



SLO News

We're on the Web!

www.deanza.edu/slo/

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SLO STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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- ◆ Mallory Newell

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- ◆ Susan Cheu
- ◆ Marisa Spatafore
- ◆ Rowena Tomaneng
- ◆ Coleen Lee-Wheat



It is the end of the quarter - Your students are amazing you with their presentations! **THINK SLOAC!**



Your students will soon be taking your final. **THINK SLOAC!**



What a perfect opportunity to complete an assessment of one of the student learning

outcomes in one of the classes that you are teaching. Certainly the final project or a question from the final will serve well as a means of assessment. You will have the data (scores) handy, you will be thinking those thoughts about how they did, and you will be reflecting on what you could do or what resources you need to give your students an even better learning experience. That's a SLO assessment. Jot down your ideas on the Word document that can be found at: <http://deanza.edu/slo/>. Either enter it into TracDat yourself when you have time or email the completed document to PapeMary@fhda.edu and Mary will enter it for you. **Happy Holidays**



In April 2012, over 150 faculty and staff met at De Anza's Annual Campus Convocation to discuss the many ways in which critical thinking—a core component of our mission statement—is fostered at our college. (continued page 2)

Help Hours in Academic Senate Office:

- ⇒ Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 am
- ⇒ Wednesdays, 4:00-5:00 pm



That morning's conversations gave rise to an interdisciplinary effort to develop a tool for assessing the impact that our work has on our students' critical thinking. A committee comprised of our own faculty and staff met throughout the 2012-13 year to address the difficult challenges facing any serious attempt to assess critical thinking at an institution like De Anza. On the one hand, we hoped to create a tool capable of applying broadly to the diverse and sometimes divergent interactions that students have with faculty, staff and administrators. We did not, however, want to sacrifice depth for breadth—we wanted a mechanism for capturing useful information about how well we actually address students' critical thinking in our many roles on campus. Finally, because 'Critical Thinking' is a complex concept, we wanted our tool to allow some flexibility in addressing some of the specific capabilities that the concept comprises.

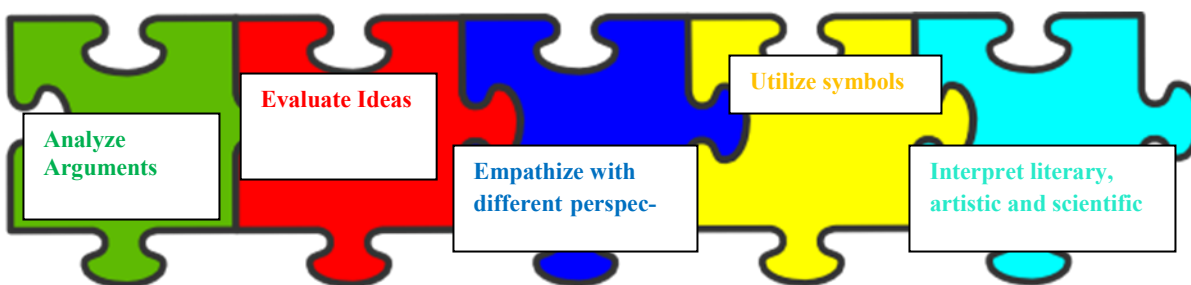
The project resulted in an easy-to-use assessment rubric that began 'beta testing' in the 2013-14 year. The rubric invites faculty/staff/administrators to focus on one particular activity as it relates to a specific aspect of 'Critical Thinking'. Because it is unlikely that a particular course assignment (for example) will address *all* elements of critical thinking, a faculty member using the rubric might begin by selecting one element of critical thinking that is *most directly* addressed by the assignment. He/she is then invited to track—according to their own crite-

ria—student performance that he/she regards as 'below level', 'at level', or 'above level' for desired achievement.

The tool has thus far been used to assess work in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Nursing, Philosophy and Political Science. The sample is of course too small at the moment to yield significant findings about the extent to which De Anza enhances critical thinking skills as an institution. The 'test run' does, however, suggest some encouraging things about the tool that our task force has worked so hard to create. The rubric can be successfully applied to activities across a broad range of discipline, and testers report that using the tool offers an excellent opportunity for reflection upon the relationship between specific in-class activities and the broader mission of the college.

The rubric is now ready for widespread use, and all members of the campus community are encouraged to apply it to their work with students at De Anza. The assessment tool, along with instructions for its use, can be found [here](#). The assessment process takes very little time to complete (testers reported completing the entire exercise in about ten minutes), and can contribute profoundly valuable insights into one of De Anza's core values.

Please consider conducting a Critical Thinking assessment during the 2014-15 year! By assessing ourselves, we open up new possibilities for discourse, reflection, and enhancement.



Special thanks are in order to all who have participated in the development and testing of the rubric thus far: Karen Chow, Mayra Cruz, Ryan Dickson, Cassie Hanna, Anu Khanna, Clara Lam, Coleen Lee-Wheat, Hua-Fu Liu, Piper McNulty, Mallory Newell, Clare Nguyen, Mary Pape, Toño Ramirez, Jeff Schinske, Donna Stasio, Robert Stockwell, Monika Thomas, and Erik Woodbury.

