

LEARNING RESOURCES – LIBRARY

By Fay Byrd



Identification cards (ID) are required for college events, to use library computers for curriculum research, and to check out books or videotapes, etc. Please come during the first two weeks of the

semester and get your ID card made in the library. After September 20th, IDs will be made at specific time as posted. And those hours may not be convenient to the user. Proof of paid registration qualifies one for a password for NCLIVE, a database of thousands of professional articles.

The library is open 8:00 am – 9:00 pm Monday – Thursday and 8:00 am until 5:00 pm on Friday. The Saturday schedule will be posted in the library. WCC Alleghany and Ashe Centers also have the public libraries and support in addition to the WCC library.

If you are looking for a specific book and you see that we do not have it, request the book through one of the library staff. It may be obtained through purchase or through interlibrary loan.

Wilkes Community College Embraces Critical Thinking

By Belinda Smithey

The 2005 – 2006 school year at Wilkes Community College will be an exciting time for students, faculty, and staff. It will mark the reaffirmation of WCC's accreditation which occurs every ten years. Faculty and staff have been working extremely hard over the past year and a half preparing for a visit that occurs the first week in October.

The On-Site Review Committee, consisting of seven members, will be visiting WCC to review our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) which is a necessary part of accreditation and also an opportunity to enhance student learning. Through analysis of surveys administered in 2004, the focus of the QEP (*Wilkes Community College will embrace critical thinking throughout the college community in order to enhance student learning*) was determined. Last year was spent designing a plan for embracing critical thinking. The On-Site Review Committee will evaluate the plan and interview personnel to determine its acceptability in fulfilling the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) requirements. The committee will make recommendations and provide advice and consultation to assist us in strengthening the QEP.

After addressing any necessary recommendations, WCC will begin full implementation of the QEP in January 2006. Some introductory implementation has already taken place. For instance, there are posters all over campus that ask, "What Is Critical Thinking?" Faculty and staff have also been engaged through dialogue in Learning Circles since March. Others have participated in professional development activities with experts in critical thinking from The Foundation of Critical Thinking. Scott Johnson, Cinnamon Martin, Julie Mullis, and Belinda Smithey traveled to San Francisco in July and participated in the International Conference on Critical Thinking. Personnel have also traveled to Surry Community College and Southwestern Community College throughout the year for sessions with Richard Paul and Gerald Nosich.

How will the QEP affect students?

Experts in the educational and learning fields say that learning is a consequence of thinking. WCC is committed to helping our students learn through improved thinking skills. Improvement of thinking skills requires practice the same as anything else one desires to improve. For instance, a basketball player must learn and practice the appropriate skills to be successful. Everything that students encounter at WCC will eventually incorporate critical thinking skills based on a model of critical thinking the college is adopting. It will provide a common language for all personnel and students. The utilization and encouragement of student's use of critical thinking will be evident in the classroom, student activities, counseling services, the business office, the bookstore, etc.

The changes will take place over time with the main implementation taking place in 2008. However, students this school year should be able to start recognizing new approaches to instruction, assessment, services, policies, and interaction in general at WCC.

For further information on the model of critical thinking adopted by the college, go to www.criticalthinking.org.