

Title: *It's TIME: Testing Information for Merit & Effectiveness*

Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC) determined the direction for its 2015-2020 Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) through quantitative and qualitative data collected during its 2005-2010 QEP. The purpose of Catawba Valley Community College's 2015-2020 Quality Enhancement Plan is to enhance students' critical thinking abilities through improving information literacy skills. It's TIME (Testing Information for Merit & Effectiveness) supports the mission of CVCC by enhancing students' abilities to think critically and by guiding students toward the metacognition necessary "... to identify and to serve higher purposes in their lives and in their communities" (Catawba Valley Community College Mission Statement).

CVCC defines critical thinking as "... a continuous pursuit of relevant and reliable knowledge about the world. It includes evaluating everything experienced or considered with an open mind and willingness to explore alternative perspectives. It also includes a reflective, responsible, and skillful reaction in determining what to believe or do, based upon the evaluation, as well as a person's understanding of his/her own reasoning" (Catawba Valley Community College 2015-2020 QEP).

CVCC defines information literacy as "a key component of the critical thinking process; [it] is a set of abilities enabling individuals to recognize that information is needed and to demonstrate the ability to locate, evaluate, and use appropriate information (information needed for the purpose intended) in an effective and efficient manner" (Catawba Valley Community College 2015-2020 QEP).

Through these operational definitions, an extensive literature review, and discussions with the stakeholders of the college, the QEP Committee at CVCC has developed the following student learning outcomes for the current QEP. According to the plan, students will

- 1) "... process information in an objective way,
- 2) ... evaluate relevancy of information,
- 3) ... evaluate credibility of source information,
- 4) ... identify and disassociate personal and preconceived notions, and
- 5) ... demonstrate both metacognition and logical processing through the appropriate use of specific and substantive supporting evidence and information."

CVCC will assess the impact of the QEP by performing pretest/posttest statistical analysis in critical thinking and information literacy, comparing student critical thinking reflections from control groups and experimental groups, and measuring the frequency of appropriate resources chosen to make informed decisions. As its Quality Enhancement Plan progresses and evolves, CVCC, through its QEP Committee, may entertain opportunities to include new avenues to enhance students' critical thinking abilities. It is the hope of CVCC that the current QEP will become an integral part of the institution's identity.

For additional information on CVCC's QEP, please contact Michael Boone, QEP Director and Mathematics Instructor, at mboone@cvcc.edu or 828-327-7000 ext. 4537.