

Deliberative Curriculum

Victoria Amarasiri
September 2019

The **purpose of this presentation** is to facilitate a discussion on what a **Deliberative Curriculum** entails, with a focus on:

What is its History?

What Does it Mean?

How Does it Work?

What are its Strengths and Weaknesses?

Is it Good for Democracy? For non-democratic nations?

What is its future?

Deliberative
Curriculum
Presentation
Purpose

Please join the classroom at:

Socrative.com

Login as a **Student** and join classroom **VA603**.

Please let the class know what you would like to cover in our discussion...

... and please keep Socrative open for the entire discussion.

Deliberative Curriculum
What is its History?

Deliberative Approach Event
 Non-Deliberative Approach Event

100 BC

Beginnings traceable to Plato and Aristotle yet intended for the elite and not the masses.

1700s

*Democratic forefathers create a deliberative constitution, impacting our political and judicial systems but **not set in motion for education.***

1950s

*Pre-Sputnik era appears to have been **systematic** (i.e. Education is run as a business.)*

1960s

Post-Sputnik era fuels a re-birth of the Deliberative Curriculum approach.

1970s

Academics (Schwab and McKeon) from the University of Chicago (UOC) are engaged to revise our education system – driving a Deliberative Movement.

Academic research continue to promote deliberative models (e.g. McKeon, Schwab, Reid, Habermas, Westbury)

2001

***No Child Left Behind Act** utilizes a “Report Card” approach to establish school accountability for all.*

2009

Common Core Standards (CCS) created by state legislator panel to avoid a federal mandate.

2021

NJ ties graduation to CCS testing.

Deliberative Curriculum was employed to fix our Education System at a time when our nation felt it lagged other countries academically (e.g. Russia leading the space wars). Today, the approach is used in select college settings.

Deliberative Curriculum
What Does it Mean?

deliberation

from the Latin deliberare and libra, meaning 'to weigh' and 'balance'.

noun

/dɪˌlɪb·əˈreɪ·ʃən/

communication in which different opinions and values can be brought face to face...

...with an effort to ensure that each individual takes a stance by listening, deliberating, seeking arguments and evaluating...

...while at the same time there is a collective effort to find values and norms that everyone can agree upon.

Antonyms

debate, discussion

deliberative curriculum

a process of inquiry about curriculum policy, program development, and other curriculum activities...

...with a purpose is to reach decisions about curricular action in the context of addressing problems.

The focus is on a particular classroom, not a district, a state, or a nation.

This is an open-ended process and the results are always subject to challenge and revision.

Synonyms

deliberative democracy

A good way to understand the meaning of Deliberative Curriculum is to consider the difference between a discussion, a debate and deliberation.

Step 3: Cultivate a Deliberative Environment

Step 1: Define the Question

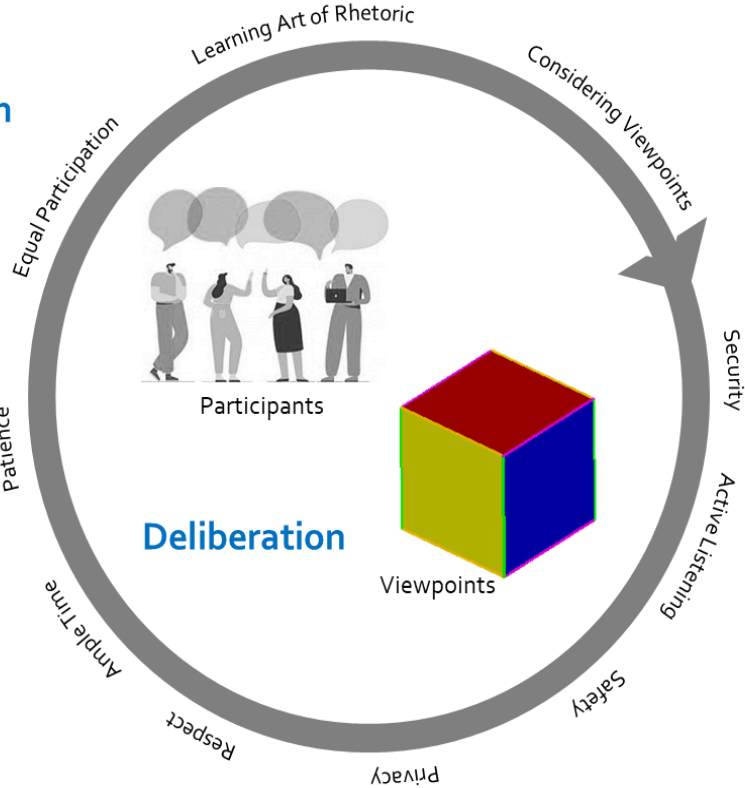


Set of Open-ended Questions

Deliberative Curriculum How Does it Work?



Identification of a Diverse Set of Participants



Step 4: Develop Actionable Recommendations and Measurements



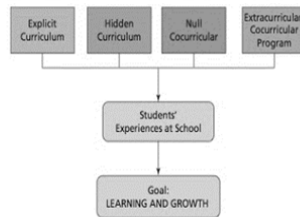
e.g. rules, policies, laws.

Step 5: Leave the Door Open to Future Challenges and Revisions.

