**92) Educators should base their assessment of students' learning not on students' grasp of facts but on the ability to explain the ideas, trends, and concepts that those facts illustrate.**

Is that true that students need to understand facts? I bet your answer is yes. Then do you agree that educators should be directed to assess students’ grasp of facts rather than the ability to explain the ideas, trends and concepts behind those facts? People’s opinions mainly fall into two categories, and I tag them as the ‘why’ oriented and the ‘what’ oriented. The ‘why’ supporters regard explaining fundamental information those facts illustrate as the goal of education. Meanwhile, the ‘what’ believers insist that grasp of facts is the first and foremost things when learning knowledge. Both sides could justify themselves with sound reasons. From my perspective, in most cases, I would suggest educators to assess their students on the basis of different circumstance.

The ‘why’ supporters might argue that the essence of education is far beyond gaining some certain scientific facts from text book or mastering marketable skills for students. By asking why, students could deep understand the ideas, trends and concepts and learn the methodology-- a way to search for a literature, to establish the framework of knowledge, to conduct a research—an approach to solve problem by themselves. A good case in hand is my intern experiences in IBM, a multinational technological company. In the workplace, the most common programming language is Python rather than Java an C, which is more prevail in academic setting. Thus, the first job my manager required is to learn Python within a week. Although I never used this language before, I mastered it as required. How? Thanks my professor who not only teach me a kind of language, but also teach me how to learn. I followed the same method to understand the features of Python; by comparing and contrasting, using one to learn another. In sum, the magic of ‘why’ is a systematic approach—to teach to fish.

Nevertheless, the ‘what’ believers might criticize harshly on the ‘why’ supporters for overlooking the importance of grasp of essential facts. By accumulating fundamental facts, students could understand core issues quickly. If deficient in fundamental facts, one would become total simplicity and naivety. We are not omnipotent, nor can we be expertise in every field. Picture a situation where students who just learn basic mathematics try to solve discrete mathematics. How could students learn knowledge if they don’t understand enough facts? In short, the advice that more emphasis should be placed on students’ ability to explain the ideas, trends, and concepts should carry with certain caveats.

In fact, there is no inherent conflicts between the ‘why’ supporters and the ‘what’ believers. Facts is the path-dependent. As a Chinese saying goes: after reciting hundreds of poems, any one could know how to write a poem. In some circumstance, for instance, one is a layman of the field, it would be better that he/she is assessed by their grasp of facts; whereas, when he/she already established knowledge system, the best way of evaluation would be their ability of explain the ideas, trends and concepts behind those facts. To sum up, educators should base on students’ levels to assess their learning.

Ultimately, there is no unitary criterion for students’ evaluation. Educators should assess their students’ learning through their divergent level.

**89) Claim: Many problems of modern society cannot be solved by laws and the legal system. Reason: Laws cannot change what is in people's hearts or minds.**

…that peoples’ hearts and minds is hard to change by laws? … that those problems result from the characters of individuals could not be solved by laws and the legal system?... ‘validity of laws’ oriented and the ‘invalidity of laws’…emphasize that laws could constrain individuals’ behavior to solve problems of modern society…insist that laws could not restrict all issues created by human nature…

…that human nature, like selfish, over-confident and lack of reason, could not be altered by laws, and problems in modern society caused by those natures cannot be solved by the legal system. A good case in hand is species extinction. The rate of species extinction is on average of 3.4%-5.2% in the past century. The reason that lend to this unprecedented high extinction is nature sources overexploitation and human should be blamed. Whereas, no matter how rigid our laws are, some people still try to kill dangerous species for their own benefits. In sum, the reasoning is fundamentally sound claim that laws and the legal system is not an effective approach to solve problems of modern society.

