Benefits of online education for reflection and critical thinking:
1. Allows students the time to absorb, examine, and reflect on course material
2. Reduces peer influences, pressure, or self-consciousness
3. Provides an “equal-opportunity environment” for student participation
4. In blended and F2F courses, moving “lower-level” tasks online allows time for deeper discussions face-to-face

Teaching strategies to facilitate self-reflection and critical thinking online:
(Drawn from Browne & Keeley, 2007; Garrison et al., 2000; Lunney et al., 2008; Marcisz & Woien, 2010; Paul & Elder, 2006)
1. Ask questions that require students to do some information seeking and/or analysis of their own actions, beliefs, etc.
2. Expect students to put answers in their own words
3. Motivate students through the use of rubrics
4. Encourage students to include specific examples in their responses
5. Utilize case studies or examples to promote students’ application of knowledge
6. Encourage students to ask questions of their peers and the instructor
7. Promote debate
8. Require journaling
9. Lead by example

Online assignments/activities to encourage reflection and critical thinking:
1. Discussion boards
2. Journals
3. Critical incident diaries
4. Blogs, wikis
5. Peer and self-assessment
6. Debate
7. Supplementary material review
8. Personal development planning/assessment
9. Reflective commentaries on videos, articles, etc.
10. Action research
11. Group projects
12. Papers
13. Other ideas?

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Resources


