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.

D. Evaluating and Deriving Lessons from the
Debate

We will also consider student involvement in
debate review, particularly their desired
learning outcomes (and 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.