Critical Thinking Committee Minutes for the 11/2/2016 teleconference:

Attending: David Gribbin, Val Czerny, Dee McKinney, David Strickland, Florenta Sega, Mary Waalkes

Mary Waalkes related that Alan Brasher is interested in giving a presentation at the Critical Thinking Conference in September 2017, and that he asked if he could work with education for personal transformation. We agreed that this is fine.

Val Czerny discussed the flyer which Courtney Power designed. We have 500 of them with a cost of $93. David Gribbin stated that this is a reasonable cost. Val asked Dee to take some of the flyers to her conference on Nov. 15, and will send Dee an email when the flyers are done. Val will also email a link of the flyers to David Strickland and Florenta Sega so that they can see them.

Val briefly went over the theme of biomimicry and emphasized that this is an especially good theme for biology students, who often present at the conference.

Val asked us to start thinking of a keynote speaker. David Strickland recommended looking at J. Steve Miller who has a book out titled *Why Brilliant People Believe Nonsense: A Practical Text for Critical and Creative Thinking*. Dr. Miller teaches at Kennesaw State University where he does presentations for first-year students on critical thinking. David Strickland will review Miller’s book. David Gribbin said that he would ask Jimmy Wedincamp for ideas regarding a keynote speaker.

David Gribbin said that he would come up with a timeline for us that we can discuss in a future meeting.

Val asked regarding the flyers if we would want to make the posters larger than the half sheet used for the flyers. Mary asked if we would place posters on every campus. David Strickland recommended using a banner outside at the main entrance to the campus, and possibly by the auditorium. He said that they ran about $80. They are made of a heavy duty tarp with eyelets and hold up well outside.

David Gribbin agreed that this is within the budget.

Val asked about what other advertising we would do for the conference. Mary suggested adding the topic to the agendas of our upcoming faculty and department meetings.

David Strickland agreed to look into creating a banner, and said that we could make it generic or customize it.

Florenta asked if we have a website for the conference, and Val replied that we do but it needs to be updated.

David Strickland asked if we have considered putting the conference proceedings on the website. Some discussion on this point included the time required to do so, and we agreed to think further about this.

Val returned to the issue of the posters and suggested that we use a separate poster for our keynote speaker. We thought that was a good plan and that it would be best to wait until we have our speaker to design the posters.

Val asked if David Gribbin will soon be sending an email to faculty about submitting their course assessments. David said that he would send out an email. He commented that the Fifth Year Report showed that we need more program-level assessments, which is especially important given the new
majors that become active in Fall 2017. We will need assessments for each program. David said that he will work with the deans and program coordinators on this.

Val asked Dee if there will be changes regarding assessment. Dee said that we will need to incorporate program-wide learning outcomes. Mary asked if this means more standardization of programs, to which Dee responded that it does. David Strickland said that this was done for Sociology but that each faculty person did not need to assess every goal of the six goals listed.

David Gribbin stated that SACS wants robust program-level assessments which requires much work and needs to start soon. He noted that other areas besides academic programs will also work on assessments. Dr. Boehmer covered this topic with his cabinet this week, and David will work with cabinet members regarding assessment. Dr. Boehmer wants us to prepare early for the 2021 Decennial Review. David said he will need Dee’s advice on aspects of assessment and Dee said she’d be glad to help. David also noted that the John N. Gardner Institute provides a model whereby we use the Gateway Course to help students progress through college. For East Georgia State College, we have earlier agreed to target MATH 1111 College Algebra as a course to work on.

David Strickland wants to incorporate critical thinking more in the CATS program by having faculty identify what we’re doing that exemplifies critical thinking. Students can then note in their portfolios what course and assignment fits as a critical thinking exercise. Mary asked how this would work, using the research project components that she just finished in four of her history courses. David said that she could send a copy of the project to him and he will include it with other examples of critical thinking assignments. David Strickland also noted that faculty can lead a workshop on a particular aspect of critical thinking in a CATS class. These workshops are electives for students during the course but can carry course credit or extra credit.

We set our next meeting for Wednesday, November 30 at 11 a.m.

Mary Waalkes
November 2, 2016