

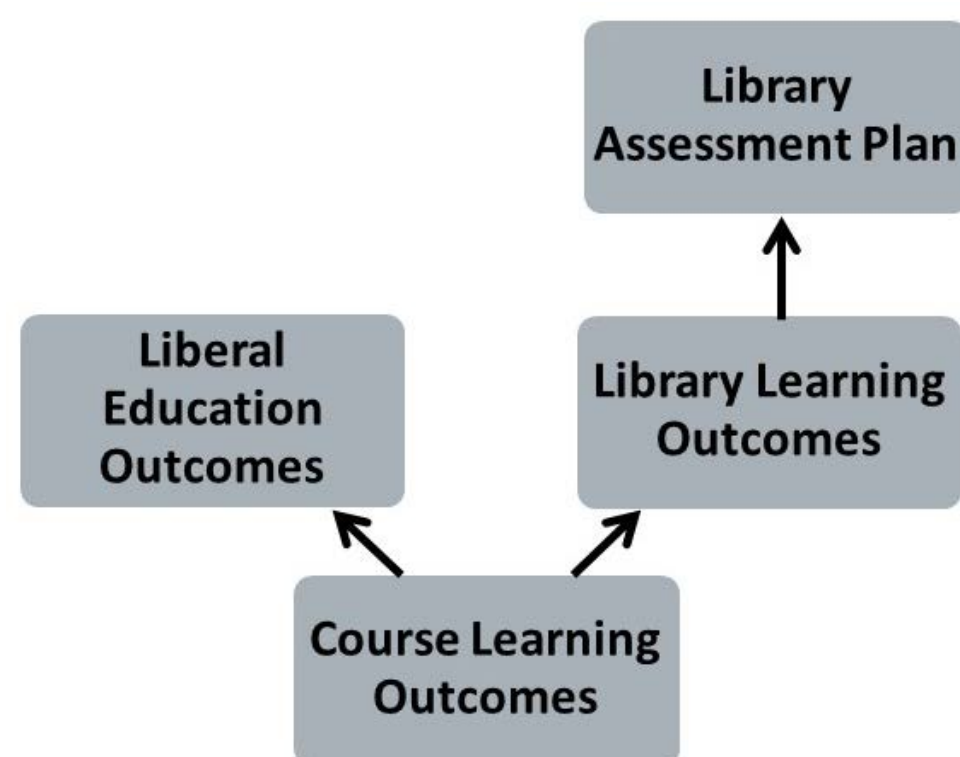
## Introduction

Librarians at SCSU developed a 3-credit course combining critical thinking and information literacy. Critical Thinking in Academic Research, LIB 280, satisfies the critical thinking requirement of SCSU's Liberal Education Program (LEP).

SCSU requires academic programs to have assessment plans describing how & when they will assess program outcomes. Also, departments with courses in the LEP must assess those courses according to the student learning outcomes in the LEP.

Multiple library faculty teach LIB 280 in several formats including paired with composition courses, adapted for the Honors Program, and online. Librarians determine the pedagogy for their sections.

## Outcomes alignment



## Methods

Faculty selected common textbook, *Asking the Right Questions* by Brown & Keeley, to facilitate collaborative teaching activities.

Faculty met several times to determine how to meet assessment requirements. We decided to use a common final project that addresses course, library, and LEP outcomes. Then we met some more.

And met some more. Finally, we adapted an assignment from the instructor's manual for our textbook. The original version addressed only critical thinking and not information literacy. We created a grading rubric and piloted the assignment. Initial results offered hope. We met some more and finalized the assignment and rubric for use in our Fall 2018 sections.

## Result

### Part 1: Analyzing Arguments

Select **one** of the following issues and read the pro/con arguments from the Congressional Digest:

- Federally Funded School Choice Programs
- Syrian Refugees
- Mexico Border Wall
- Reform Collegiate Athletics
- Drug Addiction Crisis
- U. S. Response to Social Media Hacking

Analyze each of the pro and con arguments you selected by answering the following questions for each argument. To do an analysis you need to do more than state what something is. You must also discuss it as appropriate.

- What are the issue and conclusion?
- What are the reasons?
- Which words or phrases are ambiguous? How so?
- What are the assumptions?
- Are there any fallacies in the reasoning? What are the fallacies?
- What evidence is presented and how good is that evidence?
- Are there any rival causes? What are they?
- What significant information is omitted?

