A Study of Critique: Setting the Stage to Approach Faculty Engagement and Outcomes-Based Assessment Through Fostering a Climate of Inquiry About the Arts’ Signature Pedagogy

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Introduction

Study Purpose

"Models for critique exist in every field: Scientists evaluate one another’s theories as they prepare for meetings and clinical trials, just as architects formally review design plans before pitching accounts, athletes screen game tapes to recognize and learn from the lessons of past performance, and political teams endlessly debate the nuances of single words when composing speeches and slogans” (Soep, 2006, p. 750). Within the creative disciplines, critique’s role cannot be understated. Critique is a fundamental component of the creative process that helps artists learn the disciplinary framework to progress from student to expert within their field. Through this study of critique, my goal is to define the term itself, to document the varieties and types of critique, examine the role of critique in art institutions, look at best practices, examine critique as a signature pedagogy, evaluate critique’s role in developing the scholarship of teaching and learning within the arts, and explore methods to foster faculty’s inquiry process about student learning. My approach is to use faculty’s interest in critique to nurture their interest in inquiring about their students’ learning and, to simultaneously create an interest in furthering the scholarship of teaching and learning within the arts as well as showcase that outcomes-based assessment is how faculty will answer questions about student learning.

Rationale

The disciplines’ role cannot be understated as they often inform faculty’s perceptions of assessment (Kuh, et al., 2014). For the creative disciplines, one of the most challenging aspects of assessment is determining the appropriate items to analyze for assessment (Chase, Ferguson & Hoey, 2014). In most arts institutions, and certainly at CalArts, the focus of assessment is on the individual student’s work. Faculty articulate that they find little value in objective measures of
groups when what they are primarily interested in is subjective measures of individuals and that artistic outcomes should not be prescribed in a reductionist manner. Basic knowledge and technical skills can be assessed through this approach, but the artistic practice the Institute aims to support is more than the sum of such parts. Assessment at CalArts, therefore, has developed into a discursive process that relies on qualitative methods that lead to holistic evaluations of each student.

Since professional best practices in higher education assessment are often viewed and articulated from a social sciences perspective, relying on group-level assessments and ensuring norms of validity and reliability, assessment from an arts perspective sometimes struggles for legitimacy. There is some irony in this situation considering the arts have a long history of conducting formative and summative assessments through auditions, concerts, recitals, critiques, juries, collaborative performances, portfolio displays, thesis exhibitions, and other forms of review. Because students' work can be observed, recorded, or visually represented, it can be used as a representation of student progress and, thus, gives the arts a natural advantage in terms of outcome assessment (Chase et al., 2014).

While the style and type of these assessments vary between the creative disciplines, they share one universal feature - critique. Each musician's juried review, dancer's recital, visual artist’s studio visit, or an experimental animator’s film showcase provides a moment for faculty, and sometimes peers, to critique the student’s work. Critique is the one universal, prominent, and pervasive form of direct assessment and a pedagogical method used by all programs at CalArts. Constant critique and feedback, including formal committee reviews at the mid-point and the final semester, are essential curricular aspects of every degree program.

With critique being used in all these different formats, the question remains of what
exactly is critique? What is critique’s role within art institutions and their curricula? Is it possible to engage faculty in assessment work by beginning with their own prevalent pedagogy and assessment method of critique? The answer to these questions is important for the institution and the foundation for my study since critique is the major source of individual student assessment and pedagogical method. It also provides another way to document and explain to the public and the non-arts world what students learn at CalArts and gain from an arts education.

**Literature Review**

*What are Critiques?*

For more than a century, critiques have been an important way to evaluate students’ performance in the arts (Anthony, 1991; Dannels & Norris Martin, 2008). Critiques are the main method in which students present their work, receive feedback on their work, solicit informed opinions, and exchange ideas about form, concepts, theory, technique, etc. It is an opportunity for artists to discover how others interpret their work and for faculty to evaluate students’ progress (Barrett, 2000; Barrett, 2012; Elkins, 2012). Simultaneously, the critique is an opportunity where the faculty can look at areas of strength, weakness, and concern during the development of work.

