

# Debate for Civic Learning Assessment & Research

Debate for Civic Learning Institute

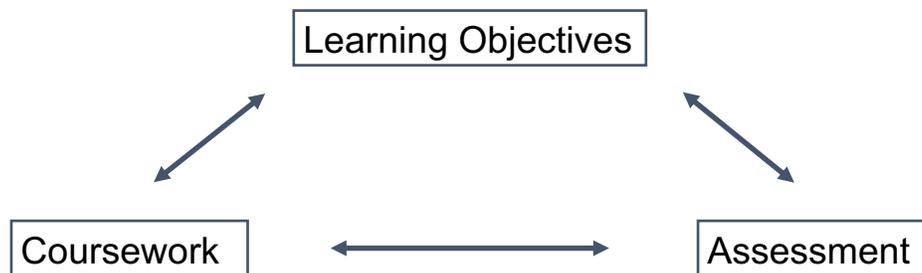
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## Assessment vs Assessment

L. Dee Fink's *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*



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CHANGE

# Assessment vs Assessment



**Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education**  
 (Approved by Council action July 18, 2017)

The Code of Virginia § 23.1-203 defines the duty of Council with regard to assessment as follows:

*"[The Council shall...] in cooperation with public institutions of higher education, develop guidelines for the assessment of student achievement. Each such institution shall use an approved program that complies with the guidelines of the Council and is consistent with the institution's mission and educational objectives in the development of such assessment. The Council shall report each institution's assessment of student achievement in the revisions to the Commonwealth's statewide strategic plan for higher education."*

Goal #2 of the *Virginia Plan for Higher Education* directs SCHEV to "optimize student success for work and life," and, specifically, to "strengthen curricular options to ensure that graduates are prepared with the competencies necessary for employment and civic engagement." Priority Initiative #4 for 2016 includes a commitment to "collaborate with institutions to measure the quality of undergraduate education, including civic engagement of graduates and relevance to demand occupations across regions of the state."

This policy identifies critical competencies for student success and establishes guidelines for the assessment of student achievement in accordance with Goal #2 and Initiative #4 of the *Virginia Plan* and in fulfillment of Council's statutory duty as cited above. The policy is grounded in the belief that good assessment is a valuable tool that, properly wielded, helps to improve and enhance teaching and facilitate greater levels of student learning.

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# Types of Assessment

Papers  
 Exams  
 Peer review  
 Ballots  
 Bibliographies  
 Reflection  
 Portfolios

Pre/post:      knowledge  
                      civic attitudes  
                      public speaking  
                      written communication  
                      perspective taking  
                      information literacy  
                      argumentation

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	No debate	HS competitive	HS classes	College competitive	College classes	Other	Prefer not	Total
Spring 2019 pre	177	13	157	1	36	3	1	388
Spring 2015 post	19	1	4	0	19	0	0	34
Spring 2016 post	25	2	31	0	17	1	0	76
Spring 2015 pre SONA	91	4	27	0	3	1	1	127
Spring 2015 pre	30	3	15	0	19	0	0	67
Spring 2015 post SONA	66	2	30	1	8	0	2	109
Fall 2016 ExEd pre	34	2	29	0	11	0	1	77
Fal 2016 ExEd post	36	2	40	0	21	0	0	99
Fall 2016 Curricular pre	29	0	9	0	2	0	0	40
Fall 2016 SONA pre	56	3	32	1	0	1	0	93
FAL 2016 Curricular post	19	0	6	1	8	1	1	36
Fall 2016 SONA post	55	2	34	1	3	2	3	100
Spring 2016 Curricular post	17	1	24	1	12	2	1	58
Spring 2016 SONA	31	2	14	4	3	0	2	56
Spring 2017 ExEd pre	36	1	33	1	11	0	0	82
Spring 2017 ExEd post	28	1	27	0	14	0	0	70
Spring 2017 Curricular post	31	2	0	1	4	0	0	38
Spring 2017 SONA post	44	7	31	0	7	2	3	94
Spring 2017 SONA pre	58	2	28	0	6	0	0	94
Spring 2017 Curricular pre	43	1	1	0	3	2	2	52
TOTAL frequency	925	51	572	12	207	15	17	1790
TOTAL percentage	52%	3%	32%	1%	12%	1%	1%	

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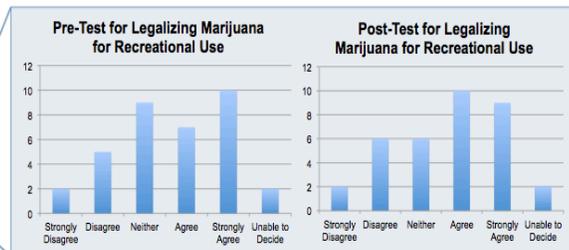
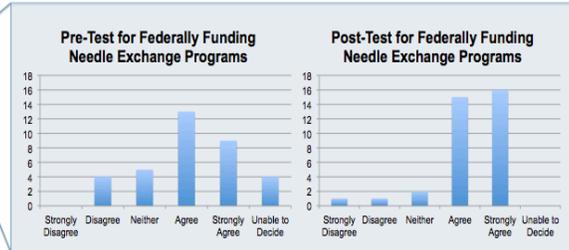
The debate or argumentation activities (n=323):	Strongly agree/agree	Neither agree/disagree	Strongly disagree/disagree
added to my learning and understanding of the course.	66%	19%	16%
were helpful in understanding the concepts debated.	73%	12%	14%
made the course more interesting and enriching.	50%	24%	17%
make me see the real-world relevance of the concepts better.	72%	18%	10%
will help me get a better grade in this course.	46%	40%	14%
may not help be get a better grade but they helped me learn more about the course concepts.	57%	28%	14%
helped me improve my research skills.	62%	23%	15%
taught me to think more critically.	66%	23%	10%
helped me learn how to analyze a real-world issue and how to draw meaningful conclusions.	73%	17%	10%
promoted collaborative learning.	80%	13%	7%

BEING THE CHANGE

Results

35 students participated in the study. Survey responses included separate sections for rating topics based on personal opinions, opinions based on societal importance, and identification of the most important issue. These results reflect just the personal opinions of participants on these topics.

