

Sample Demographics

	n	%
College of Arts and Sciences	99	29.5%
College of Business	52	15.5%
College of Criminal Justice	34	10.1%
College of Education	69	20.5%
College of Humanities and Social Sciences	82	24.4%
Totals	336	100.0%

I think the Project is aimed at a legitimate student learning need.

	Common Reader		Integrated Science		Writing to Succeed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	66	21.0%	118	37.8%	85	27.0%
Agree	133	42.2%	113	36.2%	153	48.6%
Neutral	70	22.2%	46	14.7%	46	14.6%
Disagree	26	8.3%	17	5.4%	18	5.7%
Strongly Disagree	20	6.3%	18	5.8%	13	4.1%
No Response	21		24		21	
Total Responses	336		336		336	

CR	IS	WS
63.2%	74.0%	75.6%
14.6%	11.2%	9.8%

I think there is sufficient data to demonstrate student need in this area

	Common Reader		Integrated Science		Writing to Succeed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	38	12.8%	93	30.7%	71	23.4%
Agree	105	35.5%	100	33.0%	113	37.3%
Neutral	107	36.1%	74	24.4%	88	29.0%
Disagree	35	11.8%	22	7.3%	21	6.9%
Strongly Disagree	11	3.7%	14	4.6%	10	3.3%
No Response	40		33		33	
Total Responses	336		336		336	

CR	IS	WS
48.3%	63.7%	60.7%
15.5%	11.9%	10.2%

I think the project represents a reasonable effort to address the student need.

	Common Reader		Integrated Science		Writing to Succeed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	35	11.4%	86	28.1%	61	19.7%
Agree	150	48.7%	137	44.8%	151	48.9%
Neutral	69	22.4%	45	14.7%	53	17.2%
Disagree	35	11.4%	21	6.9%	32	10.4%
Strongly Disagree	19	6.2%	17	5.6%	12	3.9%
No Response	28		30		27	
Total Responses	336		336		336	

CR	IS	WS
60.1%	72.9%	68.6%
17.5%	12.4%	14.2%

I think this is a project the campus community will support.

	Common Reader		Integrated Science		Writing to Succeed	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	27	8.9%	65	21.3%	42	13.8%
Agree	133	43.6%	138	45.2%	133	43.6%
Neutral	83	27.2%	64	21.0%	82	26.9%
Disagree	44	14.4%	23	7.5%	36	11.8%
Strongly Disagree	18	5.9%	15	4.9%	12	3.9%
No Response	31		31		31	
Total Responses	336		336		336	

CR	IS	WS
52.5%	66.6%	57.4%
20.3%	12.5%	15.7%

Common Reader Program Comments

I think the Project is aimed at a legitimate student learning need.

Unknown. I think we need to assess the need first. Then we can prove to SACS that it is a need and can establish the metrics we will use to show improvement.

We need to do something to help our new generation who want to be entertained (through the media, internet) all the time.

I do not believe every student needs this.

This proposal has the potential for making a huge difference in student success and student outcomes. I am concerned that the book selection committee has the potential for being contentious and that we may find outside entities disagreeing with/overruling committee decisions.

Students need greater emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving.

Assigned lists of books is exactly the reason we have so many adults who don't read. Research strongly supports student choice. I believe that implementing a similar plan to the writing across the curriculum could work. Each professor could have a list of books that tie in with the coursework in each individual course and students would choose from that list or a different book with approval of the professor. Students in high schools don't read the assigned lists. What would be different at the university level. This is what turns kids off.

I feel this initiative will be the most applicable to a broad range careers for graduates

What exactly IS the need? Is there a need for us to share a common reading experience? It is a need for us to show students how to read and discuss a book? I am not certain I see the learning need here.

Because of technology there are now alternative sources of information and knowledge. There are alternative formats in which information and knowledge are stored and disseminated. Therefore, "reading books", narrowly defined, may not be an essential element of learning.

The intent is to enhance the learning opportunity of the student and increase accountability

quality enhancement SHOULD include improving the quality of instruction--we as professors smugly assume that how we teach and are presently teaching is the best way and that we are the best. we need to improve our own teaching before we can implement programs that focus on student learning because student learning is DIRECTLY impacted by the quality of instruction

Students are not comfortable with reading. Sometimes they don't buy the required texts and rely on others to "fill them in" on the text information.

Seems more appropriate for community building than a learning need per se.

However, it is a program that seems to be aimed at increasing student desire to read, which, it seems to me, is a problem that could be much better dealt with earlier in the lives of students.

I do not think that our students can be made to read--especially if the books are of high academic quality. Naturally, they should be.

Students don't like to read and will avoid it unless threatened with a test, something we can't do during the summer.

needs more for both theatre and art plus i am also in CJ
Any action that helps our students is of value to the university.
It seems difficult to justify one particular book that all college student should read in a given year. I think that a set of "great books" that need to digested over the course of a college career might be a more legitimate learning need.
Students obviously need to be encouraged to read and enjoy reading.
I think this project is aimed at wasting student's time.
This seems too elementary
Does not require a core course - better is integration into first year experience with faculty/deans leading groups to demonstrate value of reading outside classroom requirements
Lifelong reading will of course be a benefit to any student. The ability to independently access the collected written knowledge of humanity is a necessary skill in any discipline. A broad interest in literature, history, events, policy and science enhances the experience of life and the civic engagement of the citizen.
and there are many of these across the nation
Projects targeting increased and improved reading would well serve the student population.
Getting students into the habit of reading is the most important achievement we could have.
This project is mandated by SACS and has ho other reason for existence. X is clearly not being driven by quality considerations by the Administration.
I recognize that some students need encouragement to read more.
Forcing students to read is not a way to enhance learning
I'm not sure what the learning need would be. Is this designed to make students better readers, or is there a different purpose?
What is this project, I've never heard of it before.
I do not know what the Common Reader Option is.
While the NEED is certainly there, I don't think this program, as described, will satisfy that need.
I am not faculty
This is primarily social. We had one my Freshman year at Syracuse, and I don't think it was really a connecting experience in the sense of ever discussing the book, although they told us that the intent was that we have a shared experience to help us bond.
While I agree in principle, this program would be difficult to incorporate in all disciplines.
I think this option (of the three) has the strongest potential to help foster a learning community and student engagement.
It promotes reading, which is crucial to learning.

