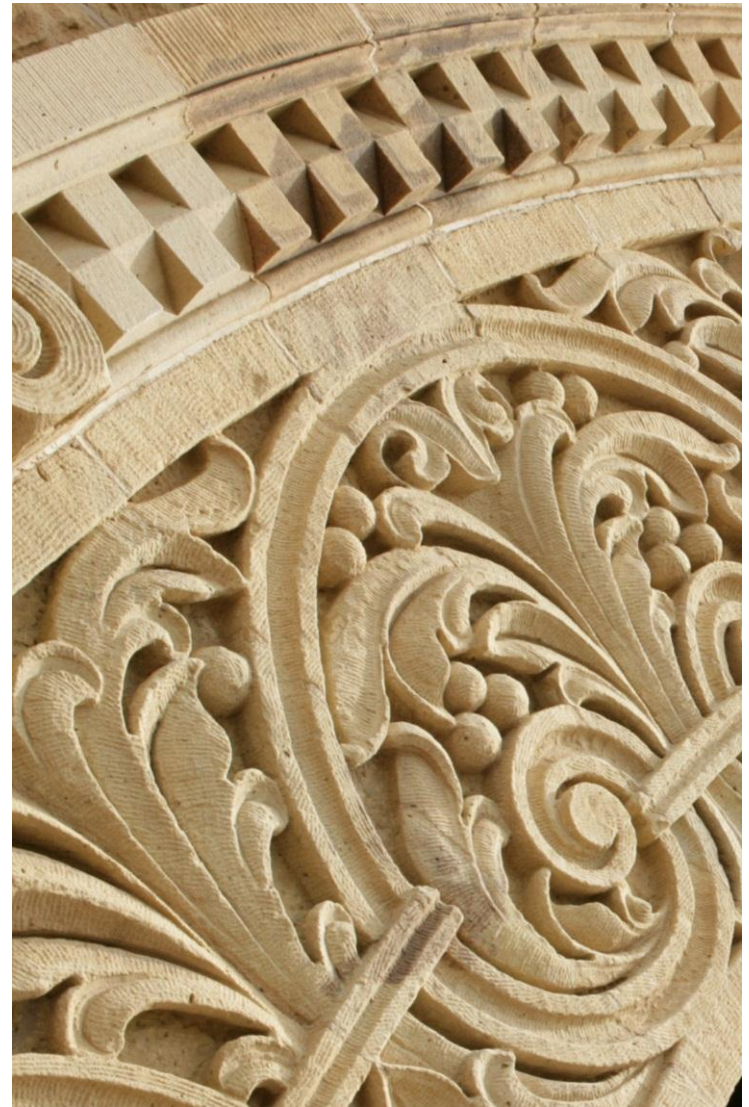


**6 Years of Lessons
on Teaching
Critical Analytical Thinking**

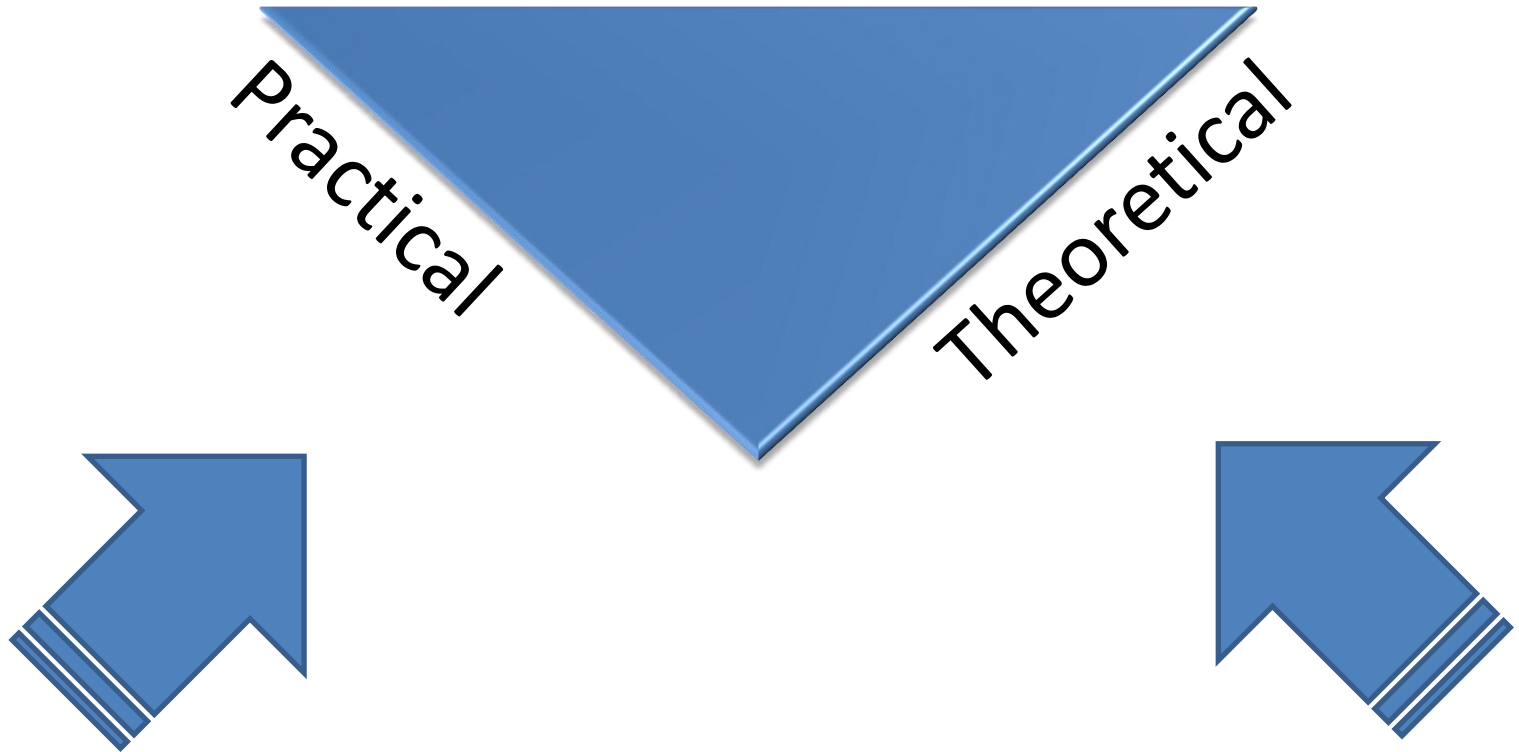


STANFORD GRADUATE
BUSINESS SCHOOL OF

JD Schramm

Lecturer, Organizational Behavior
Stanford Graduate School of Business

The MBA Dean's Dilemma



Our Journey Towards Cultivating Principled Critical Analytical Thinkers

- Inspiration
- Implementation
- Improvements
- Impact
- Implications



GSB Revamps Curriculum

- 2006 – 2007 Academic Year
 - Saloner Committee Convenes
- Fall 2007
 - CAT Launches, along w. Leadership Labs
- Spring 2008
 - Synthesis Seminar Launches

Curriculum Design Choices

We Included

- Tenured faculty member
- Writing coach
- Weekly assignments
- Seminar experience
- Optional workshops

