessment strategies through a review of past practices

3.d. Threats. Primary threats to the Collegium include the following:

- Growing faculty disenchantment. The Collegium has needed more focus and direction for a long time. This leads faculty to become disenchanted with it and to concentrate their energies on other pursuits, such the development of their majors.
- Growing pressure on faculty resources. This is due to increasing enrollment and the failure of enrollment growth money from the state to materialize over the last two years. These pressures are leading to tradeoffs that call the sustainability of the Collegium into question. If faculty are faced with the choice between sustaining their majors and participating in the Collegium, it is likely that they will choose the former.
- The need to develop new pedagogical models. If pressure on faculty resources continues to escalate, we may need to rethink the way in which we offer Collegium courses. In the past, Collegium classes have been discussion based, with enrollments generally capped at 30 to 35 students. It is conceivable that we shall have to offer Collegium courses in the same way the Division of Math and Natural Sciences is now offering basic biology, algebra and chemistry courses: as large lecture classes with discussion sessions run by adjunct instructors or teaching assistants. It would be difficult to reconcile this mode of instruction with our past practices in the Collegium.

4. *Recommendations*

There are a variety of recommendations that I would make for this program. They are as follows:

- The Collegium steering committee within the College of Arts and Sciences needs to be convened. This committee should be given a specific charge from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Among other things, the committee should develop detailed and robust statements of each of the learning objectives that the Collegium of Integrated Studies addresses.
- A survey of faculty attitudes toward the Collegium needs to be undertaken. This survey should be designed on the basis of interviews with a representative sample of faculty members in order to ensure the formulation of questions that will validly measure key aspects of faculty attitudes. This survey should also offer a useful context for faculty deliberation in which findings can be presented to the faculty and faculty discussion can be channeled toward the interpretation of these findings.
- Surveys and focus group sessions with students should be undertaken in order to uncover student perceptions and attitudes toward the Collegium. If we can better understand student perceptions, we can do a better job of explaining to the students why the Collegium is a useful and important addition to their education.
- If we truly intend to move the Collegium in the direction of civic engagement, we should begin work on identifying candidates for membership on such a board. This board could provide us with important insights on how we should structure our curriculum and develop our commitments to civic engagement and service learning.
- Faculty workshops for each course within the Collegium should be convened. This should be done in a sequential way. We have already made a start with two workshops on the Foundations course. Next we should convene workshops on both the Issues courses (at this point, Issues in Culture and Society and Issues in Science and Technology). Then we should convene a workshop on the Integrated Core Senior Capstone. Proceeding sequentially will enable us to formulate a clearer, developmental conception of how the Collegium should work for students.
- The Collegium of Integrated Learning should establish a closer, working relationship with Florida Gulf Coast University's Center for Civic Engagement. One joint project that could emerge from this collaboration would be the development of a civic engagement speakers series. Such a series would bring community leaders from Southwest Florida and beyond to the FGCU campus. Such a series would create an academic culture that would enrich not only the Collegium, but the entire university community. Another area of collaboration between the Center and the Collegium could rest with the development of service learning projects for Collegium courses. The Center's many connections with the community organizations and leaders are, potentially, an important resource of the Collegium.

Appendix A:

Selected Faculty Publications and Presentations Relevant to the Collegium

Coughlin, R (January 2004), “Reconstituting the Learning Community” Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Washington, D.C. January 20th – 24th.

Coughlin, R., and Roca M. (March 2004) “Building the Learning Community” 15th Annual Service Learning Conference. Orlando, Florida. March 28th – 31st.

Demers, N.E., Kakareka, J., Sullivan, D. B., Everham, E. E., McDonald, M., Tolley, S. G. and Wisdom, J. (April 1999) Integrating Arts & Sciences Learning at FGCU: A progress report: Tenth International Conference on College Teaching and Learning. Jacksonville, FL

Demers, N.E. C Malenfant, and M Rosenthal (Nov. 2001) Science for All: Issues in Science and Technology. Higher Education Consortium Annual Meeting. St. Petersburg, FL.

