Influences Affecting the Development of Student’s Critical Thinking Skills

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Abstract

This longitudinal study utilizes theories of college impact on developing long-term critical thinking skills in students. Precollege traits, coursework and curricular patterns, out of class experiences, and in-classroom experiences all affect the development of critical thinking skills. Theoreticians have long postulated that both academic and nonacademic college experiences influence student critical thinking skills. This study supports these theories with statistically significant data that measure the influence of these four variables. Including precollege traits significantly alters statistical significance of the impact college has on developing student’s critical thinking skills. The study may be of interest to persons interested in analyzing higher education’s impact in developing long-term skills.