I think there is sufficient data to demonstrate student need in this area

I have not seen any data on this for SHSU students.

The evidence presented begs the question--Is book reading the only legitimate form of reading? I think we must be careful not to box ourselves in on this one.

I'm not convinced that there are sufficient accountability measures in place to justify this approach.

I have seen the PP indicating the need and am not certain that it is pertinent to SHSU itself.

Did data analysis precede selection of this plan? We heard "we can get the data to support it".

The plan is unfolding. The data is being established.

year after year students critique our teaching and even complain to us and to the chairs and even the dean to improve the quality of instruction, but to no avail. we are fooling ourselves if we ignore this crucial issue that needs immediate addressing- we are answerable to our students who PAY us to teach and yet we mock their presence in class by providing poor quality instruction

Of course there is need--some of them read very little. The question is: Would the entire freshman student body actually read anything more than something highly trivial? Also, what book would address the vast interests of all of them? Those who are avid readers should not be "forced" to read something that some authority has deemed as "necessary." Their "common experience" is attending Sam. No one book can compete for that. This would just take away from the serious academics.

Of course it's needed, they just won't do it.

still could use an update

The evidence suggests that most adults don't read much, but college students read much more than average already.

Obviously from classroom observations.

I'm not sure there is HARD data other than surveys.

Students do need to do more reading, but will there be sufficient teaching of how to read this text effectively?

The real problem is the fact that none of our students know anything but a "taught to test" mentality regarding education.

I have not read the data

Our students do not have the general cultural background. A common reader might help, but only if the students change from passive learning to active learning.

I have been at universities where this was done and was well received by both faculty and students.

Those three proposal were only focused on reading, writing, and critical thinking areas which I strongly agree that they are vital. However, the technological competency area was ignored again based on the 120 credit hours policy.

Is it possible to demonstrate a need (and value) of a common reader program in a meaningful (scientific) way?

Poor literacy stems from reading and writing.

I do not know what the Common Reader Option is.

I am not faculty

I really don't know, except my own experience. It wasn't bad, just somewhat irrelevant. Since we read it before the term it did not take away from study time.

Suggested Data Sources for this Objective

Perhaps a reading assessment (group) administered in a freshman level course.

Testing students over reading assignments from the Common Reader.

Other colleges/universities that are currently using the Common Reader project

Questions about book Observe discussions of the book Evaluations in courses

Reflections to the books within the content areas as suggested above.

Method called "In-Time Learning" contact Dr. Maier in COE for more information

1. Student performance in 200 level English courses, also other reading intensive courses in the core. These courses have already been identified by Wally Barnes. 2. Student engagement measures

Have a junior level test related to the common reader for all students.

Survey entering freshmen concerning their reading habits and then re-survey the exiting seniors.

If (for ethical reasons) all students read the proposed book(s), there really is no way of measuring the impact, except maybe by looking at cross-sectional data: students at comparable places, who have not read the books. However, there are too many uncontrollable variables.

Testing when they arrive at school.

Course grades and/or assignment grades from specific courses that are part of the program.

We could compare matched groups before and after the initiation of the objective.

?

pre and post tests

Every day assignments across the disciplines including foreign languages. Students need to show critical thinking and good process of reasoning when writing assignments.

Essay Exams with general questions

data obtained from beginning freshman surveys administered as part of First Year Experience

Measure number of books read by students.

Standardized test scores on reading. Reading Center data

Student feedback.

Student success after graduation

Poor reading comprehension and writing skills present in writing-intensive classes.

I do not know. Perhaps we should create our own.

How many books are assigned, based on class syllabi?

English placement scores (that contain reading levels) ACT or SAT scores

NSSE.

Not TK20

the parking

survey and interviews

I think the project represents a reasonable effort to address the student need.

If the need is documented, I think this is a good approach.

I disagree with the idea of our university endorsing one particular book for all students. I think that this could be handled by individual departments and special interest group areas instead of the entire campus being told what to read.

Depends on the material selected for the program.

Requiring students to read one book, not of their choosing, is unlikely to have any effect on reading habits or desires of enough students to make it worthwhile.

The project will return results that are similar to the current results we have. There is motivational factor other than intrinsic motivation, which is why 1 in 4 did not read a book last year (reported at meeting).

The ones who have "learning needs" cannot be fixed by any one book. The ones who do not have learning needs are already readers. This would be preaching to the choir, as well as insulting the intelligence of those who do not have to be forced to read.

Yes, but are they going to do it?

I think the idea is a good one. However, I don't think it's likely that students will spend their summer reading the assignments. Thus, I think the common reader program would be best implemented by assigning the readings once the semester begins. I've taught classes in the past where I've used a self-tailored readings book of various well-known readings by famous authors in various areas. It was very helpful and we had reaction papers and in-class discussions on the reading assignment each class period.

The cutesy labels for various tests shows a lack of depth to the program.

Texts should reflect the rigor that will be experienced by the university student.

These are fabulous course designs!

I'm not sure what the clear learning need is: do more reading, learn to integrate college course material, create a common learning experience. It could do all of these.

On the merits of this program, my guess is that incoming students will take offense when asked to "do homework" over the summer. I suspect that participation will be low, and retention and analysis lower. Benefits of the program should be weighed against the cost of potentially making a bad first impression on new students.

However, I do believe that the Information and Communication Technology competency should be addressed as well.

Only for the Science Literacy. The other two are weak.

I always hated required reading for classes, even though I love reading, otherwise. I hope this is effective, but I fear that we need to start with preschool. I am curious if anyone has studied whether excessive reading assignments has a negative impact on self-directed reading.

How do you monitor students if they do not read the book the summer before classes start? Maybe focusing on modern press and incorporating it into programs and real life situations is a better approach.
Without question, students need to learn how to read more critically, and they need to read more than they do. I'm not sure what a great difference one book would make. I would suggest a book per semester that the whole campus reads--having programs over the same book into the spring could get a bit old.
I've been privy to such a program at another institution - the program had very little impact on student learning or motivation.
I do not know what the Common Reader Option is.
This objective needs to be met at much lower grades/earlier in life than this program. I think it is attempting to address deficiencies in our elementary education programs.
I am not faculty
Adding one book per year is too minimal a change. Why not slowly increase expectations (among students and faculty) of how much reading is normal in college courses?

