Asking Big Questions for Effective Learning
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“Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.”

“Creative thinking is both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.”

AAC&U VALUE Rubrics

Pre-Presentation Participant Activity:

1. Choose a course you teach in which there is some disconnect between the assignments (major and/or daily) and the course outcomes. Below, write the outcome(s) in question:

2. Which of learning levels of Bloom’s taxonomy does this outcome address?

3. Describe an assignment that falls short of developing and/or measuring that outcome.

Follow-up Participant Activity:

4. List one or two big questions that might be useful for unifying your course assignments with your course outcomes.

5. What are some of the challenges you would face in implementing this big question into your course? Would doing so require significant revision of the course as it is currently taught? What support might make the revision feasible for you?

6. Talk with someone sitting near you and share your ideas, challenges, and concerns regarding “Big Questions” as a teaching tool.