

Discussion on the Rocks? Add a Fresh Twist of
Alternatives!

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Discussion on the Rocks? Add a Fresh Twist of Alternatives!



Laurie Berry



Kristin Kowal

University of Wisconsin – Extended Campus

Audience Poll

- Faculty
- Instructional Designer
- Librarian
- Administrator
- Student
- Other



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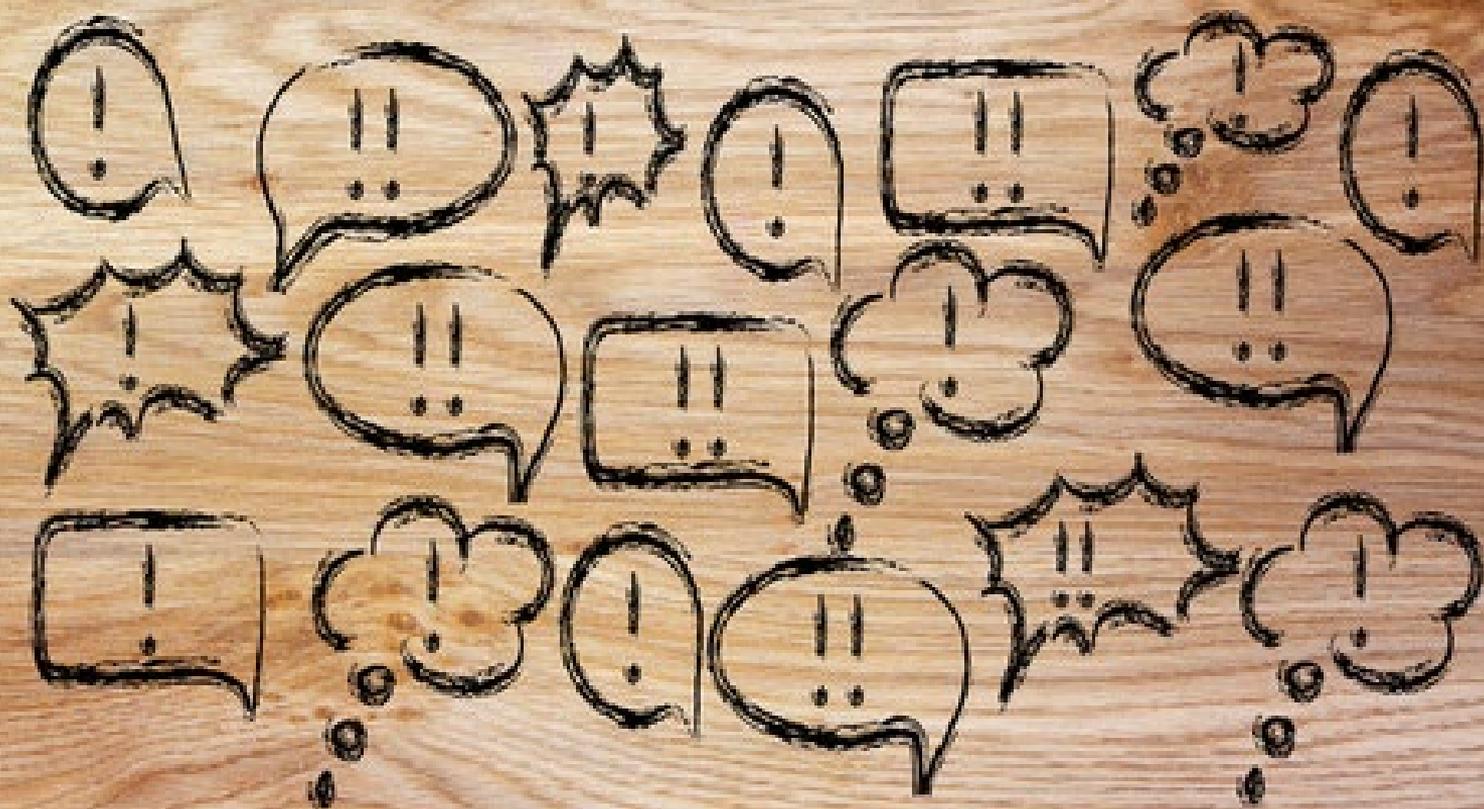
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Overview

- Pain points in online discussions
- 5 “twist” examples
- Questions



ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

Café Online













Discussion on the rocks?

Let's add a fresh twist of
alternatives!



Traditional Question

Think about a retail environment you visit often. What are 10 ways consumer marketers try to influence your purchasing decisions leveraging context and the environment?