I think this is a project the campus community will support.

I would, but I think we need to assess that.
I am unsure about this. I would hope the campus would support it.
I don't know what others will think.
Do they have much choice?
The plan is highly dependent on faculty engagement with the idea and willingness to support the common reader within coursework. Is it likely that this support exists?
yes, the campus community will certainly support any project that does not directly criticize its lack of quality instruction-nobody likes to live with the truth, so let's be in denial
It would probably work best in limited groups not the campus as a whole.
I would hope so, but I hesitate to make a guess about how many faculty would support this.
Very few will agree on what books to suggest, and very few students will read them during the summer. They hate the SAM 136 anyway and more reading is not going to inspire them.
There is always some resistance to change.
My main concern is the assessment instrument.
No matter what book is chosen, there will be some faculty who will have difficulty working it into their classes.
Please see my comment under the writing section for this--I didn't realize there was a opportunity to go back!
I know the education department is on board and very excited!
Who wants to spend another \$600 on four books. No thanks. No one will read the books and it will be a waste of SHSU's time. Why add more homework to students who are already overloaded??

The biggest problem lies in the choice of the book. Some of the "self-help," bestseller type books may not be acceptable to all faculty. Then there's the issue of "great books." Who determines this? This is an extremely murky area.

Need to prove it will be driven by faculty and subject matter experts and not another pedagogical fad or devolve into student led groups

In order to work well, faculty from many disciplines will need to refer to the text in their courses. I am not sure that will happen and then it will primarily be a SAM 136 requirement.

could be very helpful to freshman, would be very good to integrate with with the FYE

If a book is chosen democratically, then it might work. How will the "candidates" be selected? With such a wide variety of disciplines on campus, it will be nearly impossible to satisfy everyone.

It is very difficult to get students to ready their assigned literature for required/major classes...I am afraid this project would meet the same obstacles

The same people who attend writing-across-the-curriculum workshops will eagerly support this. Others may resent having to change their teaching style to incorporate the material, not to mention making time between research, teaching, and keeping up in their field to read an extra book. Unless there's strong evidence that this will help students, I suggest that this not be the one we commit to for five years.

I do not see measurable outcomes from this program.

Common reader programs work only when the book is widely popular and addresses a "hot topic," i.e., something that the students find important/engaging at the moment.

I'm not sure the campus will find a single book each year that will fulfill the need the project hopes.

I do not know what the Common Reader Option is.

I am not faculty

I do not like the idea of reading for my course being chosen by a committee. I want control of what is covered in my classes, and I know many of my colleagues feel the same. I have enough of a challenge covering essentials without having a book I may not consider relevant being added to my course content.

It targets a student need, but I do not think that it is an appropriate activity for the college level. High school, yes.

Integrated Science Comments

I think the Project is aimed at a legitimate student learning need.

The lack of appreciation for science AND TECHNOLOGY leaves the USA with a large group of constituents who lack the intellectual resources to operate effectively in high technology environments.

Based on the grade distributions reported in the meeting, it would appear that there is a need.

Critical thinking and an emphasis on making science-thinking a way to see other courses and life experiences sound good.

Why don't we ask the students?

I think there are needs that are more significant.

An individual going to college for higher education irrespective of his/her area of interest, in my view, should be exposed to the scientific point of view.

I believe there will be more student interest in this project.

With the legislature restricting the total number of credit hours to 120, colleges have had to cut back on electives relating to the core discipline of the major. In this context, this project will further take away coverage of essential areas, especially for professional courses. This need should have been well covered in high school.

The science faculty have such high D and F stats that there is really a significant problem.

Again, if we were to raise the admissions standards, there would not be a problem of students not passing their science courses..

Good, let the science classes do it.

needs some more student input

I am not well informed about it.

I think it is definitely a legitimate need. However, my department already has required courses that approach the same types of topics and issues.

Sounds like a good course for those who are non majors

Sounds like an exciting way to promote critical thinking!

However, see my following comment.

Our students in large numbers do poorly in their science classes, and many lack basic scientific knowledge and thinking skills.

I think the data presented on how poorly our students are doing in freshman science classes as well as the overall data on lack of scientific knowledge demonstrates this need.

Also needs to address topics such as Organic v Inorganic foods...

Critical thinking skills are sorely lacking in this information-saturated culture.

As a teacher of the sciences, I agree wholeheartedly that the biggest academic problem our students face is a deficit of critical thinking skills. Most of their academic history has put such an emphasis on rote learning that they have seldom needed to use creative problem solving skills. Teaching science is perhaps more about teaching how scientists think than what scientists have learned.

majors other than science often have shortcomings in evaluating scientific evidence and theories, and how these impact their lives

Knowledge comes in many forms and is acquired best by active engagement. This proposal seeks to draw students into the scientific method rather than compelling them to memorize words about the content area. It will help place students closer to the means of acquiring knowledge.

Students at SHSU are strongly influenced by superstition and seem to be resistant to evidence that does not support their beliefs. At the college level students should be encouraged to think for themselves and to question their belief systems.

this project is not driven by a student need, but rather by the desires of a small group of faculty. In the end, it will be a good attempt to teach a reasonable set of Junior High School classes.

Students are uninterested and ignorant regarding science.

I agree that the current science classes do not (cannot?) have enough time to give the students an appreciation of scientific thought and the scientific method.

Focusing on a gimmick to teach courses is not focusing on legitimate student learning. It is covering up the inability to motivate students in the course subject.

The pass/fail rate was alarming.

Again, what is this?

All national studies show that the US is falling further and further behind in science education; we now rank 25th in the world. Tragic. Let's be part of the solution.

Any program or initiative requiring interdisciplinary study is a thing to be pursued.

Reading is the greatest deficiency I find in my students.

My thought/concern is that the methods and aims of this program are ones that should already be found in the existing science courses.