We Avoided

- Lectures
- Text books
- Exams

CAT Evolved Over Six Years

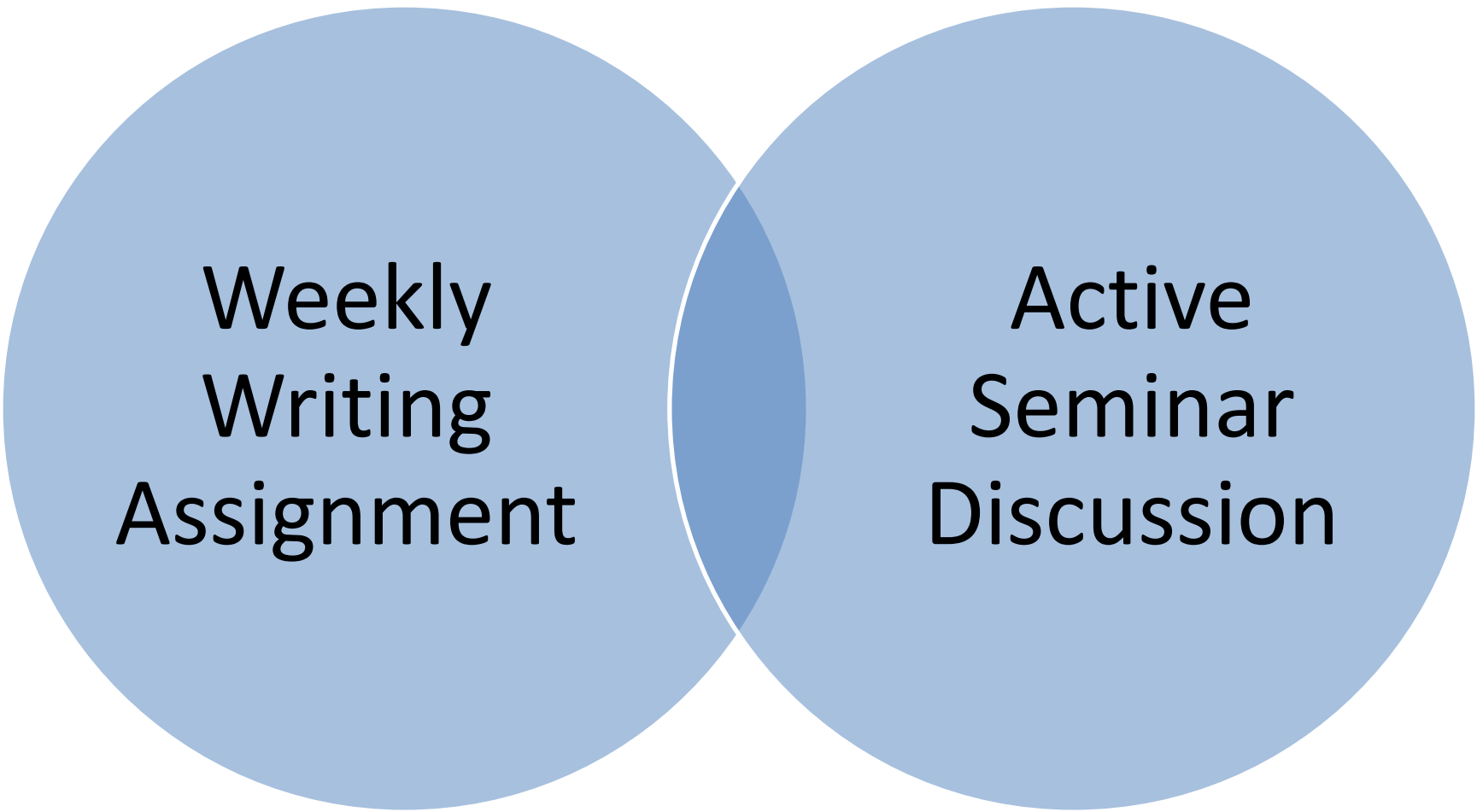
Original Design

- Weekly all hands meeting
- Wednesday assignment
- Friday seminar
- Great books approach
- Professors as advisers
- 10 weeks long
- Required Synthesis Sem.

Current Iteration

- Weekly logic objectives
- Wednesday assignment
- Friday seminar
- Profs choose content
- Staff as advisers
- 7 weeks long
- Optional Synthesis Sem.

