"F/O/P:" Encouraging Rational Argumentation.
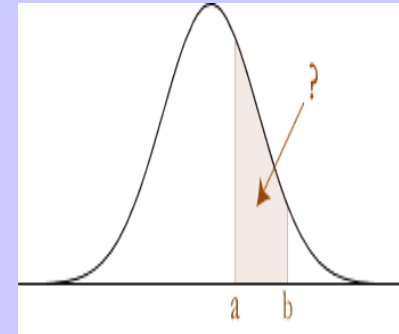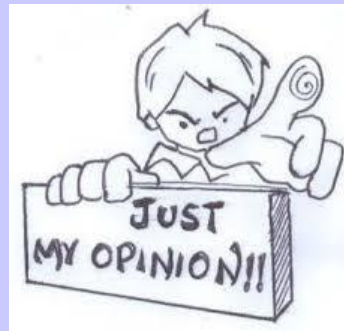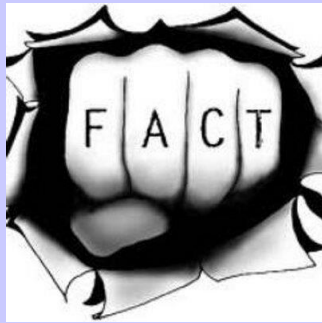
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Promoting *Informed Dialogue.*

- To encourage a firmer understanding of the relative value of different evidentiary bases.

- To combat "state your opinion" forms of argumentation.

- To prepare students for research-based assignments.

The Set Up.

- **Paired** (yet diametrically opposed) "**resolution statements**."

- **Whiteboard** and **marker**.

- **20-25 minutes** of classroom time.

Sample Resolutions.

- *"Resolved: That fraternities and sororities tend to **act to the detriment** of University life."*

- *"Resolved: That fraternities and sororities tend to **contribute positively** to University life."*

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The Debate.

- **Serial questioning** of each side:

  - "Provide us with your **first-, second-, third-best reason**, etc.…" until all reasons have been articulated.

- Instructor **simplifies and records** claims on a divided whiteboard.

The Key Step: "F/O/P" Evidentiary Categorization.

- <u>Iterative </u>interrogation of ALL reasons on the Board:

  - Q: Does this claim or reason represent a **Fact**?

  - Q: Does this claim or reason represent an **Opinion**?

  - Q: Does this claim or reason represent a **Probability**?

The Learning Outcomes.

- **Facts** are <u>rare</u>…but compelling and "strong."

- **Probabilities** are useful and "fact-like"…but could use research to strengthen their probability or "fact-ness."

- **Opinions** <u>abound</u>…are much weaker than facts…and are easily questioned/dismissed.
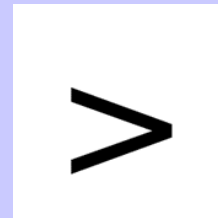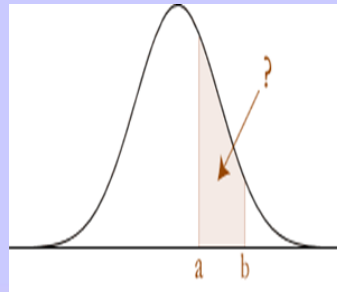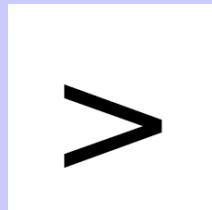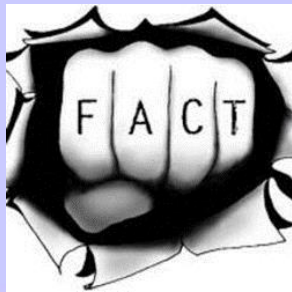
Thank you.

- If time permits, any questions…