Demers, N.E. (2003) Issues in Science and Technology: Student driven inquiry directed by the Scientific Process. *Journal of College Science Teaching* 23:330-337

McKnight, R and Demers, N.E. (2003) Evaluating Course Website Utilization By Students Using Web Tracking Software: A Constructivist Approach. *International Journal of E-Learning* 2:3:13-17

Demers, N.E. and Malenfant, C. (In Press) Collaboration for Point-of-Need Library Instruction *Reference Services Review* 32:3:XX

Henry, D. “Enhancing Critical Thinking through Civic Engagement,” Gulf South Summit on Service Learning, Civic Engagement and Positive Youth Development, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 24-26.

McDonald, M. and Tolley, S. G. (2002) “Assessment, Outcomes and Forays in Interdisciplinary Curriculum Development” in *Issues in Integrative Studies* No. 20 - 2002 pp 45-64.

Whitehouse, G (November 2002). "A Mockery of Justice: Using Role-Playing to Teach Intercultural Ethics," American Academy of Religion [AAR] national meeting, Toronto ON.

Wisdom, J., Corcoran, P., and Wohlpart, J. “Engendering Ecological Literacy: A Campus-wide Initiative at Florida Gulf Coast University. Presented at the national conference of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment. Flagstaff, Arizona, June, 2001.

Wisdom, J., Roca, M., and others. "The New Trivium: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Communication Studies." Presented at the New York State Communication Association Annual Conference. Monticello, New York, October 1999.

Wisdom, J., Demers, N., Everham, W., McDonald, M. and Sullivan, B., "Integrating Arts and Sciences Learning at FGCU: A Progress Report." Presented at the Tenth International Conference on Teaching and Learning. Jacksonville, Florida, April 1999.

Wisdom, J., Corcoran, P., Crocker, J., and Roca, M. "A Vision of A Liberal Arts Education for the 21st Century: Reflections on FGCU's First Year." Presented at the Annual Conference of the Far Western Philosophy of Education Society, Honolulu, Hawai'i, January 1999.

Appendix B:

Select Service Learning Projects for Foundations of Civic Engagement

1. Location of panther crossings: The identification of panther crossings in eastern Collier County by reviewing the panther telemetry and road kill data and looking at the land use. Collier's new rural growth plans calls for panther/wildlife crossings and students could recommend locations based on their review of available information.
2. Design of panther crossings: Student might also want to make recommendations on design by exploring how other crossings are constructed. For example, chainlink fencing as an eyesore has arisen - maybe there is some fencing or visual barrier that might work as well, but not ugly like shiny chainlink. Also crossings might be combined with bridges. See www.wildlifecrossings.info. Contact information for this project: Nancy Payton, Florida Wildlife Federation (fwf@peganet.com; 941-643-4111)
3. Placement of communications towers: Collier County has just adopted a Growth Management Plan policy calling for regulations on the siting, construction, operating and decommissioning of communication towers. The task at hand is to translate the FWS guidelines and input from experts into draft regulations for consideration by the county commissioners. Communication towers cause confusion and kill birds if not properly sited, constructed, and operated. See www.towerkill.com. Contact information for this project: Nancy Payton, Florida Wildlife Federation (fwf@peganet.com; 941-643-4111)
4. Barefoot Beach Projects:
 1. Erosion Study: Wind, waves and the occasional hurricanes move coastal sand around. Tourists, dredging and large buildings have added a new dimension to the problem of erosion on the south end of the island. Two hundred feet of land has eroded in recent years. What can be done to limit the erosion from man made problems?
 2. Composting garden wastes: The butterfly garden is a focal point for the learning center. Many hours are spent tending to the plants. The trimmings could be used for composting. What composter is the best design for our garden size with the least amount of maintenance. Composting will reduce our fertilizer use.
 3. Recycling program at Barefoot Beach Preserve: Only a few containers for aluminum cans are available for visitors to recycle. All other disposables are not recycled. What is the percentage of disposed items at the Preserve and how else can we improve the recycling program?

Contact for these projects: Jill Kusba, Friends of Barefoot Beach Reserve (by E-mail at Careanimal@aol.com or by phone at (239) 949-3363)
5. Teaching Everglades restoration: one critical aspect of Everglades Restoration is public outreach. The project is costly and will unfold over a very extended period of time (35-40 years). For this project, design a presentation on Everglades

Restoration state would be suitable to elementary, middle school or high school students and then deliver this presentation.