While the purpose of and what occurs within a critique can be articulated, a single definition or model of critique does not exist. Because critiques are dialogues between faculty and students, the practice of critiquing has been passed down through people’s own experiences with critique and, thus, styles and approaches drastically differ. Critiques are situated within subjective parameters, derived from the faculty’s own artistic practice, and aesthetic assumptions; tend to favor process over product, the means over the end, and a belief in a necessary fluidity between the creative act, the author, and the possibilities of a particular final
product; can be interpretive, evaluative, spontaneous, and initiated by either the faculty member or the student. (Barrett, 2000; Blair, 2006).

The absence of a good definition of critique is also due to the fact that critiques of students’ work are communicated through language. “‘Language is playing a constructive as much as a representational role. It is being used to actively create and clarify the design’” (Orr & Bloxham, 2013). Critique is a complex and dynamic discourse in which students have to learn how to engage with the process of critique, discuss their work, and respond to feedback appropriately. (Buster & Crawford, 2010; Barrett, 2000). At CalArts, students construct their learning in conversation with the environment of the Institute, as well as with peers, faculty, and mentors. This approach can be loosely described as a form of dialectical constructivism. Both the literature and CalArts’ practice, articulate that the role of verbal and non-verbal language within critiques illustrates that teaching and learning is a form of exchange about students’ work that is central to arts institutions.

What Exactly Happens During a Critique?

What happens during a critique varies greatly. Some critiques are based on assignment criteria while others are more free form. In some critiques, the instructor does the majority of talking while in others the students carry the conversation. The student who is being critiqued will sometimes provide a little or lot of information about their work. Typically, though, the student will discuss the intent of their work. However, sometimes the student has been asked to just listen to the feedback rather than participate in the conversation. Lastly, the quantity of feedback provided by the student’s peers can also widely vary (Barrett, 2000). Looking at two of CalArts’ classes underscores the variety of what happens during a critique. In the Art Program’s
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Post-Foundation Seminar, the student being critique remains silent focusing their attention on listening to what their peers and instructor are experiencing with the work. Yet in another part of the campus, the Dance Program’s Choreography I course, there are periods where the bulk of the response is from the instructor, periods where it is mixed (instructor and peers) and periods where all response is from peers. Each format provides a differently useful atmosphere.

Critiques can be held for the duration of a class period, final exam period, a special evening event, etc. The basic undergraduate classroom model of critique involves one faculty member and 30 students or less. This is where students need to have the critique process and critical thinking modeled for them. Within these courses, critique depends on the instructor – personality, what skill or point of view the instructor is trying to get across, and how willing the instructor is to have their views challenged (Bulka, 1996).

The length of time, number of faculty present, and students other than the artist who are present can vary. Undergraduate critiques generally run about 10 minutes in length and are conducted with a classroom of students. Graduate level critiques average 30-45 minutes, multiple faculty members, and are in a studio with a few other individuals. Beginning level critiques frequently focus on technique or skills and are brief in length. At the advanced or graduate level, the subject changes to meaning of the work and what it convenes as well as being longer in length and receiving feedback from more faculty (Elkins, 2012).

In CalArts’ Art Program, critique classes commonly include a mix of undergraduate and graduate students. While an unorthodox practice in higher education, this approach is purposeful and the critiques tend to take a more traditional graduate-level approach by focusing on the meaning of the work and receiving feedback as well as being longer in length of time. This practice is contrasted with the critique courses within CalArts’ School of Theater where faculty
follow more of a traditional undergraduate approach with critiques focusing on skills and techniques. “In a first-year performance art class, the talk would be more about theater, setting, lighting, acting, voice, memory, scripting, and presence - all the technical things that support the medium of theater or performance” (Elkins, 2012, p. 10; Buster, Kendall & Crawford, 2010).

In some critiques, the student being critiqued sets the agenda for their session. This format can be seen, for example, in the undergraduate Photography/Media class critiques where the student-artist being critiqued is asked what they want to get from the critique. The student-artist sets the stage for the feedback they hope to receive. In others, like CalArts’ infamous Michael Asher’s crits, the student is interrogated for hours about the intentions of their work. Other critiques have structured stages where the student makes a short presentation/introduction about their work and then the critique dialogue proceeds through recognition, acclimation, and analysis of the work (Elkins, 2012; Thornton, 2008).

