

**TITLE:** THE MAKE-BELIEVE JURY AS A STRATEGY FOR TEACHING MICROBIOLOGY

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**ABSTRACT:**

Make-believe jury is used as a teaching strategy in courses which approach is ethics and decision making (i.e. Medicine, Law and Business). Usually the teacher presents a real or an unreal situation and students are divided in three discussion groups where the first group should dissert about favorable arguments, the second group should present opposite arguments, and the third should analyze the arguments, make questions and take the final decision. In this work our main aim is to present the use of make-believe jury as a new strategy in microbiology teaching. This kind of simulation is already well known to improve the interaction among students as well as to motivate them to research different issues related to the main theme. We applied make-believe jury in a microbiology course to biology undergraduate students that will be K-12 teachers. We explained the strategy to students one week before the jury scheduled. Students researched during a week and were divided in accusers and defenders and the sentence council which made questions for both. The question which students should discuss was: Are bacteria good or bad? After the presentations, students filled an anonymous and voluntary survey, in which we asked them to evaluate the make-believe jury as a strategy for teaching microbiology; we also asked if they consider using this strategy in their K-12 classes when they become teachers; if this strategy facilitated the understanding of the proposed contents in their microbiology course; and, finally, if they find valid the development of new teaching strategies to undergraduate courses. Fifteen of sixteen students filled the survey and 93% (14) evaluated the make-believe jury as a good or great strategy for microbiology teaching; the same percentage that filled, consider using this strategy with their classes when they become a K-12 teacher; and the same students declared that this strategy facilitated the understanding of microbiology contents.

**Keywords:** microbiology, teaching strategy, make-believe jury, interaction