SACS Working Group Meeting

Present: Mary Lynn Manns, Jane Fernandes, Lisa Friedenberg, Bruce Larson, Susan Reiser, Jessica Dunsmore, Nancy Yeager and Annis Lytle

Absent: Amy Lanou (at study abroad)

Handout – Draft of a revised “student experience model” for the QEP that includes the nine critical thinking standards in the critical thinking framework

Updates from Mary Lynn on the QEP Project: Mary Lynn Manns reported on the excellent experience that she, Lorena Russell, and Chris Godfrey had at the i2a critical thinking institute sponsored by the University of Louisville. Mary Lynn, Lorena, and Chris met and revised the QEP “student experience model” so that it specifies the nine critical thinking standards in the critical thinking framework. Mary Lynn explained this revised model; the group suggested some edits.

Jane shared the following concerns she received from some faculty members:

- Some faculty believe the plan for the QEP is going in the wrong direction with too much emphasis on community interaction rather than intellectual scholarship
- Some faculty are concerned about the quality of the critical thinking training at the institute Mary Lynn, Lorena and Chris attended earlier in the week

Mary Lynn replied to the second concern by suggesting that the institute they attended may have been confused with the for-profit institute sponsored by the Foundation for Critical Thinking (FCT) in Berkeley California. The event at the University of Louisville is not associated with the FACT; rather, it began a few years ago as on-campus critical thinking development for faculty at that institution and it has recently been expanded to give faculty at other institutions an opportunity to share their successful practices in teaching and assessing critical thinking. Mary Lynn summarized the positive comments expressed to her by the other two faculty members who attended—they appreciated the insights they received in critical thinking concepts and pedagogies. In addition, Mary Lynn was given the opportunity at this event to discuss successful practices with faculty who have critical thinking QEPs that have been approved by SACS and are now in the implementation phase.

The group discussed the first concern (above). They believe this surfaced from our concentration on the QEP’s student experience (the inquire-engage-act-reflect model). Instead, we should be focusing on and doing more to communicate the critical thinking student learning outcome. Mary Lynn agreed that it is necessary to emphasize that the focus of the QEP is on the student learning outcome (critical thinking) rather than on the student experience. Mary Lynn, Lisa, Susan and Jessica will meet Tuesday, May 31 at 1:15 pm to begin working on this.
QEP draft due to Dr. Cheryl Cardell in August.

The next SACS Working Group Meeting is scheduled for June 10 from 10:00 to 11:30 am.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.