Twist: Post Images of Examples

Ask students to go to the location and encourage them to post images of their examples.



Let's add the
twist.

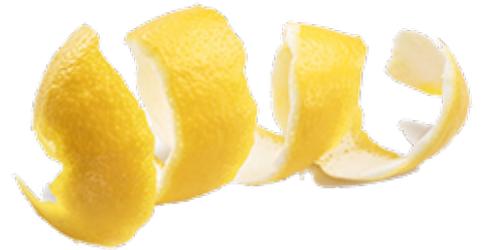


Go to a retail environment (e.g., Target, Walmart, local grocery store) and make note of 10 ways consumer marketers try to influence your purchasing decisions leveraging context and the environment. Enter your 10 ways here. **You can include pictures (optional).**

7. One clever way Target marketed their DVD's was to sell them as a movie night experience. On the end stand where they placed a variety of movies for adults and kids, they also displayed microwave popcorn, candy and various treats that you would enjoy at the movies. They also made sure all the items had sale stickers on them so you knew you were receiving a discount if you purchased them together.



Poll: Who has used
the “Post Images”
twist?





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Instructor: Erin Balliet Ratelis



It not only feels different for the students, but it is also a different type of activity which will stand out for them. It leverages a different technology, and photos are a great visual tool to solidify class insights. It requires students to explore class topics through a very personal lens (no pun intended).

Post Images of Examples: Tips



- Some students may have trouble uploading images
- Be prepared to provide work-arounds
- Remind students about privacy/permission

Traditional Question

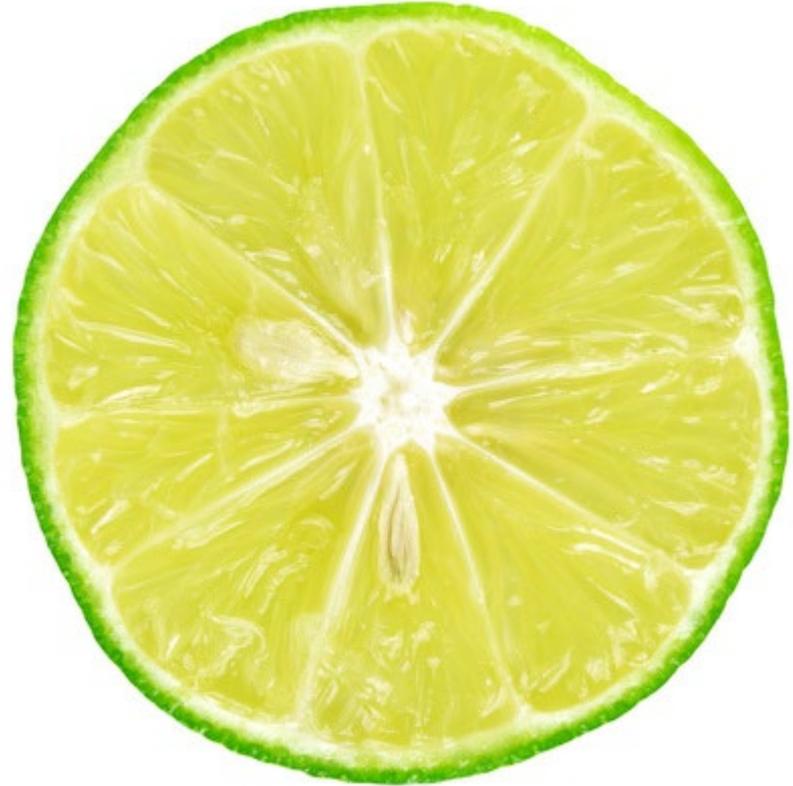
Choose a drug (e.g., Marijuana, Adderall, or Ritalin without prescriptions), and use reliable resources to answer the following questions:

- How does this drug impact neurons?
- Write a bill that you would feel comfortable proposing in your state legislature to make this drug legal or illegal. Explain why you designed the bill this way.
- Include your resources used at the end.



Twist: External Discussion and Reflection

Students discuss with a friend or colleague a particular viewpoint. Then, after their discussion, they write a reflection about their discussion and learned information.



Let's add the
twist.



Research when the drug you've selected is (or could be) useful and when it is harmful. Set up a time to **discuss your findings with a friend, colleague, or family member.**

In your discussion post:

- Briefly **summarize your discussion.**
- Write a bill that you would feel comfortable proposing in your state legislature to make this drug legal or illegal. Explain why you designed the bill this way.
- Include your resources used at the end.