…fact that laws could not change human nature and the reason indicate, but it could solve problems of modern society by limiting people’s behaviors. Cultural preservation could serve as an example of the importance of laws and the legal system. During 20th century, many Chinese historical building, like Hutongs, were demolished to make ways for new buildings and roads. All history simply gone, with it the vestige of charms once associated with old Beijing. More and more people started to realized the disappearing historical building and try to pass laws to preserve traditional culture. Thanks to their effort, without those laws, we could not have a chance to see those fantastic historical building. To sum up, the claim could not constitute a logical argument in favor of the invalidity of laws.

…laws and legal system are imperfect but indispensable vehicle for society order and justice. The essence of laws is not to teach you what to do—that is the goal of education, it is to caution you against doing something, and punish you when you across the line. Here is an example, clone is not a new science, since the first animal, a tadpole, was cloned in 1942. Scientist has the technology to clone human but laws still restrain their abilities owning to the **potential** ethical dilemma and the profound physical issues. Homo spine should not be cloned for a medical junkyard of spare parts. Thus, to date, there are not any report or records about completely human being cloned. In short, the claims overlook the first and foremost goal of laws.

Ultimately, close scrutiny of the reasoning reveal it lends to credible support to the claims. Most problems of modern society could be solved by laws and legal system.

**65) Every individual in a society has a responsibility to obey just laws and to disobey and resist unjust laws.**

…that not all laws are unbiased?... individuals should obey those just laws and disobey even resist unjust laws?... ‘validity of laws’ ‘invalidity of laws’… both just and unjust laws are valid and individuals should obey all of them… unjust laws are not fair to public and should be resisted…

… laws and legal system are not prefect but are **indispensable** **vehicle** to social order and **justice**. The essence of laws is not to teach individuals what to do, but to caution them against doing something. A good case in hand is clone, which is not a new science, since the first animal, a tadpole, was cloned in 1942. Scientists are capable to clone human beings and there are indeed some benefits to clone spare parts of human. However, laws restrict them to do that owning to the potential ethical dilemma and the profound physical issues. Home spine should not be cloned for a medical junkyard of spare parts. Thus, to date, there is no reports or records of a complete human being cloned. In short, both sides would agree that we should obey just laws.

… pubic has a duty to comply with unjust laws, not simply just laws. We established laws with the interest of the majority, and a perfect procedure could not be achieved. Laws are bound to make mistakes, from lack of knowledge to partial and self-interest views. However, we need to obey them to keep the stability of society, or at least not oppose them by an illegal means. To sum up, in most circumstances, requiring individuals to obey laws—no matter just or unjust laws, is a fundamentally sound advice.

… **when laws and policies deviate from publicly recognized standard, those appeal to society’ sense of justice might be sound to some extend.** Martin Luther King is perhaps the most famous advocate of civil **disobedience**. As he once stated, ‘I would be the first one who advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a regal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.’ The movement of historical buildings preservation in China could serve as an example of this point. During 20th century, a great amount of historical buildings, like Hutongs, are demolished to make ways for new buildings and roads. All history simply gone, with it the vestige of charms once associated with old Beijing. More and more individuals started to realize the importance of those historical building, and try to resist the old policies and constitute new laws. Thanks to their effort, or we can’t never see those fantastic buildings. In sum, disobeying unjust laws could enhance justice and direct us to truth.

Ultimately, every individual has the responsibility to obey just laws and disobey unjust laws in correct ways.

**12) Governments should offer a free university education to any student who has been admitted to a university but who cannot afford the tuition.**

…that to some students whose family could not afford their higher education, free university education is crucial for their lives?... that government should pay for them to accomplish their education...’free education’ … ‘low-interest loan’…

…free education is important to those poor students. Here is an example, a news went viral in Tsinghua University, the most prestigious university in China. The director of recruitment announced on behalf of Tsinghua University that they would waive the tuition and provide free accommodations for a poor student and his sick mother so he could continue his education and take care of his mother. The decision is dream came true moment for this students after years of study. They come to a crossroad where their destiny can be changed and their social class could be broken. When the recruitment director published the decision online, most people applaud and get deeply moved. Some of them even pronounce that government should offer a free university education to all students from poor family. In short, providing free university play a significant role in the life of poor students.

