Title: Ethics Across the Campus

Handouts:

a) Definition of ethical decision-making and our SLOs,

b) Eight Question Model for Ethical Decision-Making career assignment and my hints,

c) Assessment rubric,

d) Definitions of ethical concepts,

e) Definitions of values consistent with ethical decision-making, and

f) References.

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For the purposes of our QEP, we define ethical decision-making as “the process of making decisions about human conduct. It requires individuals to assess their ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, consider the ramifications of alternative actions, and justify their final decision.”

The following are our student learning outcomes (SLOs) for our QEP:

1. Understand concepts that provide a common language for analyzing ethical situations including:

* distinguish between ethical dilemmas and moral temptations
* identify core values related to ethical decision-making and define each
* identify concepts such as ethics, morals, character, ethical principles and ethical relativism

1. Adopt values consistent with ethical decision-making. These include honesty, fairness, responsibility, caring, citizenship, and open-mindedness.
2. Apply an ethical decision-making process when confronted with ethical dilemmas. (We use an eight question model to help students develop skills in this area.)

Career Assignment

**Part I:**

Describe a situation in which a person in your anticipated professional occupation is making a choice about what to do. (The person could be you, someone you know, someone you have heard of, or someone you make up.)

**Part II:**

Pick **one** of the following ethical questions to answer about that person and her situation:

-What is morally acceptable for the person to do?

-What is morally wrong for the person to do?

-What is morally obligatory for the person to do?

Fill in the Eight Question Model for Ethical Decision Making in order to help you answer the ethical question you picked.

**Eight Question Model for Ethical Decision Making**

1. **Purpose and Question**: What is the ethical question (s) you are trying to solve and why is this important?
2. **Information**: What are the relevant facts that might help you answer the question (s)?
3. **Points of View**: Who are all of the people involved and what are their respective interests?
4. **Principles and (Values)**: What are the relevant values or principles?
5. **Assumptions**: What am I assuming?
6. **Options and Consequences**: What are the main options for action and what are the likely consequences for each option?
7. **Conclusion**: What is your answer to the ethical question? Based on your responses to questions 1-6, provide an explanation to support your answer. In your explanation, make sure you include the general principle you used to answer the question. (A general principle is a moral rule that applies to more than one situation.)
8. **Implications**:
9. What is the impact of your answer (decision) on various stakeholders (i.e., family, friends, coworkers, boss, society, community, etc.)?
10. What would happen if everyone made the same decision you made?

Hints:

-For question 1, be sure to say why the ethical question is important to answer (besides the fact that you need to answer it for this assignment!) Perhaps, for example, the question is one that may arise in multiple careers. If so, say how.

-For question 2, do not repeat your description of the situation. You can assume that your reader has read your description of the situation. Focus on the facts about the situation that, when combined, make it hard to answer the question.

-For question 3, make sure you discuss all of the perspectives of the people involved in the situation and explain how those perspectives may affect your answer (decision).

-For question 4, recall that values are basic beliefs or desires that guide an individual’s attitudes and actions. That is, these are things that you find to be good or desirable or that motivate you. For example, honesty, compassion, and a positive reputation may be values to you. Ethical principles are values that are put in the form of rules. “Tell the truth,” “Do no harm,” or “Cheating is wrong” are possible principles a person may believe in. For question 4, identify all of the values or principles that you think are relevant to answering the ethical question and explain each value or principle.

-For question 5, state some things about this situation that you are assuming that someone from another perspective or culture might not. Explain why someone might question your assumptions.

-For question 6, list possible options for the person in the situation and state what is likely to happen in those scenarios. For instance, explain how other people would likely get pleasure or pain if alternative options were pursued.

-For question 7, state your answer to the ethical question you picked, state the general principle that you think justifies your decision, explain the general principle with another situation, and explain why you did not answer the question in some other way. Here are some possible forms for a general principle:

-If a person is in a situation in which \_\_\_\_\_, then it is morally acceptable for her to -----.

-If a person is in a situation in which \_\_\_\_\_, then it is morally wrong for her to -----.

-If a person is in a situation in which \_\_\_\_\_, then it is morally obligatory for her to -----.

-For question 8a, focus on yourself and not necessarily the person in the example unless you are the person in the example. You have now made a decision about what is acceptable/wrong/obligatory for the person in the example to do. What will be the impact, if any, on other people in your life now that you have made that decision?

-For question 8b, imagine that everyone answered the ethical question the way you did. What would the world be like?

You need to submit this assignment in two ways. First, you should turn in a hard copy of parts I and II in 2-3 typed pages by the beginning of class on Jan. 26. While this is not in essay format, you still need to use complete sentences and good grammar and spelling. Second, you need to submit part I and your answer to question 7 online under Forum in the Collaboration section of the course webpage on <http://my.peace.edu/ics> before class on Jan. 26. (Log in to my.peace.edu/ics, click this course, click Collaboration, click Forum, subscribe to Forum, click Career Assignment, click add a post, insert your name in the subject and your answer in the message, and then click submit.)

