

Faculty Champion Mentor Report: Fall Semester 2013

Faculty Mentor: Steve Lavender

Option 1: Mentoring a new faculty champion, Dr. Alan Brasher:

To better acquaint Dr. Brasher with the QEP committee's activities thus far, I shared with him the minutes our meetings. I also referred him to literature I acquired from attending the Critical Thinking Conference in Berkley, including booklets by Linda Elder and Richard Paul of the Center for Critical Thinking and Gerald Nosich's *Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum*. In addition, I presented Dr. Brasher with a list of upcoming CAT training sessions, as well as Tennessee Tech's CAT grading CD Rom so he could study it in preparation for future CAT grading sessions

At several lunchtime meetings, we discussed the principles of critical thinking and how to put them to work in instructional design. These discussions were continued in the November Teaching Circle conducted by Dr. Brasher and attended by various faculty members.

I shared with Dr. Brasher the exercise and rubric I have used to assess critical thinking in my ENGL 1101 courses. The exercise involves the use of the textbook *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing with Readings* by Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein and Russel Durst. I also reviewed Dr. Brasher's critical thinking exercise and found it to be most innovative. In addition, I discussed my plan for introducing a critical thinking exercise into my ENGL 1102 courses.

Option 2: Promoting critical thinking:

In October, 2013, I contacted Dr. George Pullman, Director of the Center for Instructional Innovation at Georgia State University and author of the textbook *Persuasion: History, Theory, Practice*. With the approval of the QEP committee, I engaged Dr. Pullman as a speaker. He will present detailed strategies for developing critical thinking skills to students and faculty at both East Georgia campuses on April 11, 2014.

To increase awareness and interest in critical thinking, I opened submissions to the second annual Critical Thinking Short Story Contest for *Wiregrass, the Literary and Arts Journal of East Georgia State College*, for which I serve as Faculty Advisor. The contest was created to honor the creative use of written language, recognizing that creativity in all its many forms is an important part of critical thinking. There will be a prize of \$100 for first place and \$50 for second place. The awards will be presented at Honors Night in April, 2014.