Disconnect Between What is Considered Important and What We Assess

Critical Thinking

NSSE: Coursework Emphasizes Memorizing Facts

How We Assess - Determines What Students Learn
Goals

Identify a Common Set of Critical Thinking Skills Across Disciplines

Design Engaging and Relevant Tasks to Evaluate those Skills that Help Faculty See Student’s Strengths and Weaknesses

Nationally Disseminate the Instrument Ensuring Reliable and Consistent Scoring of Student Responses
Skills Evaluated by CAT Instrument

**Evaluating Information**
- Separate factual information from inferences.
- Interpret numerical relationships in graphs.
- Understand the limitations of correlational data.
- Evaluate evidence and identify inappropriate conclusions.

**Creative Thinking**
- Identify alternative interpretations for data or observations.
- Identify new information that might support or contradict a hypothesis.
- Explain how new information can change a problem.

**Learning & Problem Solving**
- Separate relevant from irrelevant information.
- Integrate information to solve problems.
- Learn & apply new information.
- Use mathematical skills to solve real-world problems.

**Communication**
- Communicate ideas effectively.
CAT features

- One hour exam
- Mostly short answer essay using dynamic assessment
- Faculty scored in workshops
- Detailed scoring guide
- Reliable & Valid
- Sensitive to changes in a single course or informal learning experience
Over 250 Institutions Collaborating*

*Includes Over 40 NSF Projects
How is the CAT Instrument Being Used

- Evaluate Program Outcomes
- Evaluate High Impact Practices in Courses
- As a Model for Designing Better Course Assessments

www.CriticalThinkingTest.org

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.