The quality of our lives is determined by the quality of our thinking. The quality of our thinking, in turn, is determined by the quality of our questions, for questions are the engine, the driving force behind thinking. Without questions, we have nothing to think about. Without essential questions, we often fail to focus our thinking on the significant and substantive. Every intellectual field is born out of a cluster of essential questions that drive the mind to pursue particular facts and understandings. Every field stays alive only to the extent that fresh questions are generated and taken seriously as the driving force in thinking.

In this conference we focus on questions as indispensable intellectual tools. We focus on a range of principles essential to formulating, analyzing, assessing, and settling primary questions. The goal is to help students achieve a state of mind in which essential questions become second nature; these questions are the keys to productive thinking, deep learning, and effective living.

Dr. Richard Paul is a distinguished leader in the international critical thinking movement. He is Director of Research at the Center for Critical Thinking, the Chair of the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, and author of over 200 articles and seven books on critical thinking.

Dr. Linda Elder is an educational psychologist and a prominent authority on critical thinking. She is President of the Foundation for Critical Thinking and Executive Director of the Center for Critical Thinking. She has coauthored four books and 21 thinker’s guides on critical thinking.

Dr. Gerald Nosich is an authority on critical thinking. His work has been highlighted at more than 150 national and international workshops on critical thinking. He is the author of two books including Learning to Thinking Things Through.

Dr. Enoch Hale is a major presenter for the Foundation for Critical Thinking. His PhD dissertation, entitled A Critical Analysis of Richard Paul’s Substantive Trans-disciplinary Conception of Critical Thinking is, to date, the most comprehensive analysis of the Paulian approach to critical thinking.

Mr. Rush Cosgrove is Historian for the Foundation for Critical Thinking and is engaged in research for a PhD at the University of Cambridge. He holds Masters degrees from both the University of Oxford, New College and the University of Cambridge, Darwin College.

The works of the Fellows of the Foundation for Critical Thinking have been translated into many languages including French, Greek, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Turkish, Arabic, German, and Polish.

For detailed descriptions of the conference sessions and conference theme, visit criticalthinking.org.
The conference is designed to empower participants both theoretically and pragmatically. All sessions are grounded in carefully refined concepts and provide practical ways to come to terms with critical thinking practices. There are many ways to begin to implement critical thinking. Participants will be exposed to a variety of strategies to improve teaching and learning. This will include ways to design instruction so that on a typical day students will take ownership of the content they are learning. It will include strategies in the art of critical reading, writing, speaking and listening. All sessions will entail active participation by all attendees. Expect lively discussions and meaningful exchange of ideas with other participants. New registrants will be introduced to the foundations of critical thinking; returning registrants will deepen their understanding of critical thinking and ability to foster it.

Dr. Michael Shermer is the Publisher of Skeptic magazine, a monthly columnist for Scientific American, and author of many books including Why People Believe Weird Things. He was a college professor for 20 years, and has appeared on such shows as The Colbert Report, 20/20, Dateline, Charlie Rose, and Larry King Live. Dr. Shermer was the co-host and co-producer of the 13-hour Family Channel television series, Exploring the Unknown.

Mr. Ethan Watters is the author of Crazy Like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche and coauthor of Making Monsters, an indictment of the recovered memory movement. A frequent contributor to The New York Times Magazine, Discover, Men’s Journal, Details, Wired, and PRI’s This American Life, he has appeared on such national media as Good Morning America, Talk of the Nation, and CNN. His work has been featured in the Best American Science and Nature Writing series.