6. [Oyster Reef Restoration](#): In collaboration with the Lee and Collier County School Districts, Florida Sea Grant, and the City of Cape Coral, we propose to educate and involve the general public as well as high school and undergraduate students in a community-based restoration of oyster reefs in the lower Charlotte Harbor - western Everglades watershed. We intend to utilize community volunteers to create, maintain, restore and enhance oyster-shell reefs in order to establish healthy living-oyster reefs in Charlotte Harbor - Everglades watershed. Contact: Dr. Aswani Volety (Associate Professor of Environmental Studies, 590 7166; avolety@fgcu.edu).
7. The CREW Land & Water Trust: Compare Everglades Acquisition and Restoration with the CREW Acquisition and Restoration Project. What lessons might be learned from the Everglades project that may help plan for a successful system approach to the protection of the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed. Protection of the Everglades system started in 1947 with the formation of Everglades National Park. It was only later that they learned the headwaters of the Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee were cut off from the Everglades National Park by the Everglades Agricultural Area and much of the area has been artificially drained for human use. The CREW Project is a 60,000 acre watershed acquisition and restoration project started in 1989. This is the last mostly intact fairly pristine watershed system in southwest Florida.
 - What is the value of protecting this area and what measures can be taken to insure this system is protected as a whole?
 - Does the system extend beyond its boundaries and what kinds of measures could be taken to ensure the protection of the total system?
 - What mistakes were made in the Everglades that could be avoided here by taking action in the near future?
 - What benefits does and will this system provide in the future and can a value be put on these benefits?
 - Compare cost & benefits of protecting an intact natural system such as Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) as opposed to the cost of restoring a system that has been fragmented by agricultural uses and drainage.
 - Contact: Ellen Lindblad, 657-2253 [elindblad@earthlink.net]
8. *Smart Growth*: Here is a project idea from Wayne Daltry, the director of Lee County Smart Growth... "I can think of a project theme with a diversity of opportunities for different task teams. We use in the "community character" subject area a term, "sacred places." These are the places (or events) that help us identify why our home is different from other places. Under Smart Growth, a challenge exists in keeping such places vibrant and healthy, when we have such growth and redevelopment demands that such places are under siege. Further, when the besiegers are "from someplace else" and such a large percentage of the population is "from someplace else", the sacred places lack the automatic antibodies that pop into place that would keep such development proposals from originating in the first place. Different study teams looking at individual "sacred

- places" --what makes them special and to whom, how they are threatened and what is being done--would be a true immersion in civic engagement. And how the threat to such places create civic activists." Projects would be submitted to Mr. Daltry's agency. Mr. Daltry would provide feed back on these projects. Contact information: Wayne E. Daltry Director, Smart Growth Department; wdaltry@leegov.com 239-335-2840; 239-335-2262 (fax). Note: a good first move in initiating this project would be to examine the Department of Smart Growth's website: <http://www.smartgrowthlee.com/default.htm>. Pay particular attention to who smart growth is defined and consider how this project relates to this vision of smart growth.
9. *Dialogue for Democracy Project*: Florida Gulf Coast University recently applied for a "Dialogue for Democracy" grant from the Center for Liberal Education and Civic Engagement. We are probably going to do what was outlined in the grant proposal, whether we get funding or not. For this project, we would like you to examine the [grant application](#) and the [grant proposal](#). Pay particular attention to the first workshop activity plan on holding in November of 2002. The goal of this workshop is to initiate a process of developing shared understandings of service learning with community leaders. We would like this group to carry out several initial interviews with a very broadly representative sample of community leaders. The point of the interviews would be to discover the attitudes and expectations that community leaders hold about developing a service learning partnership with the Collegium of Integrated Learning. Contact information for this project: Richard W. Coughlin, Associate Professor of Political Science, FGCU (590-7177; rcoughli@fgcu.edu).
 10. *Service Learning in Comparative Perspective*: As we work to develop our own approach to service learning at Florida Gulf Coast University, it is important to be aware of what other universities and colleges are doing and what we have to learn from them. There are a number of important issues to address through comparative research. What kinds of linkages have other universities and colleges made with their surrounding communities? How have students benefited from these programs? In what ways has service learning been integrated with the academic curriculum? Does this serve to enrich both service and academic learning?
 11. The health of our democratic society depends upon active civic engagement of all citizens in their community. This means a healthy exchange of ideas and, ultimately, a vote for the candidate who individuals think best reflects our interests. This exchange happens in precincts--in one's community. Today's era of big media makes it easy to forget that civic engagement isn't just watching those we elected; it is participating in deciding whose policies we think matter for us. A precinct is the smallest structural organization for governing; it consists of a number of neighborhoods of people who all vote at one place. It will include 1500 to 2500 registered voters--some Democrats, some Republican, and the remainder those who are in small parties or are not affiliated. Precincts combine to become County Commissioner districts, and State Legislator districts, and U.S. Congressional districts, and that ultimately determines the number of electoral votes our state has toward electing the President. During this Service Learning

