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Asking the Right Questions (cont.)

Remember, this tip is not just about how to ask the right question for a particular lecture, class or presentation. Keep in mind that the bigger questions that you ask in relation to the course learning outcomes should serve as a foundation and guide that impacts the design of the whole course...select learning activities...student projects... ways to assess, etc. If the right questions are asked up front, then you increase the odds of creating an intellectually stimulating learning environment for your students. Here are a few more questions (*See Ken Bain) that you might find helpful.

- How will I find out what they know already and what they expect from the course, and how will I reconcile any differences between my expectations and theirs? *
- How will I help students learn to learn, to examine and assess their own learning and thinking, and to read more effectively, analytically, and actively?
- How will I find out how students are learning before assessing them, and how will I provide feedback before—and separate from—any assessment of them?
- How will I communicate with students in a way that will keep them thinking?
- How will I spell out the intellectual and professional standards I will be using in assessing students’ work, and why do I use those standards? How will I help students learn to assess their own work using those standards?
- How will the students and I best understand the nature, progress, and quality of their learning?
- How will I create a natural critical learning environment in which I embed the skills and information I wish to teach in assignments (questions and tasks) that students will find fascinating—authentic tasks that will arouse curiosity, challenge students to rethink their assumptions and examine their mental models of reality? How will I create a safe environment in which students can try, fail, receive feedback, and try again?

* I have summarized these questions from Ken Bain’s book, *What the Best College Teachers Do*. CTLT has a copy of this book in their library.