I think there is sufficient data to demonstrate student need in this area

Grade distributions alone are insufficient. The critical thinking instrument developed at SHSU should be useful in assessing the need.

I taught science and served as a science coordinator. I know how students need this type of program. Great Idea!

I think this proposal has the potential to be the best as well as the easiest from which to obtain data.

Not at the university level, especially for students in professional colleges.

Data was presented on student performance in science courses. Of course examination of IDEA scores in the sciences may also relate.

Obviously there is a national trend in student dislike/distrust/apathy toward science.

not really

I think it's easy to demonstrate a need for the average American. However, it seems that we would want to have data from OUR students to establish a need.
The evidence seems to show that students coming out of science classes do not understand scientific methods, but I wonder if that is something that could be addressed in existing science classes.
Particularly current D and F records for science courses.
However, I would still prefer to see our humanities students take 2 science courses, e.g. chemistry and biology or physics and if presently they are not getting more than facts out of these classes as was alleged yesterday, then let's take a look at that and see if a standard chemistry or biology or physics course could give them more than just a collection of facts.
Many students come from HSs without too much background on sciences
Not only are there course grades, there are national and international surveys about science literacy that show US students performing poorly.
The concept that 40% of students fail science classes is not reliable. Could it be a teaching - testing reliability problem? maybe - maybe not
Lots of bad science grades and many non-science majors completely disengaged from the classes they have been required to take.
there is ample data to show that our student body is deficient in their knowledge of science.
A variety of scoring methods have supported US students weakness in science and critical thinking.
Sufficient data could be easily obtained through a campus-wide assessment test given to all students. The test could be constructed in a way that tests the students' ability to analyze problems scientifically.
Maybe non-science majors lack scientific literacy because they are not interested in science. Maybe they do not believe or trust scientists.
Students lack fundamental science skills. However, these skills need to be incorporated into how it applies to major courses.
The data Marcus presented are all that seem needed.
Strongest data to support need.

Suggested Data Sources for this Objective

student pre test.
One can simply administer a survey/test of both students and corporate employers to verify.
Attitude measures will be needed along with concrete outcome or impact in other areas.
certification choices by education majors Will we see a rise in those students choosing to teach science?
Course examinations and evaluations.
Extensive literature review
Review existing literature on interdisciplinary lesson planning.

Existing data looking at student achievement in current science courses offered.
Observe low levels of questions students ask in classes.
Many of the recommendations suggested at the meeting would fit very well. Dr. Gillespie's detailed stats on the 'D' & 'F' students in many of the courses provides a great starting point to measure the effectiveness of this program.
Take a survey of popular media and its ratings: young adults are drawn to pop science and reality shows whether or not it is based on fact or tested theory.
Again I recommend a method called "In-time learning" contact Dr. Maier in COE for more information
Improved student performance data in science courses taken after the new course. Improved student performance on science competencies measured on the TExES examination for elementary teaching candidates.
Difficult to assess.
Statistical evaluation of the performance and level of engagement of students in the proposed course.
The science GPAs cited by the gentleman presenting the idea.
Grades in subsequent science classes
There are a number of pre-existing measures of critical thinking ability--perhaps use one (or more) of those which have demonstrated solid reliability and validity.
Results are impossible to measure, unless only a segment of students takes this course and is then compared to a control group. But even then, there will be students who will do poorly in the proposed course! There will be the ones who believe that a Loch Ness monster exists. We cannot cure stupidity by a forced course.
Only testing
Science passing grades were mentioned in the meeting. Number of students who elect to take more than required courses?
Students' poor performance in introductory science and math courses.
Course grades and/ assignment grades in courses that are part of the program.
pass/fail rates in science courses
My biggest concern is how to effectively assess this objective. An effective thinking test isn't sufficient.
a) Pre- and post- tests of students entering and leaving the proposed course. b) Student research projects/designs that are presented at an undergraduate research conference on campus.
pre and post tests
Student evaluations/interviews at end of course. Comparison of performance in science courses before and after taking this course. Faculty interviews regarding critical thinking.
Student (non-science majors) grades in science classes.
pre and post test course data, scores in other science courses, student surveys or work samples
Constant failing grades

Why is this space available for the integrated science option and not the others. Create a standardized pre- and post- test. Grades C & above and those below C Number of students switching to science majors after course IDEA objective on critical thinking

Essay Exams with general questions

pre and post tests for students enrolled in the designed classes

Student grades, pre- and post-; longitudinal studies of student success before (look back at data from 10 years and see if there's a change in student success in these programs).

Entry/Exit questionnaires re faux science such as astrology, texts of application of scientific method/reasoning

The statistics about the low grades in courses was good. There are other surveys which demonstrate lack of general knowledge of the scientific method.

student reasoning skills

Student grades in science courses. Survey students with questions that require critical thinking.

Project 2061

surveys of entering freshman in several non-science majors on critical thinking skills, basic science literacy, and on the scientific method.

compare groups here at Sam who did and did not take this new integrated course. for a control, compare with science majors

One of the best data sources would be the students. Pre and post tests and questionnaires might shed light on the effectiveness of such a measure. If tests (surveys) were also administered to volunteer students who have met their science requirements without the benefit this program, comparisons could be made to the post tests of those students who completed the program.

Grades for introductory science courses Standardized test data--especially ACT--that is science related

Test scores, student feedback, faculty feedback, exit exams.

The presentater provided ample statistics to justify the need and indicated that they already had mechanisms to measure progress.

Construct an exam that poses a series of problems. The choices (answers) should not be "right" or "wrong" - they should be constructed in a way that evaluates the student's ability to reason and solve a problem scientifically.

Comparison with students from other states

Unlike the Harvard graduation data Eglsaer's 3-page QEP described, we need to test SHSU students before AND after they go through our program. Maybe Harvard graduates' understanding of why the earth's summers are hotter than winters was ten times better than incoming Harvard students....

Student test scores Written assessments of students' understanding

Pre- and Post- tests on critical thinking and process (not facts).

International Science rankings ACT Measuring College Readiness

improved pass rate in freshman sciences?

