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TEACHING INTERDISCIPLINARY ARGUMENT EVALUATION

Abstract:

In this session, I will present the results of research developed through Northeastern University's Center for Teaching and Learning through Research (CATLR). My project collected and analyzed evidence of successful active learning assignments for interdisciplinary argument evaluation. Based on my findings, I designed a sequence of assignments and in-class activities for argument evaluation in any field. Participants in this session will leave with both an overview of my research process as well as an actionable activity sequence, including rubrics, assignment templates, and examples of student deliverables from each activity in the sequence.

The data for this research was gathered from courses I teach in philosophy. In general, philosophy courses provide an excellent environment for testing active and problem-based learning activities, and the philosophy courses I used for this project are introductory courses specifically designed to foster interdisciplinary critical thinking. As a result, the material I present is designed for teaching argument evaluation in any field.

In this session, I will give you a roadmap for designing a sequence of active learning assignments that build toward a structured in-class team debate activity. This framework can be used to help students develop argument evaluation and critical thinking skills in any discipline. Although this sequence has been designed for easiest implementation in a class of 25-40 students, I will also suggest ways to modify the sequence for larger or smaller classes.

Key challenges addressed: (1) how to design interdisciplinary active learning/team problem-based learning events that help students develop critical thinking, (2) how to incorporate technology that engages students and promotes higher order thinking, and (3) how to assess student progress in argument evaluation learning goals.

Keywords:

Active Learning, Interdisciplinary, Argument Evaluation