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| **Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric**  *for more information, please contact value@aacu.org* |  |

**Definition**

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.*

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|  | **Excellent**  4 | **Above Satisfactory**  3 | **Satisfactory**  2 | **Needs Work**  1 |
| **Explanation of issues** | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown. | Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description. |
| **Evidence**  *Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion* | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis.  Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly. | Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.  Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.  Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning. | Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation.  Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question. |
| **Influence of context and assumptions** | Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position. | Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position. | Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa). | Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position. |
| **Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)** | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue.  Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged.  Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis). | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue.  Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis). | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue. | Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious. |
| **Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)** | Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student’s informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order. | Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly. | Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified. |

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