- **Briefly summarize your discussion.**

We agree that the use is safer if legal and regulated

Usage should be up to the person not the government

Safe to produce and distribute, safe for consumers (laced product and handling)

Necessary for medical use

Beneficial for people with physical or mental illnesses that need it (calming effects)

Regulation necessary (similarly to alcohol, sold in specific pot shop- joints in grocery stores?)

Age limit 18, medically 12?

People make their own decisions (don't like being told what to do)

Worry about people driving (can't tell if they are high as easily as drunk)

Showing up to work high (no matter the job) -- employers allowed to regulate and test on their own

We decided to legalize.

- **Write a bill that you would feel comfortable proposing in your state legislature to make this drug legal, or illegal. You can include any details you want, but you don't need to use legal jargon or formatting.**

Effective immediately, Marijuana and Marijuana products shall be legal for persons aged 18 or older. Medicinal use with prescription and supervision for ages 12 and older. Driving or using heavy machinery while under the influence of these products will not be tolerated. Legal action will be taken. Employers have the right to further regulate usage on their own, including drug

Poll: Who has tried the
“External Discussion
and Reflection” twist?





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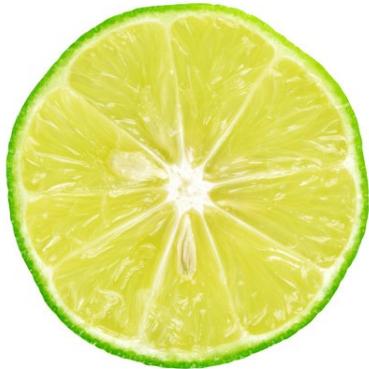
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Instructor: Rachel P.



Students are asked to discuss information with another person, who may not understand the [content] as well, and that could lead to the student teaching someone else, and therefore reinforcing the information they have learned.

External Discussion and Reflection: Tips



- Students might have a hard time finding someone to talk to
- Phone conversation or Skype conversation is acceptable

Traditional Question

After reading the Kaiser Family Foundation & Byrne resources, determine whether companies should be allowed to charge higher premiums to individuals whose biometric screening results or lifestyle choices do not meet certain levels/parameters.

Reply to at least one other peer.



Twist: Debate

Students would research a particular side or viewpoint of a topic. Then, they would review the other side and write a reflection whether they agree or disagree or what other information might be necessary before they can decide.



Let's add the
twist...



Debate the following issue:

Take a position, for or against, on whether companies should be allowed to charge higher premiums to individuals whose biometric screening results or lifestyle choices do not meet certain parameters.

Reply to at least one peer **whose position is contrary to your own**. Provide a minimum of three posts about why your position is the right position.

Debate Etiquette

I expect that, despite any level of disagreement you might have on a point, everyone will be respectful of one another and contribute to a rich debate. Particularly in such instances, bring all of your knowledge and learning to assist in your argument. Doing so is a great way to test your own beliefs and, in so doing, you may better understand each side's argument and perhaps develop more empathy for differing viewpoints from your own whether or not your own beliefs are modified.



One foot on the fence

After careful consideration, lengthy research, and much contemplation, I have decided that I do believe companies should be able to charge higher premiums to individuals whose biometric screening results or lifestyle choices do not meet certain levels or parameters, to an extent.

One's own present health decisions directly affect his or her future health. For example, one who is sedentary and consumes copious amounts of junk food, fast food, and soda is more prone to develop adverse health effects later in life than someone who exercises routinely and eats a very healthy meal. "Much can therefore be done to make young adults more aware of the consequences of their food choices for the sake of improved eating habits and future health and well being whereby they could benefit for the rest of their lives" (Fischer, Erasmus, and Viljoen). Instead, we must heed the negative foods associated with weight gain due to excessive energy levels. Providing reduced premiums to those whom engage in healthy behavior can help offset the possibility of increased food expenditure due to the prevalence that junk food is usually cheaper.

I truly believe that money is a motivator...for some people. We value money a lot differently as a society than we did 50 or 60 years ago. Regardless, we need our money to provide for a roof over ourselves and our families, buy food, and attain water. To have our ability to provide for these basic necessities limited because we need to spend more on health insurance creates stress, and should, in theory, cause us to strive to keep our own rates low by making excellent health decisions. According to Tambor, Pavlova, Golinowska, Arsenijevic, and Groot: "There is a significant body of evidence on the effectiveness of financial incentives in promoting healthy lifestyle and disease prevention...(no) clear conclusions on the effectiveness of financial incentives." In other words, financial intervention of health care has been found to work for some, however, not for all, which is a limitation of charging higher premiums to elicit healthy decisions.