In the performing arts, critiques may also take the form of “criticism by doing.” This is where faculty may hum, beat out, sing, or play an instrument of the work they are critiquing. The focus is not placed on verbal feedback but rather on aspects of the student’s performance such as focus, articulation, coherence, integration, and synthesis (Elkins, 2012).

Critiques may also take the form of reviews or use critical response. The Critical Response Process, developed by choreographer and educator Liz Lerman (2003), places emphasis on questions, facilitation, and informed constructive dialogue about art making. The method differs from other types of feedback in that artists have an active role during the critique of their work. Within this process peers provide their feedback about the meaning of the work, the artist asks peers specific questions about the work, and peers ask the artist neutral questions without opinion. The Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance at CalArts has a distinguished
history when it comes to critical response and it can be witnessed during the inclusive weekly critique sessions. In the Choreography I course, the students are divided into two or four groups so that they may have deeper and more informative interactions with fewer students and quicker responses from more of their peers.

The examples provided above showcase the variety of what happens in a critique related to its duration, format, and style. Other examples of critique are listed in Appendix C. The reality is that the variety of what occurs within a critique is somewhat endless since they are reliant on the complex and dynamic discourse that occurs between students, instructors, and peers as well as being a process built on faculty’s own experiences with critique.

**Qualities, Varieties, & Types of Critiques**

There are a variety of types and forms of critiques. Critiques range from faculty-led to faculty-and-student-led, peer critique (student-led, small group, individual student critique by another student) to self-critique, written critique to group critique, etc. Faculty-led, faculty-and-student-led, peer, panel, and group critiques are common at CalArts. However, group critique is the most common form of critique sessions used in art institutions where students present their work to a group of peers and faculty and receive feedback. Seminar critique sessions are typically held in a non-hierarchy situation that feels less threatening and leads to more participation from quieter students (Utaberta et al., 2010). The formality of each type of critique varies from informal conversations within a hallway to formal classroom critiques. The type of critique and formality of CalArts’ critiques can be summarized within layers as depicted in the diagram below.
Group critique is the most common form of critique sessions used in art institutions where students present their work to a group of peers and faculty and receive feedback. Seminar critique sessions are typically held in a non-hierarchy situation that feels less threatening and leads to more participation from quieter students. The formality of each type of critique varies from informal conversations within a hallway to formal classroom critiques. (Barrett, 2000; Elkins, 2012; Utaberta, Hassanpour & Usman, 2010; Bulka, 1996).

Critiques can be one-on-one, with a number of people (such as in a class), or with an audience. One-on-one or individual critiques are one of the most common types of critique. This type of critique is a private and instructor-to-student and may take place during a class period while the remainder of the class continues other work, may be initiated when the student desires feedback, or occurs when a guest artist is asked to conduct individual critiques (Elkins, 2012; Barrett, 2000). One-on-one critiques occur throughout CalArts’ main campus building, in a hallway as a student and faculty member stop for a brief conversation, as part of an independent study, in a student’s studio, during an exhibition, after a noon concert, etc. Students may also seek critique from their faculty mentor at any point during the semester.
The most common form of critique is where students are provided feedback that will help them evaluate and make progress on their work. This is also known as formative critique or interim crits (Utaberta et al., 2010). Formative critique occurs on a daily basis across the Institute. CalArts’ graphic designers participate in weekly Thursday afternoon critiques to present designs and receive feedback. Actors routinely present solo and group pieces in their speech, movement, and studio courses. Film/Video undergraduates participate in courses solely devoted to showing their projects developed outside of class for group discussion and critique. CalArts also uses the critique process for its formative mid-residence reviews held during the mid-point of the student’s degree. The comprehensive reviews of the student’s portfolio, jury, recital, etc. assesses performance-level competency and faculty look at the student’s progress through the program. The process is designed to provide students with in-depth feedback on their work from multiple perspectives through a committee of faculty.

Critique’s Role in Art Institutions

For art institutions, critique is an indispensable part of the creative process. Critique is used for students to present work in an interactive setting that provides a critical direct (usually formative) feedback loop of reflection and improvement on work. The goal of the critique is to take in all the information, further their work, and to teach students a process to self-evaluate their own work after graduation. (Blair, 2006; Elkins, 2012; Crandell & Landecker, 1998). The critique is, thus as Buster, Kendall & Crawford (2010) point out, both a deadline and a continuous starting point in students’ artistic practice as students strive to have work ready for the critique session but use the feedback received during that session for improvement.