2-Part Core Instructional Model



Weekly
Writing
Assignment

Active
Seminar
Discussion

CAT-at-a-Glance

| Week No. | Thurs. Date | Topic – learning objectives |
|----------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 9/23 | <i>Google out of China</i> Problem formulation and deductive arguments. |
| 2 | 9/30 | <i>Who Killed the Electric Car?</i> Further work on <u>deduction and effective structuring</u> of arguments. |
| 3 | 10/07 | <i>Outliers</i> <u>Use and misuse of evidence</u> . |
| 4 | 10/14 | <i>Career Advice</i> Integrating personal experience and outside evidence based on David Brook's columns. |
| 5 | 10/21 | <i>Toxicity and Race at 20 (1987 to 2007)</i> Correlation vs. causation, strengthening arguments. |
| | 10/28 | Midterms. No CAT Seminar or paper. |
| 6 | 11/04 | <i>Persuasion</i> Articulating a contrary position by using critical and analytical thinking. |
| 7 | 11/11 | <i>Team Debate</i> Synthesizing course content through collaboration. |



Lessons CAT Provided

- Balance faculty autonomy and course consistency
- CAT Launches well...but hard to sustain
- Rightsizing a two-unit course

After 6 Autumns of CAT

- Increased discourse in all classes
- Improved writing across the curriculum
- Heightened collaboration among faculty
- Embedded element of GSB culture
- Empowered students as consumers

Challenges and Counsel to Others

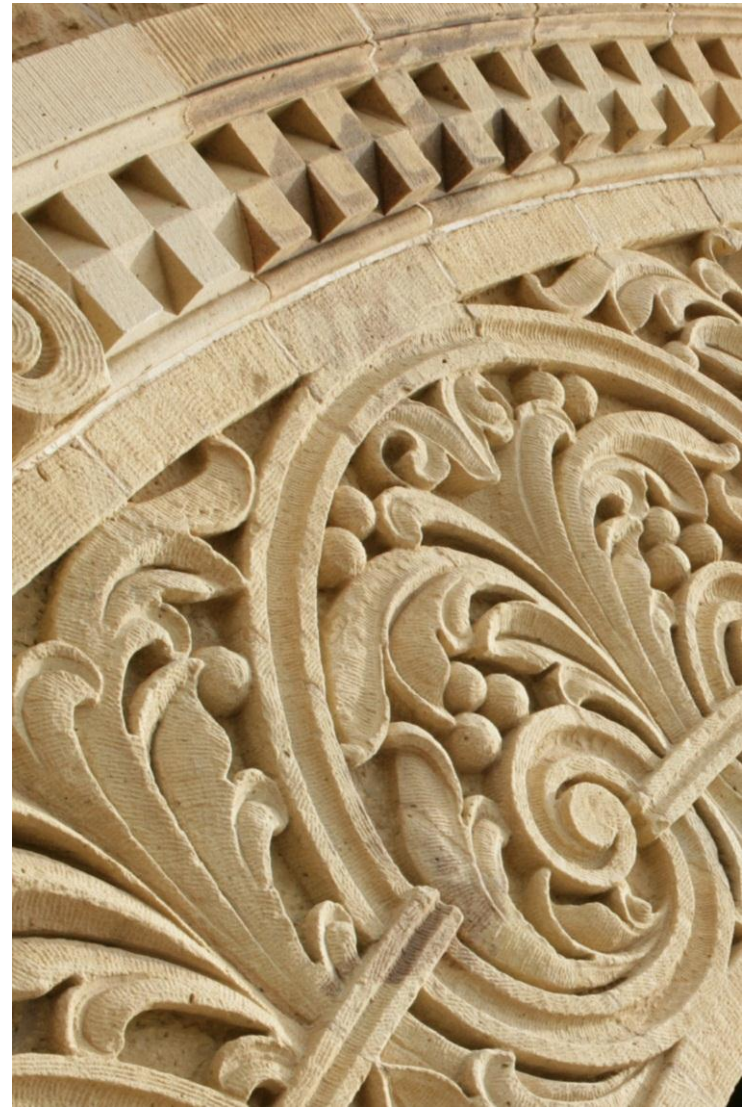
- Staffing CAT is a key to its success
- Grading time from due-date to course
- Rely on study group dynamics
- Look for synergies with other core courses

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