

**A HOLISTIC METHOD FOR ASSESSING A
BUSINESS ETHICS AND SOCIETY COURSE**

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ABSTRACT

My primary teaching goal is to engage students in creating ethical organizations whose managers take into consideration individual and community well-being. This chapter summarizes my assumptions about the course and student motivation, and provides justifications for twelve student performance assessments. Students earn points for (1) attending class, (2) speaking in class, (3) submitting daily homeworks, (4) journaling on a weekly basis, (5) taking quizzes prior to discussing assigned chapters, (6) facilitating the discussion of an ethical dilemma experienced at work, (7) working on a service-learning team project, (8) writing a report about the project, (9) sharing a meal with those needing the services of a community meal program, (10) composing a purpose of life essay, (11) sharing important class concepts with a boss, co-worker, or subordinate, and (12) submitting extra credit assignments.

INTRODUCTION

Millions of Americans have died in wars so that we could be free. With freedom comes responsibility. My primary teaching goal is to engage students in creating ethical organizations whose managers take into consideration individual and community well-being. I want them to

gain the critical thinking skills necessary to be first-class managers and communicators, as well as informed citizens contributing to the ethical evolution of a democratic society (Dewey, 1916).

I have been teaching Business Ethics and Society courses to students for more than twenty years. Currently, I teach a “Social Responsibility in Business” class to traditional undergraduates and returning adult students at a small liberal arts college. At a previous university, I taught the course to MBA students at a research university.

My interdisciplinary class integrates ethical analysis from philosophy, persuasion from communication arts, and management principles from business (Collins, 2006a). Students explore and implement the critical thinking, communication, and managerial skills necessary for developing socially responsible organizations and ethical citizenry through lectures, debates, experiential exercises, class participation, and service-learning projects.

This is a learning-by-doing course. A Chinese proverb is “What I hear, I forget. What I see, I remember. What I do, I know.” I provide opportunities for students to see and do things, in addition to hearing. Students are challenged to become a partner in this educational process and step through the learning doors I open. The purpose of education is to transfer knowledge and develop ethical citizenry, and hopefully both are achieved.

Such lofty goals require a holistic assessment of student performance. Students are measured on three different levels: individual and group performance, speaking and writing skills, and along Bloom’s learning taxonomy – beginning with remembering information and progressing through understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating new ideas (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

This chapter summarizes my assumptions about the course and student motivation, and provides justifications for twelve student performance assessments. Students earn points for (1)

attending class, (2) speaking in class, (3) submitting daily homeworks, (4) journaling on a weekly basis, (5) taking quizzes prior to discussing assigned chapters, (6) facilitating the discussion of an ethical dilemma experienced at work, (7) working on a service-learning team project, (8) writing a report about the project, (9) sharing a meal with those needing the services of a community meal program, (10) composing a purpose of life essay, (11) sharing important class concepts with a boss, co-worker, or subordinate, and (12) submitting extra credit assignments.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Table 1 lists the twelve assessments, the point total assigned to each assessment, and the percentage of the total grade for a typical semester. The class operates on a 1,000 point system, with another twenty points available for extra credit. To earn an “A” the student must accumulate 950 points (95%), 890 points for an “AB,” 840 for a “B,” 780 for a “BC,” 700 for a “C,” 650 for a “CD,” and 600 for a “D.” Due to the very fluid classroom discussions we have, if a student has earned 1,000 points, the student cannot receive higher than a “C” if he or she missed 20 percent of the class sessions. The class meets for seventy-five minutes twice a week for fifteen weeks, a total of thirty class meetings. After five missed classes the student is warned that one more missed class will result enforcement of the attendance rule. In extremely rare circumstances, I may deviate from these grading guidelines.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Teaching is a spiritual calling that requires an emotional and heart-felt experience by both the professor and student (Palmer, 1997). Students and professor should become better people, and make the world a better place, as a result of their interactive journey in class.