The critique plays a large role in an art institution’s curriculum. While art institutions
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hold lectures, demonstrations, and seminars to provide specific information such as current and historical contexts of theory and practice or specific techniques, the majority of students’ learning takes place through working on their art and then participating in critiques (Crandell & Landecker, 1998). This concept is reflected throughout CalArts’ structure of undergraduate degree programs where students start within their métier (or major) and are treated as artists from the very first day of classes. The belief of the institution is that students learn by providing a foundation in history and theory, teaching them how to use equipment, techniques and skills, and then allowing them to practice followed by critiques of their work. The feedback and discourse aspects of critique are unique to art institutions and are essential for the growth of artists.

**Best Practices to Strengthen Critique**

As common as critiques are in art institutions, faculty sometimes find them challenging to conduct. It is challenging when students do not participate or talk during critiques. The question arises how to create the environment where students feel secure to participate in critiques and get the most out of the experience. Best practices suggest that a solid understanding of discipline-specific theory, quality and type of instructor and peer feedback, articulated clear goals, the size of the group, and the instructor facilitating the process help to strengthen critique and encourage participation from all students. (Barrett, 2000).

For critiques to be meaningful, students need a solid understanding of theory. This can take time to develop. Berrizbeitia argued that “There is an idea structure behind criticism. This is the link between criticism and theory. Criticism is a crucial link between theory and practice” (as cited in Bowring, 2000, p. 10). Eighteen-year-old freshmen entering art school are not prepared to give or receive critique. Students need time to develop the structure of theory in relation to
practice and level of maturity in order to use it meaningfully. The curriculum, therefore, should provide the foundation of history and theory within the discipline as well as scaffold the integration of theory, practice, and critique. Since students need a solid foundation of discipline-specific history and theory to make critiques meaningful, this presents as a clear opportunity for assessment. Assessing students’ history and theory knowledge will signify to faculty if they are scaffolding the integration of theory, practice, and critique correctly.

The size of the group participating in critique also matters. Small seminar groups are the size most favored by students due to the effectiveness in assisting with learning. Students felt that smaller groups provided an intimate environment where quiet students could feel more comfortable voicing their opinion and explaining their work. Seminar groups are also more professionally relevant, for some art disciplines, similar to the professional environment where the faculty would be acting as a client. Likewise, faculty also preferred the small group seminar as the preferable environment for learning. (Blair 2006).

Instructor feedback has been identified as one of the most statistically important influences on student learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007 in Schrand & Eliason, 2011). “How we critique matters. Done right, feedback is a constructive, progressive experience. Done right, the information gained is useful, actionable, maybe even inspiring” (Borstel, 2012). Both Barrett (2002) and Borstel (2012) state that critiques are most beneficial and can provide students with a renewed enthusiasm for making art when faculty members do not dominate the conversation, provide honest yet positive feedback, point out weaknesses, and facilitate a non-threatening environment. Multiple studies have shown that critiques need to include “discussion driven by aspiration rather than ideological position (Rogers, 1996); focus on the specific qualities of the work under review (Roth 1999); a climate of ‘spontaneity, empathy, and equality’” (James,
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1996, p. 153); and a commitment to “‘provisionalism’” in commentary offered in critique” in order to inform students’ artistic practice and provide meaningful feedback as well as providing a safe environment for students to share their work (as cited in Soep, 2006).

Communicating both goals for students’ work as well as clear goals for the critique process can help students understand the purpose, expectations, and what they will be doing during a critique session (Estiokom, Forrest, & Amos, n.d.; Anthony, 1991). Most students are never provided formal instruction about critique and, instead, follow the faculty member’s example to know how to discuss their work. Teaching students about the critique process and utilizing various activities to reinforce the goals of critique will help students further engage in the process.

