

ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING BY IMPLEMENTING DEBATE IN THE MARKETING CLASSROOM — CRUCIAL QUESTIONS AND A BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

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ABSTRACT

The process and challenges of integrating debate as a means of fostering critical thinking in the marketing curricula is proposed for discussion in this session. The following topics are expected to be covered:

A. *Determining the Role of Debate in the Marketing Classroom*

At the outset, it is important to ascertain the level of commitment to the process on "a continuum" in terms of the willingness of time allocation, depth in preparedness of students, percentage of final grade relating to debate, and the level of depth and expectations of students. The various levels are briefly presented and discussed.

B. *Preparing Students for the Debate Process*

Explaining the meaning of debate and principles of argumentation, distinguishing debate from "report writing"-concepts of evidence and refutation, distinguishing Marketing Debate from Traditional Debates. Classroom debate execution-"rules of engagement"- procedures, rules, sequencing of events (procedure) and allocations of specific time will be suggested.

Next we will focus on critical thinking and the scoring of points. What is critical thinking and how can it be recognized and used in the debate process? (The creative use of language, examples, pedagogy metaphors, illustrations, expert quotes, anecdotal and episodic references, thinking "outside the box") and other examples are provided for discussion.

C. *Choosing Issues that Resonate*

Sources and criteria for selection should adapt issues to the student input.

Sequencing and integrating issues with text concepts allows students to see the wide range of issues debated in marketing.

D. *Evaluating and Deriving Lessons from the Debate*

We will also consider student involvement in debate review, particularly their desired learning outcomes (end of decision segment). Finally we present "A Look at Debate in the Classroom- Video Examples" and critique critical thinking episodes from them.

The goal is to engage the participants in a "reality check" discussion concerning the actual design and execution of the debate process. Each of the *four* decision components will be followed by brief "Question and Answer" segment. These represent the most relevant decision areas challenging the marketing professor in this effort.

This will be followed by a *video case* (10 minutes) and discussion of actual issue debates recorded from class examples. A series of brief scenes from the actual classroom will be presented as examples of critical thinking and both great and not so great moments. We then look at the lessons to be learned for implementation. Finally if time permits an "open forum" for free discussion will conclude the session.