The philosophical foundation for such a claim rests with the nature of life on earth. The earth is a rock that has been orbiting the sun for at least 4.5 billion years. This floating spaceship continuously, and simultaneously, moves in two directions – approximately 66,000 miles an hour on an elliptical path around the sun and 1,000 miles an hour on its axis.

There are many potential explanations for the earth's existence. Most religions have a creation story that begins with an earthly paradise. In the Judeo-Christian version, the metaphorical Adam and Eve frolicked in paradise in direct communion with God. They were to achieve spiritual perfection, unconditionally love each other, populate the world, and live happily ever after. Then something happened that distanced humans from God, and the world has been an ethical mess ever since. Rather than heaven on earth, the world is a floating purgatory where people have free will to do good or bad, and where enlightened citizens practice kindness and try valiantly to achieve a just society.

If humans do have a common lineage then we are all related to each other. Therefore, I treat students sitting in my classroom as my siblings. The class is a large family gathering and I, as the educationally eldest sibling, create activities to enhance the transfer of wisdom. I have a lot to teach them based on more than half a century of experiencing, reflecting, reading, and writing about business ethics topics.

The students also have a lot to teach me. In a traditional undergraduate class, assuming twenty-five enrollees and an average age of twenty-one, the students have an accumulated 525 years of life experiences. A similar sized returning adult or MBA class has even more, approximately 750 years. Although few students have thought as deeply as I have about business ethics topics, their life experiences serve as a validity test for issues raised in class.

I have one semester to provide students with tools to help them recognize they are ethical beings who impact the well-being of others on a daily basis, including while at work. This is a difficult task because most students fear failure, and they have been habituated to be educationally passive. I must push them out of their comfort zones and encourage critical reflection. On the other hand, the job is made easier because, deep-down, students are idealistic beings who want to make the world a better place. To verify this, just ask students to raise their hands if they want to make the world a better place. In addition, I possess a powerful leverage, the distribution of grades.

Of the earth's 6.8 billion inhabitants, I assume there is a small core of imperfectly good people who are actively and conscientiously trying to create a more ethical world. These are the ethical go-getters. There is a parallel small core of imperfectly good people who intentionally harm others. These are the ethical adversarials. Lastly, there is a huge group of imperfectly good people sitting on the fence, observing this battle of wills between the ethical go-getters and adversarials from the sidelines. Individuals in this group of ethical fence-sitters switch back and forth between assisting those trying to create a better world and those who intentionally harm others. The social change challenge is to link the ethical fence-sitters with the ethical go-getters and raise their expectations about life's possibilities.

I apply the same social change theory to my class. In my traditional undergraduate class, I assume a bell-shaped continuum of student motivation. A small group of students are go-getters. They will actively engage in class activities because the go-getters strongly desire to be ethical managers who create ethical organizations. A small group is likely to be adversarials. They prefer the banking system of education where professors deposit information into their minds which the student withdraws at test time to determine if any interest has been earned on

the stored knowledge (Friere, 1971). Most students are likely fence-sitters, willing to do what is required by the professor to receive a good grade. In my MBA and returning adult classes, I assume a larger number of go-getters and fewer fence-sitters and adversarialists because they are paying a premium price for their education and can benefit from the immediate application of the skills and knowledge they gain in class.

In either case, I teach to the ethical go-getters, expect that the excitement they exhibit in class and during group activities will inspire the fence-sitters, and closely monitor the behavior of adversarial students. I kindly engage adversarial students the very first moment adversarial behaviors are exhibited and ask them to express their views to the entire class. If necessary, we also speak in private regarding my expectations and, applying Management-By-Objectives techniques, we jointly develop goals that would enable them to get the most out of the class.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students earn points for attending class. I cannot converse with students who are not physically present. Attendance at each class session is expected because in-class activities and discussions complement, but do not duplicate, textbook information. Many issues raised in class are not addressed by the textbook. There are no excused absences except to participate in a pre-approved collegiate sporting event, which is college policy.