The role of the instructor can also strengthen critique. When the instructor takes on the role as a facilitator, they can then encourage student participation, build trust, and ensure equity. Encouraging participation allows for multiple perspectives so that each student being critiqued may have the possibility of new insights, pool knowledge and to allow students less inclined to participate to not rely or allow others to dominate the conversation. The facilitator’s role is help the class trust the situation that has been created for the critique. Trust allows for students to learn from one another and work together. Through ensuring equity, the facilitator recognizes and reinforces that the different learning styles across the individual members within the class actually helps the group with realizing what it can contribute. (McDonald, Mohr, & McDonald, 2007). There is strength within the group setting for producing those new insights.

While best practices suggest that students need a solid foundation of theory and history, good feedback, articulation of clear goals, small class size, and the instructor facilitating the process, there are additional methods to help facilitate critique. One method is to share the
setting of critique agendas with students. The student being critiqued can write a single question about their work that they want answered during their critique. The questions can then be collected and read aloud to the group. The student would then remain quiet while the group provides feedback. (Barrett, 2000).

Elizabeth Meyer explains that faculty can use a model-only review to show a variety of techniques in order for students to describe their ideas, providing time for students to summarize and reflect on ideas that were discussed, and time management of critiques so that each student has the same time to present their ideas and receive feedback. Faculty can also divide the class into groups so students can learn how to present in front of other students and gain confidence. Lastly, faculty can use dialogic feedback so that students can ask questions about the meaning of the feedback received (as cited in Utaberta et al., 2010, p. 362).

All of the best practices and methods discussed above emphasize that faculty should be aware of their teaching and its positive and negative effects on students for “the faculty’s perception of their role in students learning process also has an important impact on students’ learning experience. Faculty’s views on teaching and learning can support or undermine formative assessment” (Stobart, 2006, p.136).

Critique as a Signature Pedagogy

The lack of a single definition, variety in style, form, group size, feedback, role of the instructor, etc. all point to critique as a signature pedagogy. A signature pedagogy is “the types of teaching that organize the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions” (Shulman, 2005b, p. 52). These forms or styles of teaching are the way to impart the discipline’s “habits of mind” or content that helps students think and act like experts,
“habits of heart” or the values, attitudes and dispositions, and “habits of hand” or the skill (Jenkins, 2012; Shulman, 2005b; Thomson, et al., 2011; Chick, Haynie, & Gurung, 2009). These are the disciplinary frameworks, a requirement for expertise. Critique is one of the ways students learn the arts’ frameworks with the ultimate goal of students being able to utilize the critique process toward their own work as experts do. Each critique is a step on the path of students developing a mature artistic practice (Klebsadel & Kornetsky, 2009; Haughes, Holmgren, & Springbord, 2012; Schrand & Eliason, 2011).

Critique cuts across courses and programs, entails public performance, and requires for students to be interactive with the process through participation in the conversations with instructors and peers. As Shulman (2005b) articulates, signature pedagogies are “pedagogies of uncertainty.” Critiques most certainly are unpredictable and surprising due to critiques depending on the student-artists’ and peers’ contributions in dialogue with each other. Students become accountable to peers as well as the instructor through their level of participation and discourse.

While critique is the shared signature pedagogy by the art disciplines, the focus and relationship between theory, practice, and values varies. For dancers, critique “facilitates an intellectual and kinesthetic deepening of the student’s engagement with the dance profession.” (Kearns, 2016). For performance musicians, there are generally teach-coach, self, audience, and peer are the four ways to utilize critique to guide students toward ways of thinking and habits of mind within music-performance. With actors, critique is used as the method in which students learn how to apply both theory and skill showcasing that they understand the text and style. For visual artists, critique is the way students develop critical and linguistic skills to help them describe, analyze, and interpret their discipline (Klebesadel & Kornetsky, 2008; Hastings, 2016; Kornestsky, 2016). Even though the focus of critique varies between the creative disciplines, the
one universal feature they share, the signature pedagogy of critique prepares students to be professionals and unites them.