Consistent low test scores in science and math in Texas. http://www.edexcellence.net/institute/publication/publication.cfm?id=358&pubsubid=1364#1364
Bio 2010: Transforming Undergraduate Education for Future Research Biologists THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES PRESS 500 Fifth Street, N.W. Washington, ... www.nap.edu/books/0309085357/html/ Bio 2010 Survey Have your campus faculty and/or administration discussed the implications of the BIO 2010 report for your curriculum and undergraduate programs? ... www.cur.org/Bio2010Survey.html
Standardized general science/critical thinking exam.
Faculty in this area can have students do projects that relate this to their own discipline.
attrition rates from courses # of non-passing grades and percentges
Not TK20
pre- post-testing in science class.
standardized pre-test/post-test assessments
surveys and interviews
Test Scores student's survey after completion of the class to measure usefulness faculty feedback from upper level science courses as to students' readiness/interest

I think the project represents a reasonable effort to address the student need.
I think it would address the critical thinking aspect of the need, but I worry that we will lose something by giving up a "hard" science.
I do not like the idea of one class being required for all students. I think the science class a student takes should be determined by the major field of study and the student's interest.
This is an attempt to bring students' interests and focus alongside formal learning. Opening minds to advanced knowledge is the doorway to their academic future!
I think there needs to be more information that shows the needs for an additional science course.
Although I'm concerned that the class may not achieve the ultimate outcome of raising student science GPAs and that it may duplicate existing courses offered by the Philosophy department (Philosophy of Science, Critical Thinking)
But it should not be "dumbed down" science.
needs more input
A big concern I have is that enrollment in this class would take away from enrollment in other science-based courses. This would not be a "hard core" science class as described so I don't think it should count as a science course - it's essentially an effective thinking course (which I've taught for several years at another institution). Shouldn't this be more of a philosophy of science course? And isn't this already being done on campus?

The project seems to be well-thought out and not as dependent on "what other universities do" as the two other proposals. Much more relevant than a common reader program, which is probably best for a smaller, more elite or private university or for an honors program.

However, the contents of the course need overhauling--I think the comments made about holistic medicine, etc. need further definition, etc.

I am concerned about this being one of the "core" science courses, especially for BA students for whom this will be 1/2 of their science. The fun factor is certainly there and sure to be engaging, but the science content is less clear. Also concerned about how it will transfer to other institutions. The main goal of the course seems to be improving critical thinking, and Philosophy is already doing a great job in that area. How this course will improve knowledge and interest in science is less clear to me. It does, however, sound like an interesting course and I applaud the Arts & Sciences Depts. for their efforts.

not so sure after weighing the evidence

But, I think this is too limited for an overall QEP. It doesn't affect enough students. I'd like to see something more campus wide.

I like the innovative character of the proposal. Nothing is guaranteed to work, but to do more of the same is certainly not a recipe for success.

It is an alternative to the traditional courses and seems to be focused on student based learning.

Additional topics could include hormones in meat and other food related urban legends or misconceptions.

My issue is with the logistics more than anything else. If required, this means 3000+ students/year will take the course. A core of perhaps 5-6 dedicated, philosophically like-minded professors SHOULD be in charge. If diluted too much (foisted on adjuncts, for example), it will revert to a simple pile of facts science class. But if the core group of professors is in charge of it, how would they handle the sheer volume of students? Assess their learning? This is a LAB science proposal...who will be writing, grading, and instructing labs? Makes more sense to hold it as a required 1-hour SEMINAR course OR integrate it into SAM 136 (which allegedly teaches students how to handle college/life). The same science profs could handle their portion of it, and SAM 136 could become a required course.

Despite best intentions, I am skeptical that the new approach will represent an improvement over (and fearful that it might in some cases be a step backward from) the existing core of solid and specific sciences that we teach. I think that we should be cautious in highlighting fringe topics as a hook into science. There is beauty and mystery enough in the stars and in the Earth and in the Human body. I am generally in favor of the underlying idea, and fully agreed with several points from the speaker, such as the need to communicate themes and principles which underlay facts, and the need for a broad based representation of how scientists arrive at conclusions which may be outside common sense or personal experience. If the course is really designed to cover so many topics, it makes sense to have teaching teams which rotate through respective specializations. I feel sorry though, for the person who commits to the management of this logistical nightmare for five years! Perhaps a united lecture series by several distinguished members of our faculty, held all together (or in 2-3 sections) in the basketball arena for an hour credit would be preferable. We could scan ID's to verify participation. Afterwards we could have a pick-up game, and say the hour came from phys ed.

This ignorance is fostered by TEKS, and is now spreading into college courses. A better way to fight the scourge of science illiteracy is to make our students take real college-level science courses. Perhaps the University should look towards teaching remedial science to remove deficiencies caused by the use of integrated science in K-12.

This course is already offered on this campus. It is called Critical Thinking (PHL 262). If this is really a student learning need, then all students should be required to take PHL 262.

The way to teach the scientific method is to teach one science in depth. The integrated science approach is used in K-12 and look what the result is! The proposed program will merely "water down" the curriculum, lower standards and reduce the value of a SHSU degree.

I wonder if the freshman science instructors couldn't be provided with materials to do some of this without losing the somewhat greater depth we currently have (instead of a "general science" class, find ways to do this in Chemistry, Physics, etc.).

The idea is a step in the right direction to encourage student interest in the subjects.

(1) concerned about "common" lectures (2) concerned about course content (3) believe content can be drawn from more traditional issues in the various sciences and course could reflect the particular scientific discipline

Should be interdisciplinary rather than relegated solely to the science department. Perhaps a team-teaching approach could be considered.

see "representes" above

Science isn't the only way to be interdisciplinary, so there may be some legitimate complaint from elsewhere, but it's as good a place as any to begin an interdisciplinary initiative.

It uses popular culture/science as a way into learning. Interesting approach

I think this is a project the campus community will support.

Unknown. This will need to be assessed.

I think this project will have a more limited impact on student success as graduates; therefore, it will not have as much campus-wide support

This could appear to touch on sensitive subjects (what is true, what is not) which would require more detail to be made public before full support would be given. For example, a syllabus of what the subject matter would be needed to assure everyone that evolution would not be taught as "truth" or scientifically supportable while creationism would be "false" or not scientifically supportable. I still think this is a very worthwhile project.

