

## **Cultivating Curious Minds: Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum**

### **A Quality Enhancement Plan for Piedmont College Demorest, GA 30535**

Contact: Dr. Teresa Secules, Associate Professor of Education and  
QEP Director  
Email: [tsecules@piedmont.edu](mailto:tsecules@piedmont.edu).

The focus of Piedmont College's QEP is to enhance directly students' critical thinking across the curriculum, starting with the freshman experience course, moving through the General Education Curriculum and major courses, to the capstone experience. Students are expected to demonstrate improvement in their abilities to analyze and evaluate information, synthesize information into coherent forms, and apply and extend knowledge.

Assessment of students' critical thinking is carried out across disciplines as well as within majors. All incoming freshmen are evaluated using the critical thinking module of the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency; they are retested as seniors, enabling collection of both longitudinal as well as cross-sectional data. Critical thinking is also evaluated within majors and across the college by the capstone assessment in each major. Based on annual analysis of data, program improvements will be made to improve critical thinking.

Professional development opportunities for faculty and staff are provided within departments and across the campus including reading groups, weekly lunch discussions of instruction, and workshops by outside experts. This necessary feature of the project is expected to re-energize the faculty and reinvigorate academic programs. This will lead to our students becoming, in the words of the College Mission Statement, "*successful and responsible citizens through rigorous academic instruction in the liberal arts.*"