Abstract:

Information Systems (IS) educators have long recognized the importance of critical thinking (CT) as an essential element in the success of their curricula. Past research on CT in IS curricula mainly focused on individual courses. This paper discusses our experience in incorporating CT in our Computer Information Systems (CIS) curricula under a university-wide initiative. Our university adopted a formal process for approving Applied Critical Thinking (ACT) syllabi for courses. The approval process is based on incorporating selected CT elements into the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), identifying CT-enhancing activities, and setting up a CT assessment plan according to a university-wide evaluation guideline. Six required and four elective courses for CIS students have been approved as ACT courses. This paper reports our activities, experimentation, and preliminary results. It discusses five unique features of our approach of weaving CT into our IS curricula. Our experience indicates that incorporating CT in the program level, and not only in the individual course level, has a good potential to be cost effective. The approaches reported here may also be adopted in individual courses.