

## Enhancing Critical Thinking through a Virtual Learning Environment

**Authors :** Diana Meeks

**Abstract :** The use of a virtual learning environment (VLE), via the Second Life Platform has been a positive experience to enhance critical thinking, for executive graduate nursing practicum students. Due to the interest of faculty and students, the opportunity to immerse students via a virtual learning environment to enhance critical thinking related to the nurse executive role was explored. The College of Nursing realized the potential to enhance critical thinking and incorporated the Second Life, virtual learning environment platform into their graduate nursing program within their executive practicum course. The results from students and faculty regarding this experience have been positive. Students state the VLE platform has enhanced their critical thinking and interaction with peers. To date, course refinement incorporating a Second Life, virtual learning environment for the nurse executive practicum students continues. As a result, a designated subject matter expert has been designated for this course. The development and incorporation of the VLE approach will be presented.

**Keywords :** nursing, virtual learning environment, critical thinking, VLE

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