

Identifying Courses that Improve Students' Critical Thinking Skills Using the CAT Instrument: A Case Study

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Abstract- There is increasing interest in understanding how

over the college experience are not merely the result of a maturation process independent of a college experience [9].

The results of our collaborations with over 200 institutions across the country indicate that higher education is contributing to gains in students' critical thinking. The data in figure 1 indicate an average increase of about 26% over a four year program of study. Should we expect greater gains? To answer the question about whether the college experience can and should produce greater gains in critical thinking as measured by the CAT instrument, it is necessary to evaluate the

skills assessed by specific questions in the CAT instrument. All but two of the skill areas were impacted by one or more of the seven courses evaluated. It should be noted that three of the seven courses evaluated did not result in gains on any of the CAT questions.

TABLE 2
SKILLS MEASURED BY INDIVIDUAL CAT QUESTIONS

CAT Question Focus	Courses Impacting
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