Topic	Rate of Change
Needle Exchange Programs should be federally funded	26%
The legal drinking age should remain 21	23%
Drug users should be jailed	23%
Stimulants should not be used to treat children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	23%
Pharmaceutical companies should be allowed to advertise their products	20%
College campuses should be tobacco-free	17%
All health insurance plans should cover at least 90 days of drug rehabilitation programs	17%
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should tighten the regulation of dietary supplements	14%
Marijuana should be legalized for recreational use	9%
Antibiotics should be allowed in the meat and poultry industry	6%



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	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good
<b>Identify biased argument</b> (Bias is recognized as preconceived opinions without supporting reasons for one's position)	Does not identify any bias in claims.	Identifies the presence of bias in an attempt to induce change but does not explain the appropriate source of or motivation for bias.	Identifies the presence of bias and explains the appropriate source of or motivation for bias given the specific attempt to create change.
<b>Prioritize information based on situation</b>	Does not attempt to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information for the situation.	Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information but does not prioritize appropriately for the situation.	Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information and prioritizes appropriately for the situation.
<b>Logical argument construction</b>	Argument contains one element (claim, warrant, data) of a logical argument but does not present a complete argument.	Argument contains two elements (claim, warrant, data) of a logical argument but does not present a complete argument.	Constructs a complete logical argument, including claim, warrant, and data.

	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good
<b>Argument evaluation</b>	Does not evaluate any arguments present.	Attempts to evaluate arguments but does not identify the relevant & sufficient reasoning based on the perspective established in the argument.	Evaluates argument by identifying the relevant & sufficient reasoning based on the perspective established in the argument.
<b>Argument utilization in a situation</b>	Does not fit arguments for the situation.	Attempts to fit arguments for the given situation but misjudges the situation, purpose, or audience.	Fits the arguments for the situation, purpose, and audience.
<b>Identify affective argument</b> (Affect is understood as emotions, feelings, attitudes, values, or other relational dimensions of argument)	Does not identify any affective dimension of argument at play; whether audience, advocate, or situation.	Identifies an affective dimension of at least one perspective but the affective argument identified is not relevant for the given situation.	Identifies an affective dimension of at least one perspective and the affective argument identified is relevant for the given situation.

BEING THE CHANGE

**Identify biased argument:** NCCA pay for play

**Prioritize information based on situation:** local school start times

**Logical argument construction:** Federal death penalty pro/con

**Argument evaluation:** animal testing

**Argument utilization in a situation:** hiring decision

**Affective argument:** healthy food pitch

## Debate for Civic Learning Data

The debate or argumentation activities (n=20):	Strongly agree/agree	Neither agree/disagree	Strongly disagree/disagree
added to my learning & understanding of KIN 673 Fiscal Management	90%	10%	0%
may not have helped to get better grade but helped me learn more about the class concepts	70%	20%	10%
helpful in understanding the concepts debated	90%	10%	0%
made KIN 673 more interesting and enriching	85%	10%	5%
make me see the real-world relevance of the concepts better	90%	0%	10%
helped me get a better grade in KIN 673	60%	30%	10%
helped improve my research skills	80%	5%	15%
taught me to think more critically	85%	10%	5%
helped me learn how to analyze a real-world issue and how to draw meaningful conclusions	90%	10%	0%
promoted collaborative learning	90%	0%	10%
helped me be successful in other coursework	50%	40%	10%
helped me be successful in my job(s) after graduation	35%	55%	10%

Comments:

Helped me to stop and try to understand all sides of an issues instead of just taking one out

They have helped me when researching competitors, and using evidence to bring up

Our class became comfortable with debating which helped with our final project. We were

This debate was one of the most impactful and memorable education experiences I have had in the classroom.

Table 2. Longitudinal students' reflection on debate curriculum from spring 2016 & fall 2016 (Spring 2017)

The debate or argumentation activities (n=20):	Strongly agree/agree	Neither agree/disagree	Strongly disagree/disagree
added to my learning and understanding of the course.	60%	20%	20%
were helpful in understanding the concepts debated.	75%	5%	20%
made the course more interesting and enriching.	40%		
make me see the real-world relevance of the concepts better.	70%		
will help me get a better grade in this course.	45%		
Helped me be successful in other coursework	35%		
helped me improve my research skills.	50%		
taught me to think more critically.	60%	25%	15%
helped me learn how to analyze a real-world issue and how to draw meaningful conclusions.	60%	25%	15%
Helped me be successful in my job(s) after graduation	25%	60%	15%

"It helped me understand controversial topics that impact Children with Autism, which inspired me to apply for assistant teacher positions working in exceptional education classrooms this summer."

"The debate acted as a reminder for me that there are people who will have different opinions than my own. Although I might feel strongly about a certain thing related to disabilities or education, there may still be some opposing views. As a therapist, you have to be able to listen to the ideas of the family and not neglect their opinions."

"By learning how to properly find valid evidence for supporting my claims, I have become more successful at arguing my point in my other EXED and HTH classes."

## Research Opportunities

- 4VA
- Institutional priorities
- Debate for Civic Learning Implementation Grants
- STEM, Civic, HIPs, Community service learning
- DxC Bibliography