

Creating a culture through convergence of technology and discussion

Presentation

Trish Clokie

Wintec

Private Bag 3036

Hamilton 3240

[trish.clokie@wintec.ac.nz](mailto:trish.clokie@wintec.ac.nz)

All authors give permission for their names and contact details to be included, along with their contributions to the conference, in the paper and the on-line Conference Proceedings.

Creating a culture through convergence of technology and discussion

## Presentation

This presentation reflects on my experiences of using case studies and online forums in communication classes in order to encourage critical thinking and to develop confidence in writing especially among international students. It also suggests how forums can be fun for both students and the tutor and identifies the pleasures and pitfalls especially when dealing with international students.

Many international students come into mainstream programmes in New Zealand with little or no experience of business. Using case studies with focussed questions enables the students to see how communication functions in a business. The benefits to all students include the need to make decisions about communication and to justify those decisions. For this reason case studies are commonly used in education. During class discussions, international students tend to be reluctant speakers because of their lack of experience or language skills.

Online forums give students time to think before responding and also move control of the discussion to the students. The effectiveness of this learning method has been well established in distance learning and can be successfully implemented in blended delivery of classes. Online forums also encourage a social interaction between international and domestic students which helps to create a positive class culture.

The success or failure of online forums depends on many factors including set up, tutor presence and perceived value of the experience. However, the results, both expected and surprising, make their use an interesting and rewarding experience.