

# Ideas to Action (i2a)

## Using Critical Thinking to Foster Student Learning and Community

UNIVERSITY OF  
**LOUISVILLE**  
DELPHI CENTER FOR  
TEACHING & LEARNING



### Background

Ideas to Action: Using Critical Thinking to Foster Student Learning and Community Engagement, also known as i2a, is our multi-year initiative to enhance undergraduate students' critical thinking skills and effectively prepare them to contribute to society. In accordance with accreditation requirements set by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), we created i2a in 2007 as our quality enhancement plan (QEP). This ongoing initiative is designed to help students build core critical thinking skills in General Education courses and sharpen these skills in discipline-specific contexts in the major courses. This foundation supports students' completion of a culminating undergraduate experience (CUE), guiding them to integrate practical application of disciplinary knowledge with higher-order thinking skills. i2a empowers students to put their ideas into action and apply what they are learning in authentic contexts and community settings throughout their undergraduate experiences.

### Goals:

**QEP Goal 1:** Critical thinking is explicitly taught throughout the undergraduate experience, preparing students to apply critical thinking skills across academic domains and to integrate these skills into their lives beyond campus.

**QEP Goal 2:** Students will develop the ability to address community issues and engage in integrated learning, reflection, and content application to real world situations and community learning experiences.



### Why is it important?

Ongoing application of i2a principles provides students with powerful habits of mind. These strategies and principles assist UofL students in becoming comfortable with complexity and ambiguity. Students gain independent and excellent thinking skills, leading to better decision making and quality of life.



## What students are saying about i2a:

“Brings out my best thinking.”

“It’s like a pro and con list on steroids.”

“Gives me a competitive edge.”

“A toolbox I can use in any situation in college and afterward.”

## A Guide to the i2a Website

[louisville.edu/ideastoaction](http://louisville.edu/ideastoaction)

- **About:** This section provides an overview and information about our scholarly approach and resources to each component of i2a, including our evaluation plan and Fifth Year Impact Report.
- **Programs and Services:** Information and links to our signature programs—learning communities, the annual i2a Institute, internal SUN Grants program, and other special events are available in this section.
- **Resources:** This section includes i2a annual reports, articles, select presentations, original i2a scholarship, as well as video testimonials from faculty, staff and students. Additionally, an exemplar webpage showcases “before and after” faculty and staff artifacts, assignments, and syllabi, and a CUE Curricular Toolkit provides best practices and useful links.
- **Leadership:** This section explains our leadership structure, lists i2a Steering Committee members, and houses our charge issued by the provost.
- **Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning:** This is the gateway to i2a’s on campus home and the university teaching center website whose mission supports face to face teaching efforts, strengthens distance education and teaching with technologies, and customizes other professional development programs.

## i2a Team

**Patty Payette, Ph.D.**

Executive Director, i2a

Associate Director, Delphi Center

[patty.payette@louisville.edu](mailto:patty.payette@louisville.edu)

502.852.5171

**IL Barrow, M.A.**

i2a Specialist for Assessment

[il.barrow@louisville.edu](mailto:il.barrow@louisville.edu)

502.852.5105

**Nisha Gupta, Ph.D.**

i2a Specialist for Culminating Experiences

[nisha.gupta@louisville.edu](mailto:nisha.gupta@louisville.edu)

502.852.5104

**Edna Ross, Ph.D.**

i2a Specialist for Critical Thinking

Associate Professor, Psychological and Brain Sciences

[edna.ross@louisville.edu](mailto:edna.ross@louisville.edu)

502.852.5138

**Jessica Musselwhite, M.A.**

i2a Program Coordinator Senior

[jessica.musselwhite@louisville.edu](mailto:jessica.musselwhite@louisville.edu)

502.852.7611

**Kimberly Smith**

i2a Graduate Assistant

[kimberly.smith.2@louisville.edu](mailto:kimberly.smith.2@louisville.edu)

502.852.7251