- experience, you will be assigned to one precinct, and within that precinct to the Democratic party organization. Your job is to create a precinct organization, and then to hold a meeting of that organization during which you discuss with people the issues they think matter most in the 2004 election. At the end of your project, you are to have two things: 1) An ongoing precinct organization with precinct and neighborhood leaders who have materials you leave for them, 2) a report of your findings about the political issue viewpoints of people who live in this precinct. Your final class presentation will consider both what you have learned about how one works toward making a difference in civil society, and what your observations are about the breadth and depth of critical thinking used in your precinct issue meeting. Contact information: Martha Simons, President Democratic Club of Bonita Springs and South Lee County, 947-9579; cell 571-7614, e-mail Gita434@aol.com. For more detailed discussion of project, see [precinct organizing](#) link.
12. *Barefoot Beach*: There are two projects that students could undertake: monitoring turtle hatching, which is not beginning to occur at Barefoot Beach and the development of a butterfly garden. For information on either one of these projects, please contact Jill Kusba at: careanimal@aol.com, jkusba@wi.rr.com, or phone (262) 569-9394. Note that Jill has read Nosich's *Learning to Think Things Through*. She can be very helpful in terms of enabling you to understand your service learning project in terms of Nosich's approach to critical thinking, which is a connection that we want to be able to make with this assignment.
 13. *Everyday Face of Globalization* In this project, you educate yourself about globalization and its local impacts in South Florida. You also learn a methodology of popular education and utilize this to enable local organizations in South Florida to more effectively respond to globalization. Contact: Brian Payne, Student Farm Workers Alliance [sfw_alliance@hotmail.com]
 14. Great Ape Center: Its primary purpose is to provide a permanent sanctuary in a safe and enriching environment for orangutans and chimpanzees in need of long-term life care ... specifically those who have been used in entertainment or kept as pets by private owners. There are many projects that students could undertake: help with fundraising, informing the public, supply drive, volunteer push, etc. For information on what the Great Ape Center needs visit the website at: <http://www.prime-apes.org/>. Whatever you choose to do, remember that it should entail some degree of critical thinking and problem solving. A previous project included the creation of a powerpoint to assist the Center in informing the public about the plight of great apes in captivity. Located in Wachula, FL visiting the Center requires quite a drive but is an enriching and rewarding experience.
 15. *Develop your own service learning project*: you may already have a service learning project in mind that you would like to accomplish. The project proposal needs to be approved by your instructors for this course. It should require some degree of critical thinking and problem solving to complete.

Appendix C:

Select Syllabi from the Collegium of Integrated Learning

Presented here are URLs to course webpages:

Foundations of Civic Engagement (IDS 3300)

Richard W. Coughlin <http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/rcoughlin/ids3300f03.htm>

Issues in Culture and Society

Glen Whitehouse (see attached)

Issues in Politics and Economics (IDS 3302)

Terry Wimberley

<http://ruby.fgcu.edu/courses/twimberley/Constitution10wk/IDS3302HomePage.htm>

Richard W. Coughlin <http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/rcoughlin/3302f02.htm>

Issues in Science and Technology (IDS 3303)