My foot is on the fence because I also believe that there should be some type of income ratio/factor calculated into premiums. This would benefit those who engage in negative choices out of necessity. I also feel there should be some type of way to slow down the rising costs of health insurance. "Between 2008 and 2013, the average cost of single coverage increased by 25% and the cost of family coverage increased by 29%" (Shi and Singh). A rising percentage of the burden to pay for health plans are placed on the employees with a larger increase in deductibles as well. Many companies are no longer offering health care due to the cost. This is a severe limitation to charging higher for premiums as eventually, health insurance will become so unaffordable, the working class will not be able to purchase it, regardless of health.

References:

Fisher, H., Erasmus, A. C., & Viljoen, A. T. (2016). Young adults' consideration of their food choices a propos consequences for their future health. *International Journal Of Consumer Studies*, 40(4), 475-483. doi:10.1111/ijcs.12273

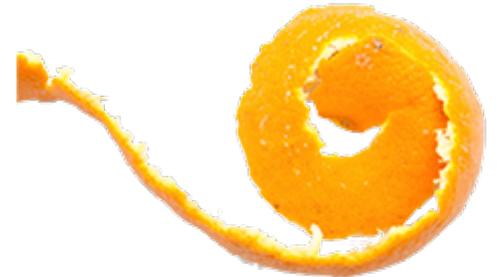
I think you make a very interesting point when you talk about income ratio/factor that is calculated into premiums. Now this is something that I am on the fence about. I am unclear about what you mean when you stated that, "this would benefit those who engage in negative choices out of necessity." I feel that this would not necessarily be true. Yes, I believe that many people do eat unhealthy food because it is cheaper and more convenient. I also feel that no matter how much money one person makes, it does not mean that they will eat healthy all the time. They will probably just eat more expensive junk food, lol. I don't feel like it is fair to punish someone with a higher premium rate just because they make more money. For example, if someone made \$9 an hour and another employee made \$18 per hour and the \$18 had double the cost for their premium. However, the person that makes \$9 an hour uses their insurance more and costs the company more money than the person that makes \$18 an hour and barely uses their insurance. It is things like these that make American people not want to work and be successful. I have seen it many times before with things such as food stamps, taxes, and many other government programs.

 Reply

Hi

I believe you have made strong points regarding your side, especially about how money is a motivator. However, I believe that using money as a negative factor is unfair, mainly to punish someone for not ideal numbers. We are unaware of an individual's health conditions that they may have encountered previously in their life. These conditions could have not been caused by junk foods and inactivity that has produced off numbers from the biometric screening. Mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression could cause numbers to fluctuate too. Also, biometric assessments are not always the most accurate and shouldn't be the only reason to raise premium rates. Secondly, someone who may actually eat unhealthy and are not physically active could have great numbers and will not change their behaviors because of it. Likewise, someone who may eat healthy and encounter physical activity for at least 30 minutes 3-5 times a day, are unable to maintain ideal number due to their own genetics. This is unfair to punish someone because they can't control genetic predisposition. An individual may do everything that is considered "right" to be healthy, but no matter what, they cannot get their numbers to be ideal. Thirdly, there are other parts of health and wellness someone needs to focus on then physical attributes. Social, emotional, occupational, spiritual, and intellectual factors all contribute to health and wellness. Don't get me wrong, physical factors are very important, but overall, an individual needs to find a positive balance between the 6 different factors to have optimal wellness. A biometric screening does not give feedback on social, emotional, occupations, spiritual and intellectual factors. It shows just the physical ones, and I believe that is unfair. If an individual is excelling in the 5 other factors, but maybe not in the physical factor. The individual is eating healthy and doing physical activity, but the numbers are not there, which makes it unfair to punish them because of one factor. All 6 factors should be contributed in someone's health. Employers should be happy that their employees enjoy their job, are able to be social with friends and family, be proud of their intellect, and overall, have a happy life.

Poll: Who has tried the
“Debate” twist?





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[Debate] engages students in higher level analysis as they are required not only to respond but to defend their position. Definitely resulted in greater student engagement and satisfaction. Several students mentioned how much they enjoyed this activity.

Instructor: Todd W.



Debating with other students provides extra motivation to make good arguments and present oneself well, which are both important in this type of work... Another advantage is having students respond to the other side's points, which allows them less time to prepare arguments in advance and is more difficult to quickly minimize those arguments.