The support of the science faculty will be critical. As for education faculty, I believe most will be supportive since most COE undergraduate degrees require 16 hours of Science courses. The new course may also influence the teaching of science by COE grads in a positive way. They are likely to imitate this innovative teaching approach in their own classrooms.

I don't see how this course differs significantly except for the lab with PHL 262. The idea of having those who fail 40% of their students and are proud that they do teach a course like this seems out of joint.

Since the non-science faculty think that they would not have to add extra or different course requirements, I think this course stand a chance to have faculty support.

I think the largest support is that no other departments would have to do anything to institute this project. Based on some of the faculty comments in the CHSS meeting, this could be very good that some of those faculty wouldn't be responsible for teaching this course.

The most support would need to come from the departments involved, but the rest of campus would probably support it unless it are into resources from the broader campus community.

I hope that faculty will be able to see how this can aid their students' critical thinking, and understand that "fact dump" should not be the goal of a university that wants to encourage life-long learning.

It is a good course, but i am concerned that there will be a "dumbing down" of course material and agenda.

This was my favorite course offering! I would love to take this course!

Some will of course, but I think a liberal studies mindset would prefer them to have a real chemistry class + laboratory

I think that combining math and science is a terrible idea. They are two different fields of study and are hard enough alone. Maybe the science class and lab should be combined to cut back on 4 hour labs.

This course would present a plethora of problems, ethical, political, and personal. There are many areas that are "murky" when it comes to "mythology." I, for one, would be highly offended if some of my ideas about holistic medicine, the power of positive thought, the cosmic energy that our thoughts and feelings have, etc. were debunked and made to seem trivial or ill-conceived. This is an extremely personal issue, not unlike religion.

The key issue in my mind is whether the science faculties will support this approach. If enough of them do with enough enthusiasm, then the rest of us will be able to join the parade.

It is only up to the science departments to implement. I would hope they will be excited about the chance to do this.

Needs to include all sciences GEL, GEO, CHM, PHY, AGR, BIO etc. None should be left out!

from personal experience, I think that the entering freshman will be more enthusiastic about this course than current non-majors courses

Outside the science purists and those who think that knowledge equals verbal information this proposal will be well received.

This is a project the campus community SHOULD support.

It is a radical paradigm shift and will face some resistance from entrenched faculty I suspect.

The resources (faculty and space) to actually accomplish this are obviously not available.

I am not sure that having two separate systems of teaching science would be viable for the university. How do we know the learning outcomes will be comparable between the two?

Most of the campus community will feel/be uninvolved.

I wish it also addressed the incoming students' poor knowledge of mathematics.

As a scientist, I like the idea and support it, but I'm not sure others feel as strongly as I. I'm pretty sure some of my "pure" scientist colleagues will not support it. But I also believe no discipline should be having 30-40 % plus D and F grade distributions. Something is wrong with this picture. I suggest a reference for this course by Bill Bryson, "A Brief History of Nearly Everything", or something like that. It's a very informative and easy to read science book written with the layperson in mind.

I think some of the other areas will squawk, but this would be a good thing for the commonwealth.

I think it's terrific of the sciences to offer to handle this QEP objective.

Easiest to implement. Strongest data to support need.

Writing to Succeed Comments

I think the Project is aimed at a legitimate student learning need.

The writing across the disciplines is an expansion of an excellent program we already have. While this new initiative has merit, the issue to me is whether this program is as needed as the others?

There is plenty of anecdotal evidence but I think we should do a more systematic assessment prior to implementation.

We have had an AUWP in place here on campus for more than a dozen years. If students lack writing abilities, that is not due to the lack of action on the part of the university.

In a world that is heading towards higher and higher levels of specialization, I am not sure. By looking at our students' writing skills, however, I wish they had better skills and therefore this could be a good effort.

I think there needs to be much more emphasis on getting students to write and be better prepared for writing as professionals and graduate students.

I require a significant amount of writing and I know that writing does help learning and communication skills.

I believe in writing, and if the students don't get more opportunities to write they will graduate without the ability to fill out an application and get a job.

This program has been in effect for some time and it serves a student need.

I think it's a great idea. However, doesn't every major in our college already have writing intensive courses? In my department we have courses that focus on writing in our discipline where students are required to write several APA-style research reports.

Students rarely understand the importance of writing as a means of understanding material.

However, I feel that many areas already do this--especially literature courses with which I am familiar.

The need for good writing is at a crisis level!

Apart from building ideas for improving already writing enhanced courses

A very effective way to stimulate collaborative learning efforts.

Statistics and experience show that this is an area that should definitely be addressed as the QEP.

My students often have serious writing problems.

Our students need work in writing.

ENG 164/165 and HIS 163/164 and SAM 136 could easily be linked through common reading/writing topics

r u in ur office? This is pretty much the extent of my students' writing skills.

writing is clearly an established and effective learning tool

I continue to be amazed at the quality of writing coming from students in my classes, even at the junior and senior level. This needs to be addressed.

This seems to aim merely at forcing students to write more. There is little to suggest it would improve the quality of their writing and there seems little effort to do so.

Writing, from taking notes to creating a technical report, seems to be a lost art with many students.

Student writing must be improved. I do not believe the program will address this issue. Writing starts by fundamentally teaching students to apply knowledge from course work.
cuts across the entire campus.
I have never heard of any of these things. More information would be appreciated.
Communications (not just writing) are an important part of workworld preparation. There needs to be writing in every discipline on campus (and more serious writing than has been done over the years in our existing WAC program), which was pretty thin for most of its existence.
All SHSU students could benefit from being expected to write more, in all their classes.
I think it would affect all.
I don't think so.
In my opinion, college students' writing and thinking skills are abysmal. I applaud the WID effort.