Building a Culture of Inquiry Around Teaching & Learning

Within the field of education, teachers are often siloed within their classrooms. The existence of silos prohibits good ideas and practices from being shared with others. Generally, for most educators, teaching is a private experience shared with students but rarely with colleagues. The classroom can be an “experience of pedagogical solitude” (Shulman, 2005a). For disciplines with a signature pedagogy teaching the students the habits of mind, heart, and hand to prepare them to be professionals within their field, “pedagogical solitude” does not allow faculty to learn from or build on the accomplishments of their colleagues. Creating space for faculty to converse and participate in activities with colleagues both inside their own institution and out can provide faculty with new perspectives, opportunities to develop inquiry skills, and access to resources and ideas they may not have discovered on their own. “…it is the professional responsibility of educators to engage continuously in their own efforts to study the quality of their work, its fidelity to their missions, and its impact on students intellectually, practically, and morally” (Shulman, 2005a, p. x). This work can help improve teaching and learning for faculty’s own classrooms as well as for others.

Maki (2002) explains that faculty members often have an “intellectual curiosity” that attracts them to their work and drives them to continue finding solutions to advance their teaching and students learning. When faculty’s “intellectual curiosity” is directed towards questions of how pedagogy and student learning interact, their curiosity naturally shifts toward looking at their teaching and the ways students learn and use the habits of mind, heart, and head of their discipline. Maki’s work has informed the direction of my project – by directing faculty’s
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inquiry towards critique and student learning, they will begin to reflect on their own teaching and examine how their students the ultimate goals of critique. This could then strengthen the sense of community around the creative discipline’s signature pedagogy.

Building upon faculty’s “intellectual curiosity” to create disciplinary communities of inquiry provides opportunities for faculty to step out of their silos and engage with their colleagues around questions of student learning. When faculty begin examining questions about student learning, faculty’s “intellectual curiosity” can lead them into practitioner research focusing on answering a specific question and looking at what it means for the instructor to teach a specific way to a specific group of students in a specific class. That work has the potential to become scholarly leading to the advancement of the scholarship of teaching and learning. The signature pedagogy provides a structure to guide the scholarship of teaching and learning in better preparing future artists who are the future of the discipline. The scholarship of teaching and learning invites faculty to see teaching as a serious profession which requires asking questions about their students’ learning, look for evidence within their classes, and document the work in a public way so that others may benefit. (Shulman, 2005a; Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Hutchings, 2010).

At the same time, fostering faculty’s “intellectual curiosity” will ultimately lead to larger engagement in assessment. After all, the answers to faculty’s inquiries about student learning require assessment. By connecting assessment to the scholarship of teaching and learning, faculty bring their skills, knowledge, and values as scholars within their field to their work as educators. Faculty then ask questions about their students’ learning, collect and evaluate evidence about those questions, make changes based on what they find, and share their insights with others. Through this process, the scholarship of teaching and learning and student outcome
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assessments then have common ground looking at how students learn, using an evidence-based approach to improvement, become public about learning, building communities of inquiry, reflection, and improvement. Promoting the scholarship of teaching and learning can create a climate in which faculty can see that assessment can be accomplished by examining their own curiosities and it remains within their control. When bridges are established between the scholarship of teaching and learning and the work of assessment, assessment can move more easily into the classroom and discipline. (Hutchings, 2011).

As faculty engage in conversations that focus on teaching and learning, this indicates that a culture of assessment is growing because assessment connects and reinforces teaching and learning (Maki, 2004; Driscoll & Wood, 2007; Hersh & Keeling, 2013). Assessment should develop out of faculty’s teaching and their questions about students’ learning (Hutchings, 2010). Assessment becomes seen as more “valuable” when it is closer-to-the-classroom for assessment in the classroom sets the stage for work at the program and institutional level. “But it is, after all, the deeper thinking about how and how well students acquire the field’s knowledge, practices, values, and habits of mind – and how to improve learning in all of those areas – that assessment (at its best) is after.” (Hutchings, 2011). When assessment is driven by and engaged with the discipline’s ways of thinking, acting, and valuing, faculty become more engaged and find more value.

Utilizing the principles and practices of the scholarship of teaching and learning can also assist assessment work particularly in increasing faculty engagement. Hutchings advises that one can promote faculty engagement in assessment by looking at how students ‘decode the disciplines’ (Pace & Middendorf, 2004 in Hutchings, 2010) and learn ‘disciplinary habits of mind’ (Garung, Chick & Haynie, 2008 in Hutchings, 2010). When assessment reflects and
respects disciplinary interests, it is more likely to lead to greater faculty engagement. Essentially, assessment has to live with faculty, in the classrooms “allowing faculty to operate where they are most comfortable and to bring their field’s distinctive questions, methods, and ways of thinking to the task of improving student learning” (Hutchings, 2011).

