

Final Project Report: Melissa Jordine

Executive Summary:

My WASC ALA Project consisted of the implementation of a pilot version of a critical thinking signature assignment with common elements, developed collectively by five faculty from three different departments from the College of Social Sciences and two faculty from the College of Science and Mathematics. The signature assignment was implemented as a course imbedded summative assignment in upper-division courses with a significant number of seniors during the Fall 2014 semester and assessed using the rubric developed by the faculty involved in this initiative. The pilot resulted in the development of an authentic, valid and reliable measure for critical thinking that can be implemented campus wide and thus the primary aim of the project was successfully achieved. A total of one hundred and ten students who were seniors or juniors with only two semesters until graduation completed the assignment. Essentially, the first criteria determined if students could identify the main claim of an argument, the second criteria determined if students could accurately identify evidence and indicate if the evidence was relevant to the claim and sufficient to prove the claim was true, and the third criteria determined if students could identify the key strengths and weaknesses of the argument including any fallacies present. In terms of the pilot study, less than 85% of Fresno State students were deemed proficient and thus if the larger study confirms this conclusion steps will need to be taken to address this issue.