…overlooking the potential issues of free university education. Of course, for the above case, the student is outstanding—he was the top 1 in the college entrance exam and Tsinghua University has enough resources to help him out. Whereas, should all students who cannot afford the tuition obtain this free university education? For other universities, which doesn’t have enough money or resources, should they also provide this policy? If so, where that money come from? If government uses some budget on this policy, is that fair to other family who pay for higher education? Those questions are not unique to China, it’s universal. To sum up, without answering the foregoing questions perfectly, it’s hard to convince public that government should offer a free university.

…low-interest loan might be better solution of the dilemma. According to a social science survey, conducted by Ministry of Education and Peking University, more than 80% who receive students’ loans to continue their study could afford the interest and repay their loans within five years. It is not only an effective approach to help students’ study but an excellent way to reduce the heavy burden of government’s financials. For a small state, like Suriname, who has a population lower than 300,000(est. 2009) and an average income less than $1000, way below the poverty line defined by the United Nation, those microstates could not spread their fix costs of government over a great amount of people—that is they could not achieve the educational scale in the same way that larger states could. In the worst case, for states like Zambia, who faces generalized HIV epidemic, how to they spend their money on free education when they could use it to stop people dying for starvation and disease? In sum, providing low-interest loan might be better approach to help students out.

Ultimately, governments don’t have to offer free university education to all students whose family could not afford their tuition. It is enough that they provide low-interest loans to them.

**82) Colleges and universities should require their students to spend at least one semester studying in a foreign country.**

…studying in foreign country could broaden students’ horizons?... require all students to study aboard at least one semester?... ‘foreign country’… ‘endemic country’…

…the advantage of studying aboard is evident. First of all, students could learn a new language, experience different culture and learn self-reliance. My experience in the US could serve as a representative example of this point. When I was a sophomore in Tsinghua University, one of the most prestigious university in China, I was fortunate to be selected to transfer to University of California for one semester. My professor Raymond Mar leads us to use the method of machine learning to solve problem of computer vision. Our team unites students from divergent state and different people have their own personality. To accomplish the system, some of us focus on user interface, some of us get down to algorithm, others place more emphasis on database and architecture. Through cooperation, we not only learn new knowledge but transcend our limitation. Besides, with the development of globalization, a great amount of firms set up their sub-companies aboard. Applicants who have those experience of studying abroad could be probably easy to get those jobs, since those experiences could demonstrate they have the abilities to get use to unfamiliar global circumstance. In sum, directing students to study aboard is a fundamentally sound advice.

…potential issues of this policy. Who should pay for those costs? For some students whose family even can’t afford their tuition, is that fair for them to require them to study in a foreign country? If students don’t have to pay for that, do all colleges and universities have the resources to help their students to study abroad? To those colleges and universities who can’t not offer this opportunity, is that possible that government pay for them? For some small state, like Suriname, who has a population less than 300,000(est. 2009), and an average income lower than $1000, way below the poverty line defined by the Unite Nation, they could not spread the fixed cost of government over a great amount of people—that is they could not reach the educational scales in the same way that larger state can. In the worst cases, countries like Zambia, who faced generalized HIV epidemic, how could they pay for free foreign education when they could use those budget to stop people dying for starvation and disease. To sum up, the advice that all students should study in a foreign country at least one semester should carry with some certain caveats.

…not all universities could find a perfect similar study plan in a foreign country, thus, students might waste their time in those transferring time. Becoming truly educated also need students spend enough time practicing on their major. As Malcolm Gladwell said in ‘Outlier: the story of success’: the key to success, to large extend, is to practice in correct way for a total of 10,000 hours. The CEO and architect of Microsoft, Bill Gates met the 10,000 hours Rule when he gained access to computer during high school and started to program on it. In a limited four-year study, students who have to study abroad might inevitably squeeze their time in their own field. In short, suggesting students to scatter their attention is not helpful to their time management.