I think there is sufficient data to demonstrate student need in this area
I haven't seen any.
There was not much mention of measures that could be utilized to determine effectiveness.
We look only at test scores, not a good indicator of what kids can do with some instruction.
I would hope that this already happens in many of our courses.
Writing and reflection and learning go hand in hand.
I agree that there is evidence to support writing across the curriculum, am not sure that SHSU data was used to generate this plan. Wasn't an earlier effort discontinued?
Not enough details given in the presentation of how this need would be measured.
Some are bad writers, some are good writers. Why should good writers have to do even more writing because their peers cannot write?
That is why I do make them write in my classes.
I think the data is easy to come up with for the average American. However, I think we need to demonstrate the need in our own students. I also think that this data should be collected by major since I think many majors emphasize this type of writing already.
Not sure this has been documented very well.
Students do need to learn to write better.
See above comment. Students need to see that there are other types of writing other than the FORMAL approach. Discovery through writing
Dr. Nardone has done an excellent job of gathering data that supports this pedagogical method.
Our students come in with deficient writing skills, and many leave with that deficiency. Undergraduate writing is a huge problem.

No HARD data that compares with what the need is (grammar & punctuation)
Look at writing samples across the university at all levels and in all courses. This need is unquestioned.
I give essay exams and written assignments in many of my classes. While many students can handle them successfully, a large number cannot. We do not want to graduate people who are that ill-prepared.
Numerous studies of students' need for writing exist.
Students do need to improve their writing skills, but I don't see a broad program of more writing necessarily achieving this.
writing samples from various disciplines
I am confused on how we would measure an increase in a student writing skills from this program.
If SHSU requires W courses, then faculty need help in structuring those courses.
Our students cannot write. And our WI courses are doing nothing to solve the problem
From my own experience, I can see that students need all the practice they can get in order to improve their writing skills.
Weak data

Suggested Data Sources for this Objective

classroom experiment
There are a variety of writing assessments we can use.
Evaluation of writing assignments.
Current writing enhanced courses here at SHSU, and data from other colleges/universities that is currently using this project
Compare writing samples from the disciplines.
Each professor should find a way to assess. There would need to be training so that professors don't emphasis grammar and mechanics instead of writing to learn.
Writing assignments from various classes at the beginning of the semester vs. the end.
Junior Level Essay Exam for graduation.
Have a university writing test for all persons as they move into their junior year!
Pre-test entering students, test along the way in discipline areas to compare learning as impacted by writing, then post-test as exiting graduates.
No idea.
The improvement in short essays over the length of the semester.
Grades of students in W courses.
Course grades and/or assignment grades in courses that are part of the program.
Compare matched groups who have and have not participated in the program.
I don't know, although I'm sure there are some nationally normed tests out there.
pre and post tests

Student performance in writing tasks.
Dr. Nardone has cited several studies--also a poll of university faculty might show the dearth of good writing from students
The constant poor work on essays across the disciplines
Essay exams with general questions
data on level of ability and also frequency of use of students using the writing center could be used.
Pre and post in non-writing and in W classes. Faculty survey of student abilities in this area; student survey of abilities.
At the most basic level, we could pre and post test the students. Then we could have them respond to the issue itself: Has your learning increased in this course? What importance/effect does writing have on this newly acquired knowledge? ETC.
The university needs to collect portfolios of student writing across their time at SHSU. I don't think we know what kinds of writing the typical SHSU student will do over the course of their academic career. However, it is very difficult to measure the success of any writing program. It is also labor intensive. As someone who has been involved in writing assessment for many years, I think this will be almost impossible to truly measure its effectiveness.
Across the curriculum check of random papers from writing-enhanced courses. Sadly, many junior faculty have poor writing skills as well.
I only have the basic (and I think shared) experience that students in my classes can not write.
Instead I suggest using micro essays and writing across the disciplines tools but apply it to the Integrated Science course.
writing samples from various disciplines
A sampling of student writing, such as emails and written essay exams and term papers should be enough to convince anyone that this is a definite student learning need.
Ask the persons that employ graduates
Examine students grades in WID course versus "writing-free" courses taught by the same instructors. Is there a correlation?
Student writing samples
Writing diagnostics taken upon enrollment. Data from the Writing Center.
From my experience, it seems we are not writing as much as we use to. This is not a good thing. The ability to write creatively and with meaning is important.
National Council of Teachers of English; there is also a national organization specifically for Writing Across the Curriculum.
Pre and post writing assessments in across a variety of fields.
Have students read each others' writings - without identifying each other, of course.
Very difficult to measure.
SHSU Writing Center - Tutoring Program

I think the project represents a reasonable effort to address the student need.

I don't know enough about the proposal to comment.

I did not get a clear understanding of this proposal, but I do believe the writing deficiency of students is an important concern.

Most disciplines have their own vocabulary and acceptable writing styles. Each discipline must be held responsible for assuring their students will acquire the necessary communication skills. For example, the writing of a research paper in chemistry will require a significantly different set of skill from an early childhood research paper.

I have writing assignments in my class and many students could use help with this skill.

Remains to be seen

Needs more development with specific content writing strategies.

Again, the better writers do not need it; the very poor writers cannot be cured. Mediocre ones might benefit. But who will give them feedback?

Professors?

Many of my colleagues do not like to assign writing assignments since they then have to grade them.

I think there's definitely a need for more writing. However, I don't think the current emphasis on us having larger classes allows more faculty to emphasize writing in their courses.

Much of classroom learning is traditional lecture-style, but learning by doing is much more effective.

It is "outside inspired"--a revision of "writing across the curriculum".

We need the support of the university community! There doesn't seem to be any

WAD allows students to receive the broad-based learning skills necessary to effectively address any university-level writing assignment.

This is the only truly REASONABLE QEP.

It isn't exactly clear what the program will consist of. Will it just continue with the week long work shop? How will the university be assured that writing happens? For as long as we have had a university wide writing program, assessment has been problematic. If we haven't been able to assure ourselves that courses labeled W are including writing assignments in almost 20 years of the programs existence, how do we think we can assess this?

Having attempted a few WID techniques with abysmal results, perhaps I'm too cynical. Many students see writing as busy work.

Unclear exactly what the program is, how it will be implemented, particularly in large 'scantron' based classes.

This program is a waste of university resources!

