

# Thomas More College's QEP: *Critical Thinking for Productive Living*

## Executive Summary

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### **Theme Selection: *Critical Thinking for Productive Living***

Thomas More College's Quality Enhancement Plan reflects a shared vision of what we want our students to be able to know, do, and value. The selection and development of our QEP has its foundation in our institutional mission, strategic planning process, and institutional data. The QEP steering committee chose our QEP theme after a long, open, and collaborative campus-wide dialogue among all constituencies: faculty, staff, administration, students, and alumni.

### **Goal: *Think in 3D – Discover, Develop, Deliver!***

The institutional goal of Thomas More College's QEP is to transform our learning environment by developing a culture in which students *Discover* a framework for critical thinking, *Develop* the tools to apply problem-solving skills within their disciplines, and *Deliver* the results through creative application and real-world experiences. The conceptual framework is based on the Paul-Elder model, aiming to apply best pedagogic practices to help students apply Standards of Thought to the Elements of Reason to develop the Intellectual Traits of habitual critical thinkers.

### **Student Learning Outcomes with Three Implementation Strategies**

Thomas More College students will demonstrate improvement in their abilities (1) to evaluate information, (2) to synthesize alternate versions of the issue, (3) to base a conclusion on appropriately applied information, and (4) to communicate effectively the relevant ideas.

**The 3D Center for Teaching and Learning** provides resources and pedagogical support for faculty who work to improve students' proficiency as critical thinkers.

**The 3D Faculty Learning Community**, composed of a rotating set of ten faculty members, engages in improving students' proficiency as critical thinkers by exploring, testing, implementing, and discussing strategies to improve critical thinking learning outcomes within specific courses. Within five years, student-engaged staff will also be brought into the learning community.

**A focused plan for faculty development** will ensure that student outcomes continue to improve by providing pedagogical training and support for all faculty to help students achieve the goals of the QEP. Critical thinking will be established as a fundamental campus value by including the scholarship of teaching critical thinking in the Tenure and Promotion process.

### **Assessment**

The College will assess the QEP using data collected by the Proficiency Profile (formerly MAPP), NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), and Freshman/Senior writing test samples. We will assess our student learning outcomes using quantitative data from the CAT (Critical Thinking Assessment Test) and embedded assignments in specific courses. Clear numerical goals have been developed for student learning outcomes. These data will provide local and external assessment, quantitative and qualitative assessment, and direct and indirect assessment.

### **Resources**

The College has created a physical center as well as funding for a QEP Director, an Assessment Coordinator, an FLC faculty leader, part-time administrative support, assessment materials, and significant investment in faculty development, travel, and supplies.

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