Debate: Tips



- Allow enough time for this type of discussion; one student's late post could affect the whole group

Traditional Question

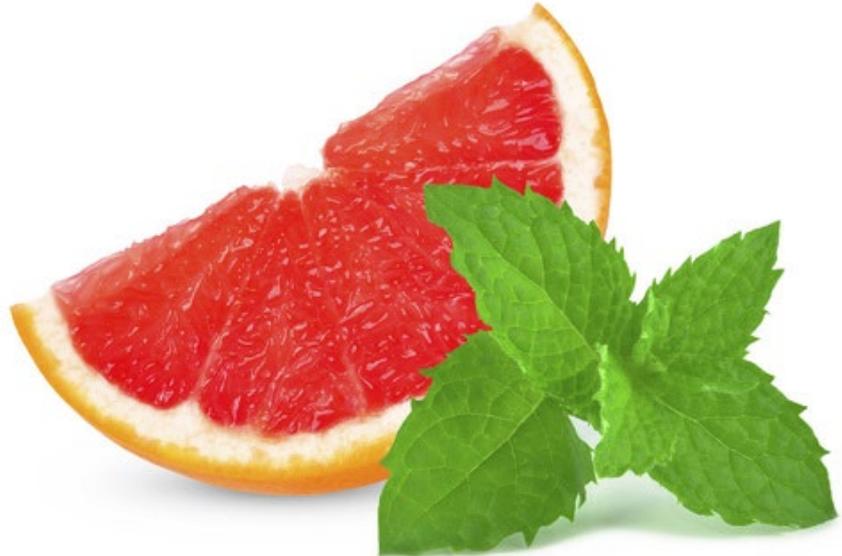
Find and read four resources about vaccinations. Post the title, author, and link to each resource, note whether it is pro or anti vaccine (or neutral), and note any other biases.

Next, consider situations where vaccinations are required by state law and respond to the following: Do you find yourself coming down on a “side” of whether vaccines should be required?



Twist: Role Play

The student could be assigned a particular side of a topic and then do some research based upon that role. Then, after posting to the discussion board, they could review the other perspectives and write a reflection based upon the other viewpoints.



Let's add the
twist...



Consider vaccinations from the **role assigned** to you by the first letter of your last name.

[Roles: Parent of a child with a healthy immune system; college student living on campus; doctor; community member; parent of an immunodeficient child]

Conduct research based upon your assigned role, and summarize what you learn. Be sure to include your view of vaccines in your role.



Vaccinations - A Doctor's Perspective

As a doctor, the entire vaccination debate and “anti-vaccination” movement is not only distressing but also offensive to me. It is distressing to see children suffer, experience irreversible harm or even die from illnesses that are preventable, many that were once completely eradicated. Vaccinations are available for more than 15 serious and deadly diseases including smallpox, mumps cholera, yellow fever, malaria and tetanus¹. Because of vaccines, many diseases that plagued children for centuries have all but been eliminated. According to many scientists, “vaccines may be the greatest public health achievement of the 20th century”². Despite this, in the last decade there has been a resurgence of diseases such as measles and whooping cough³. How is this possible and how can the topic of vaccinations even be debatable? This debate was fueled by a 1998 study published in a medical journal that falsely asserted a connection between autism and the combined measles-mumps-rubella. In 2010, the author of this article was discredited and the article fully retracted but unfortunately the damage was done⁴.

Are vaccinations completely safe? The simple answer is no. No educated and honest doctor will claim that vaccinations are 100% safe. There are risks including

Why am I offended? As a doctor my job is to provide parents and the public in general with my educated advice related to current and science based facts. The suggestion that I would make a recommendation that was unsafe or did not have the best interest of a patient at heart is a personal affront to my professionalism. Additionally, the fact that some people feel that the Internet, their friends or their neighbors, those with no medical degree can provide them with more sound medical advice is truly incredulous to me. For the sake of your child’s health and the health of others, please immunize.

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaccine-preventable_diseases
2. Achievements in Public Health, 1900-1999: Control of Infectious Diseases <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4829a1.htm>
3. Study relates vaccine refusal to rise in measles, pertussis, Matt L, 2016, <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2016/03/study-relates-vaccine-refusal-rise-measles-pertussis>
4. The MMR vaccine and autism: Sensation, refutation, retraction, and fraud, Sathyanarayana Rao TS, Andrade C, 2011, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3136032/>

Poll: Who has tried the
“Role Play” twist?





