

Critical Thinking – Higher-Order Competency 2

Definition: The systematic process of exploring issues, objects, or works by collecting evidence, deconstructing that which is complex, and developing informed conclusions or judgments.

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3	Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Explore Ideas	Clearly states and comprehensively explores topic, considering information from credible and varied sources.	States, describes, and clarifies topic, considering information from a few credible sources.	States topic, but description lacks clarity; includes minimal information from sources or information from sources lacking sufficient credibility.	Topic is stated without clarification or description and does not include information from sources.
Ask Relevant Questions	Identifies and thoroughly questions viewpoints of relevant sources and experts.	Identifies viewpoints of relevant sources and experts, and superficially questions the validity of sources	Viewpoints of experts are taken mostly as fact, with little questioning.	Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Consider Alternative Points of View	Student’s position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of the issues, ideas, artifacts, and/or events. The student acknowledges the limits of their position and synthesizes the points of view of others.	Student’s position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of the issues, ideas, artifacts and/or events. The student acknowledges the points of view of others.	Student’s position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Student’s position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
Accept/Formulate Conclusion	Conclusions – accepted or formulated – are logical and reflect the student’s informed evaluation and ability to prioritize evidence and perspectives.	Conclusions – accepted or formulated – are logically tied to a range of information, include opposing viewpoints, and clearly identify related outcomes.	Conclusions – accepted or formulated – are logically tied to information and identify some related outcomes.	Conclusions – accepted or formulated – are inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed and related outcomes are oversimplified.