



**IPESL Grant Application  
(Initiative to Promote Excellence in Student Learning)  
Minnesota State University, Mankato**

**PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

Title of Project: Global Perspectives: Advancing critical thinking through increased media literacy

Name: Barb Bergman & Cheryl Radeloff

Are you full-time faculty in 2006-2007? Yes

Do you plan to return to MSU in 2007-2008? Yes

e-mail: barb.bergman@mnsu.edu ; cheryl.radeloff@mnsu.edu

Campus Address: ML3097 ; MH109

Campus Phone: 5945 ; 1672

College: Library Services ; Social & Behavioral Sciences

Department: Library Services ; Women's Studies

Spring Semester Schedule:

List times when available to participate in Learning Communities and workshops.

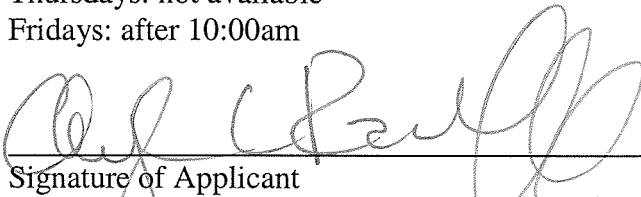
Mondays: any time

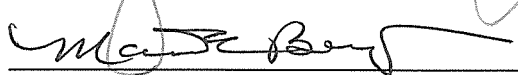
Tuesdays: not available


Wednesdays: after 11:00am

Thursdays: not available

Fridays: after 10:00am

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant 11/27/06

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chair/Director/Supervisor 11/27/06

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of College Dean/Vice President 11/27/06

**Ross, Stewart**

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**From:** Radeloff, Cheryl L  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 07, 2006 12:46 PM  
**To:** Ross, Stewart  
**Subject:** Departmental meetings

Stewart,  
It looks like I will be having departmental meetings on Wednesday in the Spring from 11:30-12:30. Just something you may need to know.

Thanks, Cheryl



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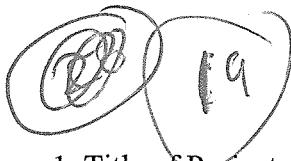
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Barb Bergman 11/27/06  
Signature of Applicant

Berky Schwartzkopf 11/27/06  
Signature of Department Chair/Director/Supervisor

Donna Rose 11/27/06  
Signature of College Dean/Vice President



1. Title of Project: **Global Perspectives: Advancing critical thinking through increased media literacy**

2. *Explain the purpose of your project (e.g., need, project goals or outcomes, significance, affected student population) and include a definition of “critical thinking” as appropriate to your project.*

Critical thinking is defined as the ability to identify and challenge assumptions, to search for alternative ways of thinking, and to summarize a reflective analysis (Ore, 2006). The purpose of our project is to increase undergraduate students’ media literacy because “being literate in the media age requires critical thinking skills that empower us as we make decisions” (AMLA, 2006). We believe that focusing on media literacy skills is important because although students access media constantly, ETS (2006) reports that students taking the new Information Literacy Assessment showed a surprising lack of critical thinking skills. Documentaries and feature films will be integrated into the course content of Global Perspectives on Women and Change to facilitate critical analysis of global women’s issues. The use of films is highly appropriate for this course because visual media has an ability to illuminate lived experiences in a way that lecture cannot.

By encouraging students to explore the role of media in normalizing stereotypes and misrepresentations about other cultures, media can also be used as a tool for promoting alternative ways of understanding different cultures. Thus, we hope to improve critical thinking through increased media literacy skills. Through critically viewing films, reflecting, performing active research, and presenting findings, students will gain a better understanding of the diverse issues impacting women globally and will have the tools to understand these complex issues. Ideally students will learn to “watch carefully; think critically” (CML, 2006).

3. *Describe your project and how it will enhance students’ critical thinking through one or more of the following activities:*

- *development, implementation, and assessment of new instructional or curriculum materials*
- *development, implementation, and assessment of new support mechanisms*
- *development and implementation of new assessments*

A proposal has been submitted to change Global Perspectives from a three to a four-credit course. Through collaborative design between a Social & Behavioral Sciences and a Library faculty member, this course redesign project will add active learning and critical

thinking exercises through the application of media literacy principles. The project co-directors plan to introduce pre- & post-assessment of media literacy, increase students' research and presentation skills, and develop an assignment that asks students to submit their analysis as either a film review or a film discussion guide. The course will also increase library instruction to emphasize research skills to support evaluative thinking objectives. The librarian will bring expertise in selecting a core list of films and will teach students about locating and evaluating non-print materials. Students will be asked to use an inquiry chart to answer questions about their topic from multiple media formats. For example: a book, a feature film, a documentary film, and a news recording may serve as evidence. Exercises adapted from *Second Thoughts: Critical Thinking for a Diverse Society* (Teays 2006) will be utilized. By making the course film intensive, our goal is to engage the students with active viewing techniques which require a viewer response. We also believe that a film-focused syllabus will more fully engage visual learners than traditional text-based courses.

Global Perspectives will be taught during Spring 2007 and Spring 2008. We will use this year's section to test some of these added critical thinking elements for incorporation into the 2008 section, which is anticipated to be a four-credit course.

#### 4. *How will you assess the results of your completed project?*

Student learning outcomes will be assessed through a variety of methods. To begin, students will be given a pre- & post-test assessment of their knowledge of media literacy, research skills, and the basic goals/objectives of the course. Students will gain knowledge about media literacy through course instruction, writing, and learning activities, and be assessed using ideas from resources such as *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (Angelo and Cross 1993). In addition, course re-developers will produce a variety of activities and exercises that will be evaluated by teaching colleagues, academic support professionals (such as personnel from the Center for Academic Success), the students, as well as the course re-developers. We look forward to learning about additional assessment methods for evaluating critical thinking development during our participation in the IPESL learning community.

5. How will you disseminate your project and its results? (e.g., department colloquium, professional conference, college colloquium, university-wide colloquium, publication, IPESL website)

We plan to add some of these critical thinking activities to other courses, and we will offer sessions to forums such as the IPESL learning communities or the Faculty Exchange Series about how media literacy can be used to encourage the development of critical thinking skills. We will plan similar presentations at state CTL conferences. We will also pursue national dissemination through publication in a journal such as *Feminist Teacher* or *Teaching Sociology* and/or co-presenting at the major conferences in our respective fields. Sessions at our national/regional conferences often address media literacy in direct relation to course content and delivery.

6. How will your project support department/university goals?

This project promotes continuing course development in relation to general education and cultural diversity requirements, and also fits with the university strategic priority to promote academic excellence in students, and with the library goal to educate users in the identification, location, evaluation, and use of traditional and media information resources.

### References

Alliance for a Media Literate America (AMLA). What is media literacy? <http://www.amlainfo.org/>

Angelo, T.A., & Cross, K.P. (1993) *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Center for Media Literacy (CML). What is media literacy? <http://www.medialit.org/>

Educational Testing Services (ETS) (2006, Nov. 16). College Students Fall Short in Demonstrating the Information and Communication Technology Literacy Skills Necessary for Success in College and the Workplace. <http://tinyurl.com/yk34wc>

Ore, T. 2005. *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Teays, W. 2006. *Second Thoughts: Critical Thinking for a Diverse Society* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.