



Creative Inquiry
On Creative Inquiry

Clemson University
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Research Team

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Overview

- Characteristics of Creative Inquiry (CI)
- Study Design
- Practices of Undergraduate Scholarship
 - Students
 - Mentors
 - Institution



The Creative Inquiry Initiative

- In 2005, a team-based undergraduate scholarship initiative began at Clemson
- Faculty/staff mentors work with small groups of students (7-10 preferred)
- Funds support team and mentor scholarship
- Communication skills, disciplinary methods of inquiry, critical thinking, and ethical judgment are introduced

Purpose of the Study

- **Reveal** differences between CI learning and traditional classroom experiences
- **Evaluate** team-learning aspects
- **Document** advantages for mentors and students
- **Determine** challenges and potential solutions

The Assessment Team and Development of the Assessment Plan

- **First Semester:**
 - IRB Application & Approval based on Assessment Plan
 - Developed Rubrics
 - Student Interviews at poster symposium, Focus on Creative Inquiry (FoCI)
 - Direct Assessment of FoCI Posters

Second Semester

- Analyzed results from FoCI interviews and poster evaluations.
- Revised Student and Mentor Goals of CI
- Created and Implemented Mentor Survey
- Analyzed Mentor Survey
- Analyzed Mentor Yearly Reports

Third Semester

- Reviewed Mentor Survey to help create Student Survey
- Prepared and launched Student Survey
- Summarized findings in preparation for dissemination

Findings: Student Interviews

- CI does a very good job helping students think and learn in new ways
- Students learn about the designs, fundamental approaches, and preparations of research and inquiry
- Some groups attended workshops, debates, conferences, and created papers and reports
- Group members are getting experience with surveys and interviews
- Most effective team size: 5-7

Findings: Student Surveys

- Learning Skills: 2.9 – 3.1
- Inquiry Skills: 2.8 – 3.2
- Increased Involvement: 3.5
- Prefer CI to Classroom: 3.3
- Developed Teamwork Skills: 3.1
- Recommend to Others: 3.5

Findings: Student Surveys

- Published: 15% (51% intend)
- Professional Conference: 37% (54% intend)
- Poster Presentation: 64% (67% intend)
- Enhanced Academic Performance: 50%
- Improved Satisfaction with Clemson: 55%
- Learned Non-class Skills: 62%
- Improved Relationship with Faculty: 70%
- Had Supportive Mentor: 77%
- CI was an 'Easy A': 8%

Findings: Mentor Survey

- Helped in teaching, research, and service
- Enhanced satisfaction at Clemson
- CI valued or supported by students, peers, TPR committee, Dept. Chair, Dean, and Provost for
 - Teaching (all)
 - Research (some)
 - Service (all)
- It is perceived by mentors that CI does not count as part of a faculty member's productivity

Connections to General Education

- New Gen Ed adopted in 2004
- Students must meet competencies in several areas, documenting in electronic portfolios
- CI mentor reports include learning outcomes
- Some reported learning outcomes are directly relatable to Gen Ed competencies

Summary of Gen Ed Connections

- Dominated by Reasoning/Critical Thinking
- Numerous outcomes related to Math and Science (large fraction of projects)
- Large number of Written/Oral outcomes
- Arts/Humanities & Social Science competencies not in abundance
- Cross Cultural Awareness low
- Ethical Judgment low

Findings: Institution

- Meeting times are a challenge for all. Block out specific times for CI?
- Issues with student abilities, motivation, teamwork, and team size
- Mentors need help with recruitment – web application in development
- Tenure and promotion processes do not reflect the value of being a mentor
- (More???)

Next Steps

- Findings to be presented to the Provost and Undergraduate Dean – solution to lack of space, time to meet, etc.
- Strategy to identify CI approaches in non-CI Courses
- Resolution or approaches to recognition and valuing CI as part of promotion and tenure considerations
- Assist mentors in assessment of successes in CI (How engaged are students in classes? What skills are students demonstrating that are not learned in the classroom?)



Summary/Concluding Remarks

- Any questions?

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