Nora Demers <http://ruby.fgcu.edu/courses/ndemers/80777/index.htm>

Donna Henry <http://ruby.fgcu.edu/courses/dhenry/10854/syllabus.htm>

Michael Feuerbach <http://ruby.fgcu.edu/courses/mfauerba/ids/su03/ids3303.htm>

Issues in Environment and Ecology (IDS 3304)

Joe Wisdom (see attached)

Issues in Art, Media and Literature (IDS 3305)

Joe Wisdom (see attached)

Myra Mendible (see attached)

Craig Heller (see attached)

Senior Capstone Seminar

Joe Wisdom (see attached)

Glen Whitehouse (see attached)

Appendix D:

Critical Thinking as Learning Outcome

Critical Thinking: Identifying and Assessing the Elements of Critical Thinking

Element	Identification	Assessment
Purpose	<p>Ability to clearly define purpose or multiple purposes of a particular piece of reasoning. Students should not assume that there is only one purpose. A piece of critical thinking might be addressed to multiple audiences and therefore have several different purposes. To understand this aspect of purpose is to grasp the context in which the critical thinking in question occurs.</p>	<p>The most important standard to consider here is relevance or importance. Why is it important to define a particular purpose? You can't really answer this question without having some notion of the context in which critical thinking is occurring. And this context is dynamic: it is part of the unfolding of history at different levels – one's personal history, regional histories, national histories, global histories, even geological or natural histories. Also: to understand the importance of a purpose means that one can grasp alternate purposes and assign those purposes different values in terms of importance or relevance.</p>
Question at Issue	<p>Ability to formulate question at issue or questions at issue for a given piece of reasoning. Again, one should not assume there is only one question at issue. Often, sophisticated pieces of reasoning identify several interrelated questions at issue which, taken together, illumine the outlines of the argument a particular piece of critical thinking makes.</p> <p>Yet another aspect of question at issue</p>	<p>Ability to formulate relevant alternative questions at issue for the critical thinking in question.</p>

	<p>is the analysis of what it would take to answer a particular question. Nosich addresses this point in chapter 5 of his book. Can the question be answered by consulting a single system of thought? Is the answer to this question a subjective opinion? Does the answer require reasoning within multiple systems? The point of posing these questions is to anticipate what sort of reasoning must occur to answer the questions at issue.</p>	
Assumptions	<p>Ability to identify both explicit and implicit assumptions that a particular piece of critical thinking makes. Ability to distinguish assumptions from other elements of thinking, such as conclusions or implications. The latter can be seen at the output of critical thinking (i.e., critical thinking generates conclusions and implications). Assumptions might be regarded as inputs to critical thinking; they are starting points as opposed to end points.</p>	<p>Ability to make judgments about assumptions. Are they subjective beliefs, facts in relation to some system of knowledge, of judgments that require evidence and reasoning within multiple systems? After that point is clarified, then students are in a position to make determinations about the accuracy, clarity, relevance, and sufficiency of assumptions.</p>
Information	<p>People tend to think that all real information is quantitative. Ask them to find information, and they go looking for numbers. What we want to cultivate, instead, is an ability to identify the different kinds of information that are used in a particular piece of critical thinking. This requires developing a typology of kinds of information: documentary, experiential, hear-say, folklore, cultural generalizations, scientific data, etc.</p> <p>Ability to formulate judgments about how information is used within a piece of critical thinking. This is an important component of information literacy. For starters, students should be able to draw some sort of</p>	<p>Another important quality of information, of course, is accuracy. Again this involves an important aspect of information literacy in terms of evaluating the quality of the sources from which this information is derived. This evaluation might proceed by thinking in terms of another element of thinking: point of view. What is the point of view of the sources of information? Does this lead one to make judgments about the accuracy of the information used? Or about its clarity.</p>

