

IPESL Final Report

Developing Critical Thinking through Online Collaborative Activities

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Purpose: My project uses an internet-based discussion board accompanying classroom instruction in critical thinking. Its purpose is to provide a collaborative environment for ongoing assessed practice of critical thinking skills.

Results: In the funded semester, my project was in development, so this coming semester will see its first implementation in the classroom. My project involves ongoing collaborative exercise of critical thinking skills, with frequent peer and instructor assessment. It is my expectation that this learning environment will enhance students' ability to evaluate the argumentative goals, technique, and overall persuasiveness of texts.

Issues: No significant issues arose during the development of the project. However, my IPESL community of practice did point out that the way I had originally conceived of students' online participation was going to multiply my workload without any obvious benefit to the students. As a result of their recommendations, I reorganized the activities as group-based activities, rather than as individually-based ones.

Dissemination: I plan to present my project to my colleagues in the philosophy department. I also plan to submit a summary of the project and its results to the journal *Teaching Philosophy*, and to a teaching philosophy session of an international professional association for conference presentation. I would also welcome the opportunity to do the same at any MSU colloquium for IPESL participants.