

For Drug Use In Academics

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Central Argument

Modern society is constantly changing and adapting. As our world grows more and more complex, the need for higher levels of cognitive function becomes more and more prevalent. Post-secondary education, for many, is where the skills needed to thrive in the workforce are introduced and constantly improved, traditionally through coursework and countless hours of studying. By using cognitive enhancements, students in higher education can gain more from their studying efforts, and potentially retain this knowledge at a much higher rate. This improved efficiency in college, can lead to an increase in high-quality job applicants after graduating from their institution.

Example Enhancement

_____ Our substance would allow individuals using it to be able to have a higher memory retention rate. While they are able to hold more information the students would still have to put in the effort in their studies to gain more knowledge. In our case the drug would be easily accessible to any student who would want to use it.

General Pros

In the short-term, there are quite a few effects that enhancements for memory retention can have on students. Formal education and training in the United States is expensive and time-intensive, utilizing cognitive enhancements can allow students to acquire knowledge and skills faster, which can lead to better grades in classes and, potentially, reduce the time they spend in college (therefore reducing the costs). In most cases, improved memory leads to increased productivity and performance (Tomažič & Čelofiga, 2019), which are skills that are desirable and necessary in the evolving job market.

Wider Ripple Effects

_____ While there will be immediate effects that can be seen in the short term from this drug use there will be a wider spread of effects that could take years to be seen. With an overall enhanced mental state we will see advances in every area of the workforce. As a whole we could experience great medical and technological advances. We could possibly develop robots that have amazing artificial intelligence. While an amazing breakthrough in the medical field would be finding a cure for cancer. Allowing these already smart individuals to work at a higher level could also solve some of the major problems we face in the world such as climate change.

Core Value Implications

_____ While individuals may believe that taking cognitive enhancement drugs will change how these individuals are viewed. The view shouldn't change because their core values have not changed. These students will still have to work hard and study in order to receive a degree and get the most from the drug. While they are getting an advantage over some, this drug will not discredit their work ethic since they still have to have the motivation and personal desire to learn.

Arguments against Opposition

Since the debate specifies that Substance X is approved and deemed safe for human use, our first argument would be that since this poses no health risk to the user, it is up to the individual to make the decision to enhance for themselves. We can foresee the opposition arguing that cognitive enhancements can lead to negative advancements in technology (i.e. deadlier weapons and/or self-aware artificial intelligence), and to that we will argue that we would still come to those advancements at some point, but the cognitive enhancements can also lead to us discovering solutions and protection against them sooner as well. Also, we would

argue that the potential negative advancements do not outweigh the positives that can arise (i.e. advancements in medicine and manufacturing).

Formal Rules

If desired by universities they could establish a section in their honor codes that clarify the use of enhancements. They could say cognitive enhancements used for studying and exam taking are in violation of the universities honor code.

Rights

_____ Humans have the innate right to decide what substances they choose to consume. There is no other party that has the right to step-in and intervene unless the substance is proven to be harmful, which is not the case for this enhancement. Since there are no formal rules or laws written against academic enhancement, legal rights are not significantly affected. Social rights are also not deeply affected by this enhancement.

Fairness

_____ Fairness is defined as being impartial and without discrimination. Since this drug will be easily available for all students it will be fair for them to use it in a university setting. If people chose not to use the drug it is fair because they have the option to if they desire to. While they do not have to use the drug, they can still achieve the same level of intelligence than those taking the drug. It just might take a little longer than those using the drug.

Responsibilities

_____ Every student is different, so some may feel that they have a responsibility both to themselves to take this drug to better themselves in both academia and their life as a whole, and to the world to be able to enhance their ability to make the world a better place. On the other hand, some may feel a personal responsibility to themselves to not take any drug and to remain

“pure,” or “natural,” and to the world to not “cheat.” As previously stated, humans have the innate right to choose what they can consume, and they also have the innate right to choose what they perceive their responsibilities to be (Bavarian, et al., 2015). Additionally, outsiders might feel that any student has a responsibility to take a drug like this if it makes them a better academic.

Character

Just like responsibilities, every student's character is different. Everyone has different morals and ethics that make up part of who they are. Some students might see taking a drug like this a violation of their character, while others might view the use of this drug as in line with what they believe in. Taking this drug does not affect someone's character unless they let it affect their character. It is purely objective, it just helps them retain memory, which in turn will help them study, (Welford, 2016), and make them better students overall.

Conclusion

Modern science is constantly changing. As our world grows more complex, the need for better cognitive function grows ever more prevalent. Our drug would not automatically make students geniuses with photographic memories, it would simply give them an extra tool to succeed in their professional/academic lives. It has positive short-term and long-term effects, as well as positive ripple effects. It does not affect core values, nor does it go against current codes or laws. We as humans have the right to decide what to or what not to consume, and as this would be a widely available drug, it would not create an unfair playing field. It would simply depend on the student's personal responsibilities, character, and choices. The potential positives for this drug heavily outweigh any potential negatives that could occur.

References

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