	<p>connection between the sort of information used and the kinds of questions that are being asked in a piece of critical thinking. The critical thinking standard that would most readily apply here is relevance. Is the right kind of information being utilized, given the kind of question (s) that is being asked?</p>	
Concepts	<p>Students sometimes have difficulty picking out ideas. They will sometime quote key passages from the text or paraphrase what they regard as the major conclusions. Concepts are embedded in these responses, but what we need to emphasize is the identity of the concepts themselves. As with assumption, there are both explicit and implicit concepts. Academic pieces of critical thinking tend to point to key concepts – in text books, these are often terms that appear in bold print. It is with analyzing critical thinking in the context of everyday life that students need to be especially attentive to implicit concepts. For example, in thinking about one’s future plans, a key implicit concept might be a person’s understanding of what success or happiness means.</p> <p>The next step in conceptual understanding is to be able to piece different concepts together. One way to approach this is to have students develop concept maps that point to the ways in which key concepts are interrelated. This is an important step: to grasp interrelationships between concepts is to begin to understand the structure of an argument. From here, it is a short step to understanding the conclusions and implications of that argument.</p>	<p>Probably the most important characteristic of concepts is clarity. A good test for clarity is where the students can paraphrase the meaning of a concept. Here are two simple questions: 1) the key concepts we need to understand in this article are _____; by these concepts, the author means _____. If students are unable to fill in this last blank with any significant degree of certainty, this is probably a good indication that the key concepts <i>lack</i> clarity. The point of having a clarity test is that clarity (and the other standards of critical thinking) must be demonstrated. Often students will make assertions about whether or not standards apply. These assertions need to be backed up with evidence. But students are often at a loss for what evidence would be relevant. Giving them a procedure for determining clarity helps to resolve this problem.</p>
Point of view	Ability to identify the different points of view that are used in any given piece	Ability to see point of view (POV) as a place where the

	<p>of critical thinking. Students tend to identify point of view with the attitudes or inclinations of the author. From their perspective, point of view is often understood in terms of what a particular author advocates. This misses much of what is interesting and important about this element of thinking. We should think about point of view in the same way literary theorists do – as rhetorical strategy that the author introduces in order to develop an argument. A helpful analogy here is the way a lawyer might construct a case by introducing different witnesses, which can be understood as points of view. This might help students to see the strategic manner in which points of view can be deployed in a piece of reasoning. A good exercise to develop this sort of sensitivity to point of view is to show documentaries to the class and ask students to keep a running tab on the different points of view that are introduced into the documentary.</p>	<p>different elements of thinking overlap. For example, POVs inject information, concepts, conclusions or implications into the argument.</p> <p>Ability to see the politics of POV. The politics of POV is a question of how different POVs get represented – or misrepresented. For example, media systematically under-represents and misrepresents the POV of labor and other kinds of oppositional groups. So one has to raise questions about accuracy, clarity, relevance, depth and breadth of POV.</p>
<p>Conclusions or interpretations</p>	<p>Ability to identify conclusion or conclusions. Students tend to have the following ideas about conclusions: 1) that there is only one conclusion; 2) and that this one conclusion appears at the end of the piece of critical thinking. For this reason, it may be helpful to underscore the interchangeability of conclusions and interpretations. An elementary level of ability implies going beyond this schematic conception of conclusions to seeing how conclusions emerge, organically (as it were) from a piece of reasoning. To get at conclusions, we must have some understanding of the assumptions, information, and concepts. It is the <i>interaction</i> of these elements that engenders conclusions. One way to get at this is through the</p>	<p>The higher order ability here has to do with assessing the validity of conclusions and interpretations. The standards would be sufficiency and precision. Has one reasoned sufficiently in order to reach and sustain particular conclusions or interpretations? Let us return to the deficit example. To simply say the deficit is bad would certainly lack precision. Bad compared to what, one might reply? Answering that question might entail further reasoning: considering additional information, reflection on key concepts associated with government spending and</p>