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In general, students appear to be more engaged when you ask them to change their format (and to see an issue from someone else's perspective).

Role Play: Tips



- Instructors needs to remind themselves that it is a role-play when they go to grade it.
- Directions should include “At the top of your post, list the role you are representing.”
- Consider splitting the activity into two parts, students change role in Part 2.

Traditional Question

Describe how *Blum's model of the determinants of health* applies to the following examples:

- The Premature Baby
- John, the homeless man

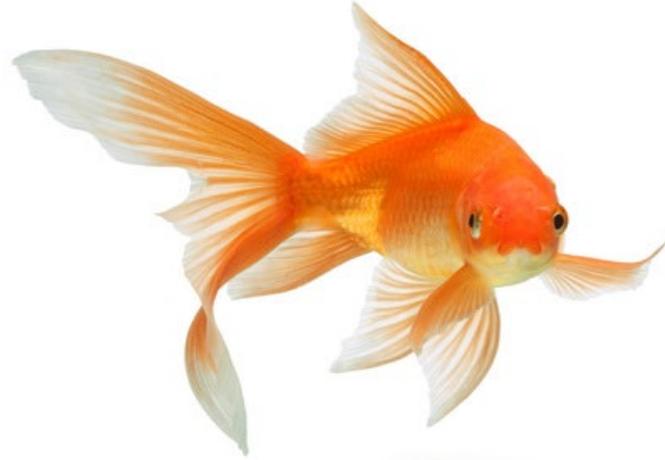
What do these two cases have in common? What differences exist that directly impact the outcome?

As a health and wellness manager, what role might you play in addressing the social determinants of health?



Twist: Fishbowl

Similar to a traditional discussion, but only half of class or large group participates in discussion at once (Inside Fishbowl). The other half observes the ongoing discussion while pausing to reflect on given questions (outside fishbowl).



Let's add the
twist.



Outside the fishbowl questions:

In this role, you will spend the week **observing and reflecting upon the ongoing discussion** “Inside the fishbowl.” Write a brief reflection paper to describe:

- One fact learned
- One surprising thing learned from the lesson
- The best takeaway from the lesson
- One thing you learned about yourself
- An area from the lesson that you would like to explore in more depth

Discussion 2: Outside the fishbowl

One fact I learned in this lesson was the fact that there has been a model in place since 1974 that describes some of the main influences that are still seen in health and well-being more than 40 years later. I have been aware the different determinants that impact health, but I was not aware that Blum had identified some of the key ones so long ago. I feel like there has been a lot of past work in the health and well-being field that has not been utilized to the fullest potential and that the field has been very slow to adapt to and take action on the concepts outlined by pioneers in the field.

One thing that surprised me in this lesson was the differences in responses to the question "Do you believe the current healthcare delivery systems are prepared to handle these types of situations?" There seemed to be a fairly equal split between those that thought that delivery systems were prepared and those that thought they weren't. I thought that the majority of people would have been on the "not prepared" side of the debate, so it was interesting to see such an even divide and the thought process behind each view.

I think one of the best takeaways from the lesson is the need for strong community health programs and initiatives to supplement the healthcare delivery systems. As shown through the two case studies, social determinants can have a crucial impact on population health regardless of the level and quality of the healthcare delivery systems in the area. This lesson also highlights the importance and need for delivery systems to shift from a reactive approach towards having more proactive, preventive, and well-being focus and identifies the need for them to partner with and sponsor community health initiatives.

One of the things I learned about myself during this assignment was realizing just how lucky I have been to be able to maintain such a good environment. The story of

Poll: Who has tried
the “Fishbowl” twist?





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Much learning takes place in observing others engaging in discussion. It allows a student to reflect on multiple student perspectives instead of selecting just one or two to review.

Fishbowl: Tips



- Use for two course discussions to allow for equal participation opportunity
- Activity does create a bit more work for faculty as you have to enter grades using two rubrics and in two different ways in the course, but it was worth it
- Better for larger classes (12+)

Summary of Twists

1. Post images of examples
2. External discussion and reflection
3. Debate
4. Role play
5. Fishbowl





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Self-Reflection Questions

- Why do you use discussions in your course(s)?
- Are you achieving what you want? Why or why not?



Group Discussion and Q & A

- Share answers to reflection question(s)
- How can we use discussions to facilitate critical thinking, engagement, and connection?
- What other discussion alternative techniques have you tried?



Q & A



Thank You!

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