

January 30, 2007

MEMORANDUM

To: IPESL Faculty Participants

Fr: Tracy L. Pellett, Project Co-Director

Re: Project Assessment (Student Work Sample & Survey)

The purpose of this e-mail is to inform you of what is expected next (from you) and what is happening in relation to IPESL grant assessment. The following information concerns your involvement with assessing student work samples and a student survey that will be administered in the next week.

Student Work Sample:

Attached is the "Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric" and directions for its use. Although all IPESL faculty are encouraged to use the rubric in ways that best meet their needs, **it is the intent of this grant to measure student progress as related to critical thinking performance using this specific rubric.** Thus, it is necessary to have IPESL faculty (those that are incorporating critical thinking strategies this Spring semester) apply this rubric to **two** samples of student work (once nearer to the beginning and once nearer to the end of the Spring semester).

Faculty not implementing strategies this Spring semester or not implementing the strategies to individual classes do not have to collect any student performance data.

The following guidelines should be applied in the collection of data using this rubric for the purposes of this grant.

*IPESL Faculty Guidelines:

1. Read/Study the rubric and scoring directions (see attachment).
2. Develop/determine two assignments that the rubric could be applied (assignments should be similar in nature if possible) for **at least one course** from which critical thinking strategies are being applied.
3. Randomly select 10 students from each of the course(s) you are implementing critical thinking strategies.
4. Score student assignments using rubric and keep record on attached scoring sheet (be sure to track and score same 10 students for 1st and 2nd assignment).
5. Submit scoring sheet to Dr. Pellett through campus mail or e-mail by **Monday, May 21st, 2007.**

*It is understood that there are flaws and methodological issues with assessing student performance when there has been uneven implementation of the IPESL initiative and assessment. However, there is believed to be some utility in the overall grant evaluation process to collecting this information. At the very least, it provides faculty practice in using an assessment tool for measuring critical thinking. In addition, it could potentially provide feedback as to the level of critical thinking performance of students and possible change over the course of a semester.

Student Survey:

A random sample of students (from courses all IPESL faculty have identified for critical thinking application) will begin to be contacted this week in relation to “past course emphasis” of critical thinking activities. These same students will be contacted at the end of this semester to gauge the level of emphasis of critical thinking activities in the specific course in which it was to be applied (as based on information you have already provided in your faculty survey). You can certainly make all students (the courses in which you proposed critical thinking activity application) aware of the forthcoming survey to increase response – but be sure to mention that only a “random sample” will be contacted.

Be assured (and feel free to assure students) that data will only be collected and used for reports and presentations related to the project as a whole. Data will only be presented in aggregate form with all individual identifying information removed. Confidentiality will be protected by coding the data as it is collected and by combining data so that it is described in grouped format rather than by individual respondents. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me at tracy.pellett@mnsu.edu should you have questions regarding any of the assessment measures.

cc Stewart Ross, Project Co-Director; Brenda Flannery, Project Co-Director

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