

Executive Summary

Quality Enhancement Plan: Bright IDEA

Institution: Georgia Military College

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In support of Georgia Military College's mission to "produce educated citizens and contributing members of society in an environment conducive to the development of the intellect and character of its students," the Quality Enhancement Plan, Bright IDEA, was developed to provide an atmosphere that will enhance students' critical thinking abilities. Through extensive research, faculty support, and carefully designed plans, the college is implementing and exposing students to critical thinking through 14 core courses that will allow direct application of these skills to their course content and material. The QEP will facilitate higher-level thinking through introduction, exposure, and application of critical thinking and metacognition, thus increasing student success at GMC and beyond, inside and outside of the classroom.

The GMC community (faculty, staff, students, and administration) selected the QEP topic of critical thinking. The QEP committee focused on the topic to identify a working definition of critical thinking, and the QEP goal and objectives.

Critical Thinking is defined by GMC's QEP committee as "an active, self-reflective, and deliberate attempt to utilize cognitive skills to support decision-making, problem solving, or mastery of concepts throughout various contexts." The QEP committee agreed upon the following desired goal, objectives, and outcomes for GMC.

Goal: Provide an atmosphere where students will improve their ability to think critically.

Objective 1. GMC Stakeholders (Students, Faculty, Academic Support Staff, and Administration) will demonstrate knowledge of metacognition, critical thinking, and the five reasoning skills.

Objective 2. Faculty will participate in professional development in metacognition, critical thinking, and the five reasoning skills.

Objective 3. Students will employ metacognitive skills, critical thinking, and the five reasoning skills throughout the college curriculum.

The plan to improve students' abilities to think critically includes several organized elements. These include revising First Year Experience (FYE) courses to comprise more critical thinking and metacognition introductory material, enhancing core courses with critical thinking lessons and assignments applicable to the material in the course, and facilitating extensive training and professional development to ensure that faculty understand the importance of and methods to implementing critical thinking in the classroom.

The GMC QEP committee has developed an implementation plan that includes an appropriate budget to cover necessary resources, identification of persons responsible for each task, and an assessment plan that will evaluate both quantitative and qualitative measures. For continued success of the QEP, data from the assessment plan will be frequently analyzed, and changes will be implemented as needed. An annual QEP report will show the assessment data, any changes made to the plan, and lessons learned throughout the year.