

**IPESL Final Report:
Katoland: Living in a simulated city
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Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop a cross-cultural, multi-faceted simulation game of local government affairs using web-based technology.

Results: *Development, implementation, and assessment of new instructional materials*

A cross-cultural, multi-faceted simulation game of local government affairs using web-based technology was developed. The game engages critical thinking skills by putting students in a simulated learning-by-doing context (they can risk making mistakes because the consequences are less severe). It also reinforces diversity and cross-cultural awareness in students' critical thinking. It extends URSI's online teaching into computer gaming, an area predicted to be central to future online education.

Implementation was facilitated by the Computer Sciences department, which helped us determine that the best technology for delivering the game would be D2L. This analysis was further assisted by ITS, which helped us create a free-standing module for project. Game content modules have been implemented individually, and are now being converted into D2L format. The game module will be available to all department faculty (regular as well as adjunct) for Fall semester. Assessment will occur in the Fall as part of implementation in course content.

Issues:

It took more effort than anticipated to determine a usable platform for delivering the game online. That issue was finally resolved late in March with the help of a student in Computer Sciences and the help of ITS staff.

Obtaining materials from Ghana has also proven a slower process than anticipated. This was resolved by working on the "American" version of the game, while writing it in a way that modules for the parallel, "Ghanaian" version of the game could easily be introduced as the materials become available. Several faculty have plans to travel to Ghana in the next year or so, and if nothing else materials can be physically obtained at that time and brought back for inclusion.

Dissemination:

Dissemination will occur after assessment in the Fall. The game will be announced on the MCMA Educational Initiatives website (a website for P-12 social studies teachers) and in the Department of Planning at KNUST. A case study of the project will be presented at the Urban Affairs Association and a manuscript submitted to the *Journal of Urban Affairs* or the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*.