Kuh, et al. (2014) suggests that campus leaders should align assessment with faculty’s interest on improving teaching and learning and focusing on questions relevant and issues of student success to engage faculty in assessment work. After all, assessment begins with understanding how students learn, documenting performance, adjusting teaching methodologies, and improve learning outcomes. By connecting assessment to improved learning connects it to the work that faculty value, this can increase faculty engagement, which is a vital component as it connects teaching and learning to assessment and affirms faculty’s role in preserving the institution’s quality of education.

The research described in this section provides a solid pathway for connecting critique as a signature pedagogy with faculty’s natural inquiries about how students learn within that process. Those inquiries can lead to faculty seeking evidence to answer their questions, analyze the data, and document their insights with the goal to improve teaching and learning within their own classrooms and others.

*Creating an Environment to Move From Inquiry to Outcomes-Based Assessment*

To create an environment that fosters inquiry into student learning requires relooking at how faculty’s time is spent. Personal reflection and scholarly inquiry are essential to improving student learning and contributing to the professional development of faculty. Teaching cannot improve without documenting the ways faculty support student learning, make their findings
public, and to converse with colleagues. Institutions truly committed to advancing student learning is shown when both time and space is devoted for faculty conversations that focus on assessment which allows for inquiry and research on student learning, analysis of results, and reflection on course and programmatic outcomes and how that may involve the discipline’s pedagogy and curriculum (Maki, 2002; Hatch, 2005).

To develop faculty habits of inquiry and evidence, Hutchings (2010) suggest offering small grants to faculty testing out a new classroom approach and then they assess the impact of their innovation on student learning and share what they learn in campus events. This recommendation supports the ability that I have as a campus leader to develop grants through the Provost Office for faculty to research a question they have about their students’ learning, to test out new approaches, and to help guide them into using assessment to answer their questions. For faculty who are awarded such grants, I would like to feature and reward faculty for their assessment work. This could be either through awards, ability to attend conferences, and/or opportunities for publication (Kuh, et al., 2014).

At the same time, faculty development support is needed. Hersh & Keeling (2013) propose providing support for faculty development in pedagogy, learning, assessment of learning, peer support, group learning, formal workshops, and coaching by colleagues. Huber & Hutchings (Kul, et al., 2014) recommend informal spaces or “teaching commons” that “provide forums for faculty to communicate with each other about wide-ranging pedagogical issues, questions, and insights.” Kezar (2014) also states that faculty learning communities help connect about similar interests and to increase organizational learning and sensemaking. This information will inform potential ways for faculty to share their style of critique, what process student-artists being critiqued and peers providing feedback use during critiques, insights they have learned
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over the years as a teacher, and questions they may have about their students learning and other critique processes.
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References


Blair, B. (2006). ‘At the end of a huge crit in the summer, it was “crap” – I’d worked really hard but all she said was “fine” and I was gutted.’ Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education, 5 (2), 83-95.


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### Examples of Other Critique Methods Used