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|  | Capstone  4 | Milestones  3 2 | | Benchmark  1 |
| Ethical Self-Awareness  **(Value SLO & EDM-Q4)** | Student discusses in detail/analyzes both core values and relevance of the core values AND discussion has greater depth and clarity. | Student discusses in detail/analyzes both core values and the relevance of the core values to the situation. | Student states both core values AND the relevance of the core values to the situation. | Student states either their core values OR articulates the relevance of the core values to the situation, but not both. |
| Ethical Issue Recognition  **(EDM SLO- Q1, Q2)** | Student can recognize ethical issues when presented in complex, multi-layered context AND can recognize inter-relationships among the issues. | Student can recognize ethical issues when presented in complex, multi-layered context OR can recognize inter-relationships among the issues. | Student can recognize basic and obvious ethical issues and grasps (incompletely) the complexities or inter-relationships among the issues. | Student can recognize basic and obvious ethical issues BUT fails to grasp complexity or inter-relationships. |
| Perspective Taking **(EDM SLO- Q3)** | Student discusses in detail the varying perspectives of the people involved that are central to the dilemma AND discusses how those perspectives may affect the decision. | Student discusses in detail the varying perspectives of the people involved that are central to the dilemma BUT does not discuss how the perspectives mentioned may affect the decision. | Student recognizes the varying perspectives BUT does not discuss how the perspectives mentioned may affect the decision. | Student recognizes only one or two perspectives BUT fails to recognize a perspective that is central to the dilemma. |
| Evaluation of Ethical Decision  **(EDM SLO- Q5, Q6, Q7)** | Student states a position, provides a clear and detailed explanation for that position, AND explores in detail the other possible options or consequences. | Student states a position, provides an explanation for that position, and acknowledges the other possible options or consequences, BUT her explanation of her position is not clear or detailed ORshe fails to explore in detail the other possible options or consequences. | Student states a position, provides an explanation for that position, and acknowledges the other possible options or consequences, BUT her explanation is not clear or detailed AND she fails to acknowledge all of the other possible options or consequences. | Student states a position BUT does not adequately explain that position nor does she acknowledge the other possible options or consequences. |
| Recognition of Implications of Ethical Decision  **(EDM SLO- Q8)** | Student is able to identity and explain the impact of the decision on stakeholders AND is able to clearly articulate what would happen if everyone made a similar decision. | Student identifies the impact of the decision on most of the stakeholders, AND is able to articulate what would happen if everyone made a similar decision. | Student identifies the impact of the decision on some stakeholders, BUT is not able to clearly articulate what would happen if everyone made a similar decision. | Student fails to identify the impact of the decision on various stakeholders OR fails to articulate what would happen if everyone made a similar decision. |

**Common Language for Ethical Decision Making**

**Values** are basic beliefs or desires that consciously or unconsciously guide an individual’s attitudes and actions (Josephson, 1997). For example, if reputation is very important to an individual, that individual will make choices in his or her life that results in an improved personal perception. (Note: Definitions related to core values WPU will emphasize are contained in the following section.)

**Ethical relativism** is the view that values are relative in the sense that no person’s value is better than any other person’s value. (Pojman, 1989).

**Ethical Principles** are values that are translated into rules or standards of conduct such as “tell the truth”, “respect life”, “do no harm”, “don’t cheat,” etc. (Josephson, 1997).

**Ethics** is being referred to in a normative or prescriptive sense as rules or standards of conduct for individuals to use in determining how they ought to behave (Williams, 1999). These standards are developed from values and ethical principles and can be standards for an individual or for members within a group or organization. For example, Peace’s honor code is a code of ethics for all members of the WPU community to use when deciding how to act in a given situation.

**Morals and morality** are terms that many use interchangeably with the concept of ethics (Williams, 1999). “Moral” is derived from the Latin word “mos”, “moris” and is translated as a manner, habit, custom, or way of life (Kidder, 1995).

**Ethical Dilemma** entails a situation where there is a felt conflict between values or principles and a choice of action needs to be decided. A true ethical dilemma typically entails a felt right vs. right conflict, where one believes that there is not necessarily a wrong choice (Kidder, 1995). Some common ethical values that are involved in ethical dilemmas include truth versus loyalty and justice versus mercy (Kidder, 1995). According to Kidder, there are right-versus-wrong choices such as whether someone should cheat on taxes, lie under oath, overstate the damage done to a car for insurance purposes, etc., but these are not really ethical dilemmas; rather they represent **moral temptations**.

**Character** is a regular pattern of thought and action, especially with respect to concerns and commitments in matters affecting the happiness of others and oneself, and especially in relation to moral choices (Kupperman, 1991).

**Core Values and Definitions**

**Honesty** – being truthful, sincere, and candid in speech and act.

**Fairness** – treating people equitably, with impartiality, and due process; being consistent and without bias in dealing with situations; not allowing self-interest to influence the decision; seeking information before making important decisions.

**Responsibility** – being accountable for our words, attitudes, and actions; avoiding shifting blame or claiming credit for others’ work; fulfilling your obligation to do your best by persevering through challenges, avoiding excuses and completing what you promised.

**Caring** – expressing altruism, benevolence, kindness, or generosity; concerned with the welfare of others.

**Citizenship** – behaving effectively as part of a community; doing your “fair share” (or more) to help the group.

**Open-mindedness** - considering multiple different points of view; relying on evidence to make decisions; being willing to change your mind; accepting of information or people that challenge your perspective.

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