PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to assess and evaluate if the critical thinking learning outcomes were being reached at an acceptable level by each dental hygiene student in this dental hygiene clinical course.

**Methods:** A 13 item self confidence survey was administered to 27 undergraduate dental hygiene students enrolled in Dental Hygiene Principles of Practice III. The survey was anonymous and included a duplicate copy for the students to obtain. The self confidence survey was administered three weeks into the fall semester and again six weeks later. Both surveys were returned yielding an 88% response rate.

**Discussion:** The learning outcomes that the students’ conveyed to have lower confidence in became crucial teachable moments for the clinical faculty to spend with the students.

Not only did the **Central Question** for the students, “How can I treat this patient in the best way possible, based upon their assessment needs?” continued to be asked but this **Central Question** emerged of “How can we as course faculty (using the elements of reasoning) prepare the students to assess their patient’s needs to be able to treat them in the best way possible?”

**GOAL ACHIEVED**

The findings suggested that this Classroom Assessment Technique (CAT) activity, Course-related Self-Confidence Survey, accomplished the goal of incorporating the standards of critical thinking in assessing the students in their clearness, accuracy, importance, precision, and relevance of the fundamental and powerful concept, the Dental Hygiene Process of Care.

**REFERENCES**