



Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Overview

The role of colleges and universities is to ready their students to work and thrive in the 21st century. Simultaneously, employers report that their employees face more complex challenges than they have in the past. As a result, employer priorities for college learning and student success have evolved to include the cognitive skills that can be applied across all disciplines and majors. The purpose of cultivating these critical thinking skills is to meet the demands of our rapidly changing, fast-paced world. This workshop helps students to begin to develop the critical thinking skills to live and learn in a global environment.

Objectives

- Identify the key steps to ready themselves to cultivate their critical thinking skills
- Examine the definition of critical thinking and explore the complexity of this cognitive skill set
- Learn the vocabulary associated with critical thinking
- Reflect on the qualities of critical thinkers
- Consider how their critical thinking works in practice



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Presenter



Laurie L. Hazard

Bryant University in Smithfield

Laurie holds a B.A. in psychology from the University of Rhode Island, and an Ed.M. in Counseling and an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Teaching from Boston University. Her career in learning assistance began as an undergraduate when she served as a peer tutor in a program called “Athletes Helping Athletes” at the University of Rhode Island. This experience marked the beginning of her path in the fields of learning assistance and student success.

As a graduate student, she coordinated the tutoring program in Boston University’s Learning Center. Laurie held several positions at Boston University focused on academic support; she was an academic advisor and later served as a reading and writing specialist in an innovative, team structured learning assistance program. For two years, Laurie served as the Director of Academic Support Services at Becker College. At Becker, Laurie was charged with developing an Academic Support Services unit on two campuses. The new unit housed tutoring and advising services, and a variety of other learning assistance programs. Laurie has been the Director of the Academic Center for Excellence and Writing Center at Bryant University for the last fifteen years and has been teaching and designing curricula for first-year experience and study skills courses for most of her career.

Frequently presenting at regional and national conferences, Laurie has been involved in professional organizations devoted to the fields of tutoring and learning assistance. She served on the New England Peer Tutor Association (NEPTA) Board from 1995-2007 and has hosted their spring forum at her institution many times over the years. Laurie, an award winning educator, is an active member in the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and the Learning Assistance Association of New England (LAANE). In 2006, she received the *Learning Assistance Association of New England’s Outstanding Research and Publication Award* and in 2010, she received *Learning Assistance Association of New England’s Outstanding Service to Developmental Students* recognition. In March of 2013 at their inaugural meeting, The CRLA Northeast Chapter recognized her work with the *CRLA Special Recognition Award*.

Laurie has done extensive work writing about and assessing the effectiveness of learning assistance programs and FYE courses. She has been a Guest Editorial Board member for the *Learning Assistance Review*. Laurie co-authored a text entitled Foundations for Learning designed for study skills and first-year experience courses. Publications by Laurie and her co-author include: *Exploring the Evidence, Volume III: Reporting Outcomes of First-Year Seminars*, a monograph published by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and “What Does It Mean to be ‘College-Ready?’”, an article which appears in *Connection: The Journal of the New England Board of Higher Education*.

Laurie’s work in of student success has received national media attention. Her interviews include: “Prepare college-bound kids for hard work ahead, which appeared in the Chicago Tribune in 2007 and “Study Tips for College Students” in Seventeen Magazine in 2008. In March of 2010, Laurie was interviewed by Associated Press columnist, Beth Harpaz, for her article “Colleges Don’t Like Senior Slump in High School.” Laurie has been a Guest Columnist for the *Washington Post Answer Sheet* (2011, August 22): Why parents should leave their kids alone at college and How to help your child adapt to college life 2010, September 2). Most recently, Laurie was interviewed by the *New Jersey Star Ledger: The Other Freshman 15: pitfalls for first-year collegians* (2013, July 30).