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<th>Method</th>
<th>Purpose/Use</th>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Group Size</th>
<th>Process</th>
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| **Liz Lerman Critical Response Process** | Supports students and peers in development of works-in-progress through a facilitated dialogue. | Any length     | Any size   | 1. Statements of Meaning - Peers and instructor state what was meaningful, interesting, striking, etc. in the work.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 2. Artist as Questioner - Student asks questions about the work and peers/instructor respond but do not offer suggestions for change.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 3. Neutral Questions - Peers/instructor ask neutral questions about the work and student responds.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 4. Opinion Time - Peers/instructor provide opinions subject to permission of the student.  
| **Collaborative Assessment Conference Protocol** | 1. Enhance instructor’s perceptions of students’ work.  
 |                               | 2. Encourage depth of perception.                                           | 45 minutes to 90 minutes | 5-30 people | 1. Presenting - Instructor asks student what they brought to the group. Student presents work offering only minimal context. Peers read silently or examine work.  
 |                               | 3. Encourage a balance of perception.                                       |                |            | 2. Describing - Instructor asks the group to state what they see. Peers respond by describing components or aspects of the work without providing judgment.  
 |                               | 4. Encourage conversation among instructors.                                |                |            | 3. Raising Questions - Instructor asks the peers what questions they have. Peers respond questions. Student remains quiet and makes notes.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 4. Speculating - Instructor asks peers what they think the student is working on. Peers respond and are asked to provide evidence.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 5. Responding - Instructor invites student to share their thoughts having heard the conversation.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 6. Reflecting and discussing - Instructor opens discussion, asking peers and students to reflect on experience of the protocol.  |
| **Peeling the Onion Protocol** | Used to help peers not jump to solving the problem. Provides a structured way to understand the complexity of the problem. | 40 minutes     | 10-12 people | 1. Sharing the problem - Student volunteers to share a problem for which they would like help.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 2. Clarifying questions - Peers may ask clarifying questions for additional information.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 3. Active listening - Going around the room, each student restates the problem using “I understand the problem to be…” statements. Student remains quiet and may take notes.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 4. Peeling/probing - Going around the room, each student may ask additional questions.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 5. Response - Student may share responses about any new thoughts they have after hearing the questions.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 6. Open conversation - Group may have an open conversation.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 7. Debrief - Instructor asks “How was this like peeling an onion? Why did we do this activity? What other ‘onions’ are there to peer in our work together?”  |
| **Issaquah Protocol**         | Models a developmentally appropriate order for questioning.                  | 50 minutes     | 10-15 people | 1. Presentation - Student presents a problem that they have been working on.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 2. Clarifying Questions - Peers may ask information only questions to better understand the problem.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 3. Active listing/reflecting back - Going around the room, peers respond with “What I think is going on in this problem is…”  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 4. Check-in - The instructor asks the students if the peers/instructor are understanding the problem correctly or what might need to be added/changed.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 5. Interpretive listing/reflecting back - Going around the room, peers respond with “What I think is going on in this problem is…”  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 6. Check-in again - Instructor asks the students if the groups responses sound.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 7. Probing questions - Peers ask non-leading questions for to encourage the student to think deeper about the problem.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 8. Response - Instructor asks the student if the questions made them think about the problem differently.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 9. Suggestions - Student determines if they want suggestions and, if desired, peers may offer suggestions using “What if you…?” or “Have you thought of…” statements.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 10. Response - Student shares next steps.  
 |                               |                                                                            |                |            | 11. Debriefing - Student begins debrief and then all peers may participate. Instructor asks “What was it like to go through these steps? Which kind of question was most useful/least useful? Could the process follow a different order and have it work? How does this relate to your work? Type of questions.  |


Appendix B

Examining Critique as a Signature Pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habits of the “Mind”</th>
<th>Habits of the “Hand”</th>
<th>Habits of the “Heart”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In foundation courses, instructors introduce students to the culture of critique.</td>
<td>Students develop artistic literacy and facility through the discipline’s creative and critical thinking skills.</td>
<td>Students learn what is valued in the discipline.</td>
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<td>Teaches process of creating art, appreciate the form, and understanding assessment of works.</td>
<td>Students develop the ability to learn from others’ feedback as well as their own critical self-evaluation, which helps students grow as artists.</td>
<td>Students examine what counts as “art”, look at different systems of representation, consider different approaches and perspectives of interpretation, and handle judgment.</td>
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<td>Students observe how instructors articulate the criteria used to evaluate their work.</td>
<td>Students learn to communicate with others through feedback dialogue. In that process, students have to think about what they say and how they will express their views to others.</td>
<td>Students learn the disciplinary framework of self-assessment.</td>
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<td>Through practice and discussion, students are exposed to various critique strategies and to the visual vocabulary commonly used in critique.</td>
<td>Students learn to share ideas and seek assistance from peers and instructors.</td>
<td>Students learn the disciplinary understandings of how the arts and artists function in society.</td>
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<td>Students learn the process for creating successful work within critique.</td>
<td>Students learn that critique is not always about the work being critiqued. It is about how the student approaches what they are making, clarifying decision making, and understanding what motivates the choices that are made.</td>
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<td>Students learn to apply the analytical skills learned in critique to their own work and, ultimately, to their professional fields.</td>
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