**50) Government officials should rely on their own judgment rather than unquestioningly carry out the will of the people they serve.**

…government officials are more professional in many fields than public?... be inspired to make decision on the basis of their own judgment?... ’independence’… ’people’s will’…

public might be **ignorance** in many issues, and government officials should take over the power to decide what they should do. A good case in hand is Big Data. Since government already accumulate lots of information and create data sets that is so large and complex that traditional approaches could not deal with. To better analyze those data, many state established new policies to solve those problems, like using machine learning and data mining to process data. Some ordinary people might question why government decides to spend so much of time and effort to develop Big Data, when they could use those budget to stop people dying for starvation and disease. In this circumstance, government should rely on their own judgment…In short, government officials should rely on their professional judgment regardless the will of its people.

Over-confident would lend to simplicity and naivety and is the bed of dictatorship…To sum up…

People pay tax for government activity and they have right to decide the policy and laws of their country. Government is established to **serve**. If government officials don’t care about the opinions of their people, withhold crucial information and decide only by themselves, it might lend to the disorder of society. Here is an example, during SARS periods in China, government didn’t inform public about their decision and some people start to rumor that government official would give up ordinary people, and only save lives of those political, technological, scientific elites. The public gradually question government and even cause social unset. In sum, government officials should consider the will of its people.

Ultimately, in my opinion, …

**3) Educational institutions have a responsibility to dissuade students from pursuing fields of study in which they are unlikely to succeed.**

**39) College students should be encouraged to pursue subjects that interest them rather than the courses that seem most likely to lead to jobs.**

…some fields are more likely to success owning to its job market and lucrative salary?... educators should be inspired to require students choose those fields and give up those fields of study in which they could not success? ... ’personal interest’ ‘job market’

bid

**13) Universities should require every student to take a variety of courses outside the student's field of study.**

…’integral development’ ‘personal interest’

**54) In order to become well-rounded individuals, all college students should be required to take courses in which they read poetry, novels, mythology, and other types of imaginative literature.**

**73) Colleges and universities should require all faculty to spend time working outside the academic world in professions relevant to the courses they teach.**

**24) The best way to teach is to praise positive actions and ignore negative ones.**

Appropriate

**30) Teachers' salaries should be based on their students' academic performance.**

Proportional ardor

**37) Society should identify those children who have special talents and provide training for them at an early age to develop their talents.**

Equalitarian

**81) All parents should be required to volunteer time to their children's schools.**

**1) As people rely more and more on technology to solve problems, the ability of humans to think for themselves will surely deteriorate.**

**43) The increasingly rapid pace of life today causes more problems than it solves.**

Crutches prevalent prevail

**91) The primary goal of technological advancement should be to increase people's efficiency so that they have more leisure time.**

**101) Although innovations such as video, computers, and the Internet seem to offer schools improved methods for instructing students, these technologies all too often distract from real learning.**

**132) Some people believe that our ever-increasing use of technology significantly reduces our opportunities for human interaction. Other people believe that technology provides us with new and better ways to communicate and connect with one another.**

**10) Nations should pass laws to preserve any remaining wilderness areas in their natural state, even if these areas could be developed for economic gain.**

Filter regulation burden urgent tourism reconstitution reestablishment unemployment karst

**31) Society should make efforts to save endangered species only if the potential extinction of those species is the result of human activities.**

**119) When old buildings stand on ground that modern planners feel could be better used for modern purposes, modern development should be given precedence over the preservation of historic buildings.**

**80) Nations should suspend government funding for the arts when significant numbers of their citizens are hungry or unemployed.**

**6) A nation should require all of its students to study the same national curriculum until they enter college.**

‘unitary’ ‘diversity’

**18) The well-being of a society is enhanced when many of its people question authority.**

**17) Formal education tends to restrain our minds and spirits rather than set them free.**

**122) The best way to understand the character of a society is to examine the character of the men and women that the society chooses as its heroes or its role models.**

