Questions to Improve Student Reading

Questions Regarding Your Students:
- What is/are the biggest problem(s) with reading in higher education today?
- What keeps students from reading? What obstacles or challenges impede their progress? Are there any aids or resources already at their disposal that they should/could be taking advantage of?
- What reading strategies do your students adopt? What strategies do you use?
- What reading proficiency assumptions do you have regarding incoming students?

Questions Regarding Your Teaching:
- How do you present the readings to your class? What advantages or disadvantages come from talking about the readings with students?
- What expectations do you have with the readings? How important is it for your class? Do you expect students to read deeply? What exactly is a deep reading of a text? What portion or percentage of the class is dedicated to lecture, in-class activities, out-of-class projects, reading assignments, etc?
- How will you make students accountable for the readings? How much of the grade is dependent on the readings?
- How much reading do you assign? How much/many of the readings do your students complete?
- How have you dealt with reading in the past?
- Would it be beneficial to have students re-read a text? Would it be valuable to have students write and hand in a paper on the readings? Why or why not?
- What insecurities may you have felt about assigned readings? What solutions can you offer?
- How relevant are the readings to the lectures?

Questions Regarding Your Discipline:
- What are the major tools of your profession? How essential is it to keep up on the research? How much reading does this entail? How do professors decide what gets read?
- How are texts in your discipline organized? Would it be useful to discuss the organization of texts as a whole or assign individual texts before students are asked to grapple with them?
- What kinds of texts do the students read throughout the course of a semester? What should students know before they start reading the assigned texts? Is it best for them to approach the reading without any prior comments from the instructor? Why or why not?

1 Many of the questions on this handout resulted from a conversation with Carolyn Colvin, Associate Dean of the College of Education, 2008.