

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/ACADEMIC SENATE RETREAT

Preliminary Observations: Today's retreat is intended to provide participants with an opportunity to begin to think and talk about the Big Five, that is, the Five Core Competencies: Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Written Communication, Quantitative Reasoning and Information Literacy. We will draft preliminary definitions and begin the mapping of the competencies and a discussion of how we teach to them. These "drafty" results will be posted and made available for continued comment and discussion over the coming weeks.

1. Part 1: Defining the Core Competencies.

The yellow handout contains three definitions for each of the core competencies. You and the colleagues at your table are to develop a definition of each of the competencies for your college. (Keep in mind that these will not necessarily be final definitions but the beginning of a conversation among the faculty in your college about each of the competencies.) The Liaison working with your table will help you enter the definition into Google Docs. You should try to limit the length of your definition to about three lines of text.

2. Intermezzo: Coffee and conversation

During the 30-minute coffee break the resulting documents, containing definitions of each of the competencies from the different colleges will be projected. You should take this opportunity to look at the definitions of the core competencies that the other groups have created and discuss with other participants the similarities and differences between the definitions.

3. Part 2: Mapping and teaching.

Now it is time to apply the competencies to your program. Using the form provided and the copy of your departmental/programmatic student learning outcomes (SLOs) determine where in your program you address each of the competencies. As the instructions on the form indicate you can identify your SLOs by a number or abbreviation so long as we can figure out from the document you have brought with you what you intend. Participants will then share the results of the mapping with others at the table. The ensuing discussion should not be just about where you cover each competency but how you teach to it. That is, while you should enter information in the forms, the main focus is on exchanging ideas with others at your table as to how you address the competencies in your particular discipline. Again, this is not the last word on this issue - just the beginning of a conversation.