	<p>old adage that facts don't speak for themselves. We might say, for instance, that the federal deficit is half a trillion dollars. An elementary interpretation might be, that's bad. This does not get us very far, but it does push us in the direction of what the facts <i>mean</i>. And it is the imputation of meaning that is distinctive about conclusions/interpretations.</p>	<p>economic performance. On the basis of all this, we might begin to distinguish between weak and strong interpretations and conclusions.</p> <p>It is also useful for students to be able to distinguish between different kinds of conclusions. We can differentiate on the basis of the kind of question that is being asked: questions of fact, in terms of a particular system of knowledge, questions of subjective preference, or questions of judgment, which entail reasoning within multiple systems. Here students should be able to draw connections between conclusions reached and questions at issue. And they should be able to determine the relevance of those conclusions to the questions at issue.</p>
Implications	<p>Like conclusions, implications are also second order elements in that they build on the interplay between other elements of critical thinking. In Nosich, implications are discussed after assumptions, which obscures the second order character of implications. Students tend not to identify implications as the outputs of critical thinking and, as a result, their identification of implications tends to be arbitrary. Implications should <i>always</i> be understood in relationship to other elements of thinking. So one might consider the implications of making, for example, certain assumptions of human nature or of utilizing particular conceptions of, say, equality, justice or freedom. Similarly,</p>	<p>The higher order ability here is to assess the validity of conclusions. I think that the standards for conclusions apply to implications because implications are a kind of conclusion. This raises the problem of how to distinguish conclusions from implications. One way to make this distinction is to emphasize that implications are forward looking. Logically, implications follow from earlier conclusions or other elements of thought. Implications might also follow in a temporal fashion in the sense of being consequences</p>

	<p>one might consider the implications of certain conclusions or interpretations. For example, we might conclude that social trust (a concept) is declining (a conclusion drawn about this concept). What are the implications of this?</p>	<p>that will make themselves felt at some later point in time. In either case, implications are what <i>results</i> from a particular piece of reasoning. We might ask, <i>results for whom?</i> Considering different POVs is a way of identifying implications. This is a higher order ability because it involves drawing relationships between the elements of thinking.</p>
<p>Alternatives</p>	<p>Students view alternatives as some other conclusion that author might have reached or perhaps some other course of action that an author might suggest. Notion of alternatives that are associated with this model of critical thinking is quite different. At the heart of the notion of alternatives is the idea that any piece of critical thinking involves a whole series of choices with respect to each of the eight elements above. Plainly one chooses one's purpose, question at issue, assumptions, concepts, etc. There is a continuum of self consciousness here. If someone has a very limited repertoire of concepts, for example, then the element of choice is constrained. A good example of this might be the way in which the language of Orwell's <i>1984</i> was intentionally delimited in order to make certain thoughts or ideas unthinkable. The goal here was clearly to exercise dominion over a population incapable of critical thought.</p> <p>At the center of this concept of critical thought is our ability to choose how we think and there is no choice without self-consciousness of what we are doing when we think. So this conception of alternatives is much</p>	<p>At a more sophisticated level, the notion of alternatives can be understood holistically or structurally. The notion of path dependence might be helpful to consider here. Once you make certain commitments to particular elements, your thinking gets pushed in a particular direction. So you make certain assumptions and that constrains where your thinking is ultimately going to go. A useful metaphor here is that thought is like the body: an intricately patterned and deeply interdependent entity. To understand what thought is means to grasp the relationships between the elements of thinking. And to understand what thought can be means to understand what happens when you change the elements and hence change, in certain ways, the larger structure of thought.</p>

	broader – encompassing all of the elements of critical thinking – and also deeper, involving basic notions of freedom and self-determination.	
Context	<p>All thought takes place within particular contexts. At issue here is the question of how to identify and understand these contexts. What sort of context is associated with an editorial in the <i>News-Press</i>? How is this different from the context associated with an editorial in the <i>New York Times</i>. What are the constituent elements of context? Two are audience and history. Thinking is addressed to an audience: one's self, to students, to residents of a particular region or nation, to all people everywhere and sometimes to several different types of audiences simultaneously. All thinking takes place within distinctive historical contexts. These may be personal scope, or regional, or global. Contexts are themselves artifacts of thought. For example, one may argue that the National Security Strategy of the Bush administration is articulated in the autumn of American empire. In this case, a great deal of critical thought goes into the elaboration of this context. In other cases, contexts are more self-evident. So one might observe politicians behaving in a certain way because this, after all, is an election year. At a rudimentary level, students should be able to make some identification of the key constituents of context associated with a given piece of reasoning.</p>	<p>At a more advance level, students should be able to formulate more sophisticated conceptions of context in terms of audience and history. They should also be able to assess thinking in relationship to its context. Is it relevant? In what sense?</p>