

EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS by knowing current discipline-based and general educational issues and how those impact schools

Summary of Assignment: Debate- Physics first curriculum

This assignment required both teamwork and research. We needed to plan a present a debate working in teams of two or three. For this project, I chose to debate the pro-side of physics-first curriculum for high school freshmen. Not only was the developed position written, it was also converted into a power point presentation. During these presentations, both sides of the argument debated with one another.

Connection to student learning objective (SLO): Educational Awareness

The conversations prompted by this assignment lead to examination of impact of such curricular changes on both the school and student levels. Like the position paper, the necessity to develop an understanding of both sides of the argument forced us to work through all of the cognitive aspects of the topic. In order to defend one's position, an understanding of multiple viewpoints is required.

Additionally, observing and contributing questions to other groups' debates increased my awareness of various educational issues facing schools today. As these debates prompted questions from the audience, we all had the opportunity to examine the issue at hand, as well as our personal feelings and biases related to these often-controversial issues.

Person Implications of Assignment within the SLO

This semester we are piloting and adopting a new science curriculum. As a teacher of physical science, working through this debate allowed me to bring a greater knowledge base to the table when it comes to making our selection. As eighth graders, my students are faced with an introductory curriculum. Their math experience, however, rarely reaches beyond the first few weeks of algebra. This puts us in the same predicament as many of those schools facing the decision to adopt physics first.

This project brought to light many of the broader issues that may initially go unnoticed to a classroom teacher. Budget, for one, plays a large factor when deciding recreate any program from scratch. Not only does changing the curriculum affect that particular grade level, any transition that affects multiple levels will have an additional cost. Fortunately, our district is not in this particular position, as we are only looking to change the textbook, not the content or the order of the topics.