**41) The greatness of individuals can be decided only by those who live after them, not by their contemporaries.**

**55) In order for any work of art—for example, a film, a novel, a poem, or a song—to have merit, it must be understandable to most people.**

**2) To understand the most important characteristics of a society, one must study its major cities.**

**77) The most effective way to understand contemporary culture is to analyze the trends of its youth.**

**42) Students should always question what they are taught instead of accepting it passively.**

**37) Society should identify those children who have special talents and provide training for them at an early age to develop their talents.**

**40) Claim: When planning courses, educators should take into account the interests and suggestions of their students. Reason: Students are more motivated to learn when they are interested in what they are studying.**

**45)** **Competition for high grades seriously limits the quality of learning at all levels of education.**

**27) In any field of inquiry, the beginner is more likely than the expert to make important contributions.**

**56) Many important discoveries or creations are accidental: it is usually while seeking the answer to one question that we come across the answer to another.**

**9) In any field of endeavor, it is impossible to make a significant contribution without first being strongly influenced by past achievements within that field.**

**93)** **Unfortunately, in contemporary society,** **creating an appealing image has become more important than the reality or truth behind that image.**

**143) No field of study can advance significantly unless it incorporates knowledge and experience from outside that field.**

**7) Some people believe that government funding of the arts is necessary to ensure that the arts can flourish and be available to all people. Others believe that government funding of the arts threatens the integrity of the arts.**

**23) Governments should place few, if any, restrictions on scientific research and development.**

**111) In any profession—business, politics, education, government—those in power should step down after five years.**

**114) Any leader who is quickly and easily influenced by shifts in popular opinion will accomplish little.**

**62) Leaders are created by the demands that are placed on them.**

**69) Some people believe it is often necessary, even desirable, for political leaders to withhold information from the public. Others believe that the public has a right to be fully informed.**

**94) The effectiveness of a country's leaders is best measured by examining the well-being of that country's citizens.**

**123) The best way for a society to prepare its young people for leadership in government, industry, or other fields is by instilling in them a sense of cooperation, not competition.**

**104) To be an effective leader, a public official must maintain the highest ethical and moral standards.**

**4) Scandals are useful because they focus our attention on problems in ways that no speaker or reformer ever could.**

**19) Governments should focus on solving the immediate problems of today rather than on trying to solve the anticipated problems of the future.**

**21) Laws should be flexible enough to take account of various circumstances, times, and places.**

**60) Politicians should pursue common ground and reasonable consensus rather than elusive ideals.**

**130) Some people believe that corporations have a responsibility to promote the well-being of the societies and environments in which they operate. Others believe that the only responsibility of corporations, provided they operate within the law, is to make as much money as possible.**

**11) People's behavior is largely determined by forces not of their own making.**

**38) It is primarily through our identification with social groups that we define ourselves.**

**33) As we acquire more knowledge, things do not become more comprehensible, but more complex and mysterious.**

**133) Claim: Knowing about the past cannot help people to make important decisions today. Reason: The world today is significantly more complex than it was even in the relatively recent past.**

**34) In any situation, progress requires discussion among people who have contrasting points of view.**

**146) The best test of an argument is the argument's ability to convince someone with an opposing viewpoint.**

**51) Young people should be encouraged to pursue long-term, realistic goals rather than seek immediate fame and recognition.**

**53) If a goal is worthy, then any means taken to attain it are justifiable.**

**106) In most professions and academic fields, imagination is more important than knowledge.**

**61) People should undertake risky action only after they have carefully considered its consequences.**

**66) People who are the most deeply committed to an idea or policy are also the most critical of it.**

**87) Claim: Any piece of information referred to as a fact should be mistrusted, since it may well be proven false in the future. Reason: Much of the information that people assume is factual actually turns out to be inaccurate.**

**103)The best ideas arise from a passionate interest in commonplace things.**

**141) It is more harmful to compromise one's own beliefs than to adhere to them.**