

Study Guide for 2025 Policy Debate

Resolved: Academic portfolios for college admission should be abolished in Taiwan.

Taiwan's education system has undergone significant reforms in recent decades, with the introduction of the academic portfolio (學習歷程檔案) system being one of the most notable changes in the college admission process. Launched in 2019, the academic portfolio is a comprehensive record that includes students' coursework, performance in various subjects, extracurricular activities, awards, certifications, and self-reflections on their learning experiences. These records, uploaded by schools or students each semester, are currently required as part of the comprehensive assessment during the second stage of the individual application for admission (申請入學) channel, specifically in the document review and interview phases.

While the academic portfolio aims to help students showcase their learning journeys and assist universities in conducting a more holistic assessment of applicants, it has sparked considerable debate among educators, students, and parents regarding its effectiveness. Proponents argue that the system allows students to explore their interests and leverage their strengths, enabling universities to better match applicants' aspirations and abilities with the training offered in their programs. Conversely, critics contend that the system has not fulfilled its promises and has instead increased pressure on students while exacerbating existing educational inequalities. This debate offers an opportunity to examine the arguments from both supporters and opponents of the academic portfolio system, shedding light on the objectives of high school education in Taiwan and the most effective methods for evaluating students during the college application process.

As this is a policy debate, both the affirmative and the negative are expected to analyze the benefits and costs of either changing or maintaining the status quo. Debaters should use the weighing mechanism of scope, magnitude, probability, reversibility, time frame, etc. Claims must be supported by clear reasoning and strong evidence.

This debate tournament follows the principles of traditional policy debate, prioritizing pragmatic arguments, specifically benefit-and-cost analyses of the policy or status quo. Arguments that are purely philosophical or based solely on critical theories (Kritiks) are strongly discouraged. Additionally, if the negative side proposes a counterplan, it must be non-topical (meaning it cannot affirm the resolution) and non-conditional (meaning the negative cannot abandon its counterplan during the debate). Given these stipulations, debaters should recognize that a negative counterplan will not be viable for this year's resolution, as proposing one would inadvertently affirm the resolution, which is not allowed in this tournament. Furthermore, the affirmative is encouraged to propose a replacement that is fundamentally different from the current academic portfolio system.

The following is a list of references meant to provide some groundwork for debaters. It is by no means comprehensive or flawless, and thus, it warrants closer examination. Students are encouraged to continue researching beyond these preliminary references to

deepen their understanding of the issue and strengthen their arguments in preparation for their debate rounds.

References:

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<https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/2066/292266/292266.pdf?sequence=1>
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<http://www.ater.org.tw/journal/article/12-4/topic/10.pdf>
7. 張慶勳. (2023). 學習歷程檔案的反思與實踐.
<http://www.ater.org.tw/journal/article/12-4/topic/01.pdf>
8. 李欣儒、劉桂廷、蔡茲禹、彭珮瑜. (2023). 【投書】高中生的猜測戰，還是大學教授的考試場？學習歷程，教授怎麼想：北部某國立大學之訪談成果.
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