I think this effort would not have any outcome in improving student learning needs.

concern about need for small classes, and effective student placement and prerequisites, and generally increased faculty support necessary to effectively address student writing projects

Needs to be more clearly articulated, but writing as a form of thinking is a clear learning need and a way for all disciplines to participate in the QEP.

Quickie blurbs on 3X5 cards will solve the problem? Hard to imagine.

I think it is redundant and I think it is once again attempting to correct deficiencies of our public (and perhaps private) elementary and secondary education systems. I believe many are addressing the need for student writing improvement along with other forms of communication.

The problem is, many of us already require writing in all of our courses. In order to make a case for this as the QEP objective, we will be asked to agree to the claim that students don't write enough -- but they do, in my classes. It's just that they don't get to write in all their classes.

Reasonable? Really?

If it really addresses problem solving techniques

I think this is a project the campus community will support.

I worry that there will be resistance if attempts are made to incorporate this into upper division courses we will actually do the students a disservice. e.g. They are paying to learn mathematics in a particular course--not writing.

Though I am not sure I understand the proposal, I think most faculty would support a plan to improve writing ability.

I think most will perceive the idea as something "I" already do in my course

I think the concept has already been introduced in many classes.

All subjects require some kind of writing, so I see this as a common, across disciplines need.

I think this is a project that should move forward with great importance! However, I do not believe that this is the project we should showcase because we have or should have been doing this for years.

Not sure.....adding the requirement to evaluate writing assignments in courses where writing has not been required may be a challenge.

Really not sure. Faculty do not understand that having the students write in order to learn and to critically think does not mean more grading.

My colleagues don't like grading papers if they can possibly help it!

With current class sizes, I don't see this plan being feasible. I'm also very concerned with the "writing to learn" approach which was mentioned in the meeting by the presenter. In that approach this emphasis is on the student getting their idea across rather than helping them to improve their writing skills (grammar, punctuation, organization, etc.). I don't like the "writing to learn" approach since part of writing is a focus on being a better writer and receiving feedback for that writing.

Not sure all faculty will be willing to train in such methods or implement them in classes.

There was little enthusiasm for this at the meeting. I didn't notice comment blocs on the reading alternative--I hated the rhyming of data criteria, and also that the presenter seemed to envision only a contemporary writer (unless we can invite Shakespeare as a guest speaker!)

See above comment

I feel like we do a lot of this already.

SHSU is no known for embracing new innovations. However, I hope that Dr. Nardone's efforts will pay off and that this will be a QEP that will be positively endorsed.

Do we not already have this project? Patricia Williams spent years developing it and now the students must have a set number of W designated classes in order to graduate. How is this new?

I think many will support, but there will need to be broad training for faculty involved and PR with students who have become accustomed to not writing.

Been there; done that. May call it something different, but explanation is the SAME.

Everyone in every discipline will admit to the importance of WRITING and writing to learn. Our whole "slogan" could be "Writing to Learn," a "Writing Community."

A lot of faculty already include writing. But if you start collecting and judging their assignments and their assessment of their students' writing, they may be resistant.

This option seems too focused on a single aspect. It is true that one can learn in the writing process. But for this to be a productive exercise, it seems that some baseline of knowledge, and deep commitment to the quality of the study is required. Increasing the amount of writing is not necessarily the same as increasing the quality of that writing. Repetition of bad habits, excessive cut-and-paste, and wholesale bluffing of half understood ideas are likely to be the result more often than not. Where writing is a potential benefit, and has legitimate applicability, we might could all use the reminder that it is a valid tool for our kit. I'm not convinced that mandating additional writing in places where it does not apply, and time already runs slim, will be a help.

we have an established history of writing enhanced courses, although those are no longer monitored or quality controlled. students certainly need good writing. awesome would be if faculty could bring current writing assignments to some center and receive feedback on how to enhance

Some disciplines will not be enhanced by emphasizing verbal ways of knowing in the way this proposal does. For instance, students in the fine arts may gain some historical or cultural perspective on their fields by reading about them, but the students are essentially engaged in media outside the written word. So, the emphasis on writing in the discipline would be a diversion from the primary medium or way of knowing. Just as one does not become a better writer by painting about writing, one does not become a better painter by writing about painting. Similarly, a mathematician does not become a better mathematician by writing about math. The student or the practitioner must wrestle with the medium of the discipline rather than another secondary medium. I do not mean to say that verbal literacy is not important. I do mean to say that it is not necessarily the most important way of knowing in every situation and to every discipline. This proposal seems to me to project the primacy of verbal knowledge over all other kinds of information.

Given our teaching and publishing requirements and the lack of specific training to help manage writing, I don't see people rushing to this option.

I am not sure how to implement this project into the applied areas such as music, art, dance, etc.

It would be great to find at least one excited person in each college, if not each department, who could help translate this policy for people. Those of us who teach classes where skills are being developed more than any other kind of knowledge may have trouble understanding how this applies to us. I believe I understand, but a lot of math, music, etc., professors may have trouble figuring out how writing beyond problem solving or composing is useful.

I do not believe this program would be valid for writing skills across campus.

with increased faculty support to meet the increased demands

I already include a great deal of writing in my courses, but it takes a great deal of time--cutting into preps and my own research and writing. Students need writing exercises throughout their courses, and instructors need to feel supported for the extra work that entails.

Again, I think there will be some squawking from departments and colleges outside English and CHSS, but the fact is, a real WAC program is not housed in or controlled by the "writing" disciplines. It needs to be spread out meaningfully across the disciplines. If the other colleges and departments are helped to understand this, they will sign on.

Those of us who already have structured writing assignments built into our classes are unlikely to want to add more, while there may be some classes where writing is not a relevant course objective. Again, I think a gradual change in student and faculty expectations to encourage some writing in all appropriate courses would be a better way of addressing the problem. That, and developing a much better staffed and supported Writing Center. (I have had numerous complaints from students about the poor skill level of helper available in the Writing Center.)

I think there will be little interest.

This is the old WAC program which has never been supported.

This is the most sophisticated, scholarly approach to student learning of the three. It is flexible and can be adapted to any field/area on campus. It needs a serious investment in time, money, and resources to succeed. This, I think, would appeal most to a SACS council review. It is an appropriate activity for the college level.