Discussion Questions for Initiating Change from "Rethinking Remedial Education and the Academic-Vocational Divide" by Mike Rose, UCLA

1. **Compare your project with institutional goals.** How would you characterize the educational goals of your institution for associate degree and transfer students, certificate/occupational students, and students required to take two or more remedial classes? How can your project align with institutional goals in order to address gaps in student achievement?

2. **Understand your context.** What is the history of the course or program you are rethinking? When did it begin? For what student population? What was the curriculum? What were the goals of the course or program? As best as you can tell, what were the demographic, economic, and political conditions of the college at the time? How has the course or program changed over time?

3. **Examine your practice.** Underlying any curriculum is a theory of learning, a definition of achievement, and a set of assumptions about the students who will receive the curriculum. These need to be articulated (possibly unearthed), otherwise any curricular change runs the risk of replacing old materials with new, but not changing the conceptual underpinnings of practice. What is the theory of learning for your project?

4. **Identify your challenges.** For this project, what are the barriers to change at your campus? Consider the following levels or factors: institutional, curricular, personnel, student population, and the surrounding community. What comes into focus when you look at your project through the lens of each of these factors? Which challenges do you need to tackle first?
5. **Name your resources.** Considering the same factors, what are the facilitators of change? What comes into focus when you look at your project through the lens of each of these factors?

6. **Step outside the lines.** We easily get locked into our disciplinary silos and administrative turf and this situation can constrain our creativity. Can you think of atypical tasks or events that might open up silos and turfs? Or people? Are there people on or off campus who are not yet involved who could help you think in fresh ways?

7. **Adapt ideas to your own context.** Good ideas will need to be adapted to accommodate local conditions, both when bringing ideas from other parts of the college or from other institutions. Scaling up involves both adoption and adaption. This does not mean a mechanical reproduction of a curriculum or program, but rather a thoughtful and creative implementation of its spirit and intent. What are the key components of a practice that you are seeking to adapt and how will you tailor them to your own context?

8. **Don’t let economics over-shadow education.** In a time of severe budget cuts and significant constraints on what we can do, the economic purpose and outcomes of education are understandably from and center. Still, it is important to keep sight of—and give voice to—the other goals of education in a democracy: intellectual growth, civic participation, and social, ethical, and moral development. How does your idea address both economic realities and democratic ideals?