Step 2: Build a Shared Knowledge Base



5 Commonplaces



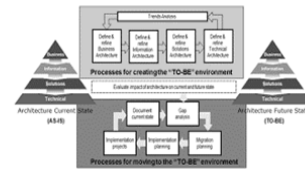
4 Kinds of Curricula



Ethical and Moral Frameworks

Component	Substantial	Competent	Not yet Competent
Reason & Logic	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning.	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, but some are more developed than others.	Some opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, but others are not.
Empathy & Respect	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy.	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but some are more developed than others.	Some opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but others are not.
Collaboration & Consensus	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, and a consensus is reached.	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but a consensus is not reached.	Some opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but a consensus is not reached.
Communication & Listening	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, and communication and listening are effective.	All opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but communication and listening are not effective.	Some opinions and positions are supported by evidence and logical reasoning, and all participants are treated with respect and empathy, but communication and listening are not effective.

Policy Guides, Terminology, Industry Facts and Rubrics



Current State Analysis

[Example of Deliberative Democracy: Thousands of Californians shape reform of the state health care system \(8/2007\)...](#)

Strengths

Outcomes are easy to enact as key stakeholders have been involved in the process.

Deliberation is inclusive and **brings society together over common issues.**

A deliberative curriculum results in a **good, happy and fulfilled society.**

Deliberative Curriculum

What are its Strengths and Weaknesses?

Weaknesses

It takes time to reflect. Society's focus on **accelerated results** may not be conducive to a deliberative approach.

A **constant stress** is placed **on tradition** and values – could we lose unalienable rights?

Weak deliberation event = weak results.

Will it be safe to speak?

Will my viewpoints be private?

Where do I learn the art of rhetoric?

Can I present my view but not deliberate?

What if others are louder than me?

I have no time; operation duties need me.

It's a **descriptive process.**

Deliberative Curriculum, while **affording the potential for achieving the best possible outcome**, has many risks that must be mitigated when compared against other approaches for it to create the good outcome.

The most important institution in our democratic government, next to the judicial and political system, is our educational system, and yet we wholly support deliberative communication in all but the latter.

To prepare our citizens for its civic responsibilities, **deliberative communication is how education systems can and should be elaborated and implemented.**

*Deliberative
Curriculum*
**Is it
Good for
Democracy?**



In non-democratic societies, it may not be safe for citizens to deliberate. Where safety can be afforded, any society would benefit from this approach.

There are wonderful **examples of Deliberative Curriculum** being employed today, mostly at private schools and colleges...

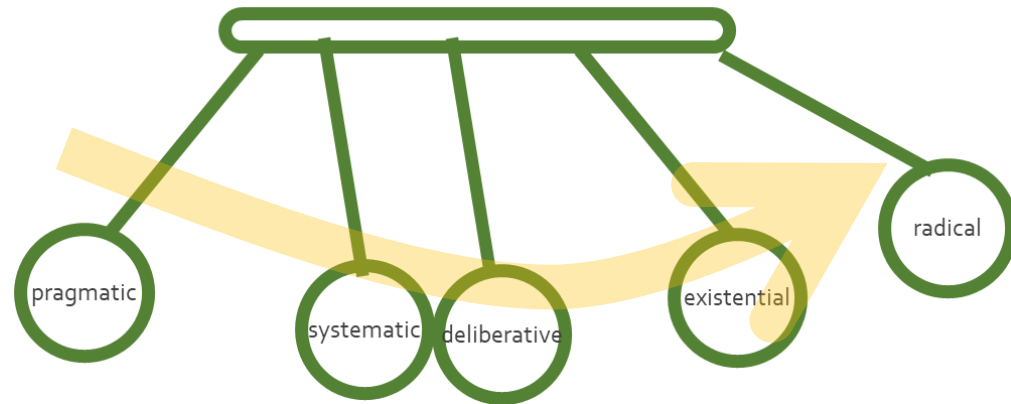
- Math Talk movement
- The Harkness Table
- Academies sharing their use of Deliberative Curriculum ([see references.](#))

... yet the deliberative movement never seems to stick and forces continue to swing the pendulum across the approaches...

Deliberative Curriculum What is its Future?

Forces

Competition
Indicators
Moral Climate
Pace
Economy
Leadership



The deliberative movement has had inconsistent momentum, and we continue to change our approach, but that is after all the true meaning of deliberation, to leave the door open to change.

Deliberative Curriculum

Thank You!

Please feel free to reach out with any questions. Victoria@Amarasiri.com

References

Null, J. Wesley. *Curriculum: from Theory to Practice*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011.

[Englund, Tomas. Deliberative communication: A pragmatist proposal. Journal of Curriculum Studies 38\(5\) 503-520, 2000.](#)

[University of Oslo: Department of Educational Sciences. Deliberative Curriculum](#)

[Livingston, Don. Learning the Art of Curriculum Deliberation: One Professor's Story](#)

[CURRICULUM DELIBERATION BY EXPERIENCED EFL TEACHERS, Kustiwan Syarief](#)

Choices.edu. [Guide to Classroom Deliberation for Students and Teachers](#), 2016

[Options Role Play, The Choices Program @ Brown University.](#)