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PART II FOSTERING STUDENT INQUIRY

The world has no shortage of reform advocates exhorting teachers to promote “active student involvement in learning.” Most teachers would love to have active, involved students. But student reticence in class is notorious and figuring out how to overcome it (or bypass it altogether) is a nontrivial task. The two articles in this section suggest very different approaches to the task.

Questioning is an essential step in critical thinking, but most professors find their students rather willing to take what they hear or read at face value. Susan Brodie analyzes the problem and offers strategies for helping students learn to ask questions. Her approach can be adapted to the study of just about any discipline.

Don Wulff and Jody Nyquist provide a careful description of the use of field methods to involve students deeply in the inquiry strategies of a discipline. Their thoughtful, imaginative planning of the course is a model of professional practice; and the structure they outline suggests possibilities for any faculty member who teaches in a subject where field methods are appropriate.