

UW-Stevens Point Quality Initiative Pre-Session Survey Response Analysis, May 2016

What is the role of CT in your course? What does it look like?

1. Unpacking and evaluating arguments, information, and positions in speech or text.
2. Posing questions and identifying the appropriate way to answer those questions.
3. Drawing conclusions from evidence, basing decisions on evidence, and justifying those conclusions and decisions in speech and writing.
4. Applying information, principles, and theories to novel contexts.
5. Tolerance for questions that have multiple possible answers and the willingness to grapple with a variety of positions on an issue.
6. Negotiating with others to make a decision or formulate a position.

What are your biggest challenges to teaching CT?

1. Students tend to not spend enough time out of class on their coursework.
2. Students tend to focus on getting a grade rather than learning.
3. Students tend to be "fact focused": less interested in exploring multiple views than in having the 'right answer' and reading and listening for information rather than connections between ideas.
4. Students tend to ignore or discount facts that don't confirm or conform to their pre-existing beliefs.
5. Students are often reluctant to take a stand on controversial issues.
6. Students lack writing proficiency.
7. Classes are large and class time is limited.
8. There isn't enough time out of class to give meaningful feedback.
9. It's difficult to create learning experiences to cultivate critical thinking.

How might UWSP help address those challenges?

1. Provide professional development sessions and venues for sharing experiences, techniques, activities, and resources.
2. Ensure consistency and scaffolding of critical thinking education throughout the curriculum.
3. Bring professionals into the classroom to discuss the importance of critical thinking skills.
4. Provide course releases to support course revision.