### Part 2: Conducting Research

- Based on your analysis of the arguments, identify and state a question around the issue you would like to learn more about.
- Locate **three full text scholarly** resources using **library databases** that help answer the question.
- Identify the database(s) you used. Specify the names of the library databases, for example Academic Search Premier, not simply EBSCOhost.
- List your search terms and any limits you applied.
- Take a screenshot of a successful database search and upload it to the D2L Assignment folder.
- For each resource provide an annotation that includes:
  - An APA citation.
  - A statement on the author's credibility. You must be able to identify an author for your resources to be scholarly.
  - A summary of the issue and conclusion presented in the resource.
  - Comments about the credibility and quality of the evidence provided.
  - A description of any flaws or weaknesses in the argument and evidence.

### Part 3: Reflection

Reflect on your research and analysis by answering the following questions:

- Why did you select your question?
- What have you learned about the issue?
- What did you learn about yourself as you worked on this assignment?
- Describe how your ideas about this topic have changed as a result of your research.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<b>Issue and conclusion</b>	Identifies the issues and conclusions without using direct quotes from the conclusions, and sometimes relies on the authors' words to describe them.	Identifies most issues and conclusions, and sometimes relies on the authors' words to describe them.	Identifies some issues and conclusions, but relies on the authors' words to describe them.	Identifies few of the issues and conclusions presented by the authors.
<b>Reasons &amp; Assumptions</b>	Reasons are accurately identified, and assumptions linking the reasons to the conclusion are fully described.	Identifies most reasons and assumptions and explains them.	Identifies some reasons and assumptions but doesn't explain them.	Identifies few reasons or assumptions. Doesn't explain reasons or assumptions.
<b>Credibility and quality of the evidence</b>	Accurately interprets evidence and provides informed evaluative comments about the credibility and quality of the evidence for all resources.	Accurately interprets evidence and provides informed evaluative comments about the credibility and quality of the evidence for most resources.	Misinterprets some evidence and provides evaluative comments for some resources but may lack specificity.	Few comments on the credibility or quality of the evidence. Misinterprets evidence.
<b>Describes flaws or weaknesses in arguments and evidence</b>	Accurately identifies ambiguity, fallacies, rival causes, or other weaknesses in the arguments and evidence. Describes and provides detailed examples.	Identifies ambiguity, fallacies, rival causes, or other weaknesses in the arguments and evidence, with some detailed descriptions and examples.	Identifies a few ambiguous words, fallacies, rival causes, or other weaknesses in the arguments and evidence, but lacks detailed description and examples. May provide biased interpretations of evidence and reasons.	Incorrectly identifies ambiguity, fallacies, rival causes, or other weaknesses in the arguments and evidence. Provides biased interpretations of evidence and reasons.
<b>Search process</b>	Screenshot, search terms, and limits are all provided.			Screenshot, search terms, and limits are not all provided.
<b>Resources</b>	All resources are scholarly and directly relate to question.	Most resources are scholarly. Most sources directly relate to question.	Resources are not all scholarly or don't directly relate to question.	No resource is scholarly or no resource relates to question.
<b>Citations</b>	All citations are accurate.	Most citations are accurate and contain only minimal errors.	Citations have several errors.	Very few or no citations are accurate.
<b>Annotations</b>	Annotation includes all components and displays critical thinking.	Annotation includes all components.	Components minimally addressed.	Components missing.
<b>Reflection</b>	Thoroughly addresses all elements of the questions and demonstrates critical thinking.	Addresses most of the elements of the questions but does not necessarily demonstrate critical thinking.	Addresses a few of elements of the questions, but often with minimal detail.	Addresses none of the elements of the questions.

## Alignment achieved

### Course learning outcomes

- Recognize the elements of reasoning
- Analyze and evaluate arguments
- Construct search strategies
- Identify and describe common fallacies

### Liberal education outcomes

- Distinguish between different types of reasoning
- Analyze arguments
- Identify and avoid fallacies

### Library student learning outcomes

- Identify different types of authority
- Execute a plan for locating information
- Students will evaluate information using critical thinking

## Next steps

- 1) Adapt grading rubric for assessment
- 2) Determine target levels for student achievement
- 3) Prepare student artifacts for assessment
- 4) Review artifacts using rubric
- 5) Revise rubric and assignment as needed
- 6) Revise Library student learning outcomes

## Squad

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