ABSTRACT

This mixed methods case study explored the efficacy of a problem-based learning environment and three different instructional methods designed to foster argumentation in an introductory sociology course. While no statistically significant differences were found in the overall assignment scores among the three treatment groups, there were significant differences in the effort they expended to achieve those scores, suggesting that a treatment in which students were instructed to generate counter-arguments to a provided model essay was most efficient while a treatment in which students were guided to construct an argument step-by-step encouraged more time-on-task.