There are always many reasons to miss a class, including work obligations and other activities. Most of my traditional undergraduate students work twenty to thirty hours a week and take 18 credits per semester. I emphasize that they are only undergraduate students once in their life and will be working the rest of their life. Together the students and I create a learning organization and we are all responsible for the learning that takes place in this organization.

The student's first responsibility in this relationship is to show up. I also warn the traditional undergraduates to be very careful about missing classes at the beginning of the semester because personal emergencies might happen later in the semester. If they miss six of the thirty classes then they can receive no higher than a "C" for the class, no matter how well they performed on everything else. I email students who miss two consecutive class sessions, noting that we learned less than we could have because he or she was not available to share information. After the third and fifth missed classes I send an email reminding them about the six missed classes rule.

I do not take attendance. Submitting the short homework assignment due most class sessions, and receiving the returned homework submitted the previous class session, verifies attendance. Students who miss a homework assignment are responsible for submitting a note stating attendance that day.

Daily attendance is even more important in the returning adult class, which meets four hours, once a week, for seven weeks. Missing one night is equivalent to missing approximately twelve to fifteen percent of a semester. As a result, students who miss an entire night cannot earn an "A" unless they do a make-up assignment.

Returning adults are allowed one, and only one, "make-up" assignment for missing an entire night of classes. The three-part assignment must be submitted prior to the final class session. For the first part of the make-up assignment, the student must interview a classmate and compose a paragraph about two things the classmate learned during the missed class.

Next, the student must watch a C-SPAN Senate or House session and observe politicians at work. Watching academics or pundits talk about politicians does not count, the student must watch real politicians in action. Sessions are available on the internet at www.cspan.org or

www.c-span.org/Politics. The student must compose one paragraph describing the issues the politicians explored and another paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with the politicians.

For part three of the make-up assignment, the student must create a one-page handout summarizing work-related expert knowledge they possess that would benefit classmates. Each student is an expert about something because of the type of work he or she performs. Accountants know the latest accounting rule changes, information technology specialists know how to avoid getting spammed, receptionists know how to get on the boss' busy agenda, writers know how to get published, etc. The student is then provided a few minutes to distribute and discuss the handout during the next class session.

VERBAL CLASS PARTICIPATION

As suggested by the class format, the course requires a great deal of verbal participation.

Students have a responsibility to share their understandings and experiences with the class to advance the group's collective skills and knowledge, and are expected to come to class prepared to make relevant points and ask relevant questions. The ability to engage in productive dialogues with others is an essential part of being an effective manager, and this entails being an excellent active listener too. All students are encouraged to become more verbally assertive, even if they think they are already assertive, to fully appreciate all that life has to offer.

Many students fear speaking in front of others or sharing personal information. They must overcome these communication fears to become ethical managers.

Students develop a habit for speaking in class our very first meeting by sharing information three separate times in front of the classroom under the guise of community building. One row at a time, students line up and tell everyone their name and hometown. This

superficial information is quickly conveyed to the relief of the speakers. Relieved that they got that over with, students begin over again by responding to a different set of questions. One row at a time students tell everyone their parents' occupations. This information reveals more about who they are in a supportive environment that helps them constructively expose their vulnerabilities (Lencioni, 2005).

After we discuss the syllabus, students do a third public speaking iteration. One row at a time, students share their childhood dream job and what they now consider to be an ideal job. All this information helps students quickly connect with each other. By the end of the first class meeting some students are now much more comfortable speaking in front of others. We have begun to create a "circle of trust," where students and the professor are provided the freedom to express who they are (Palmer, 2004).

Table 2 provides the grading scale used to assess verbal class participation. At mid-term, students submit a paragraph stating how many points they have earned using the scale, and why they believe they have earned this amount. They can choose any number from 0 to 100, such as 85 or 93, it does not have to be a multiple of ten. I reply in agreement or note that the student's self-assessment is either too harsh or lenient. These self-assessments are rather accurate because students know in advance that I'll be commenting on them. We do the same activity at the end of the semester, at which point I either accept their verbal participation grade recommendation or modify it.

Insert Table 2 About Here

The point total assigned to class participation is large enough to result in an entire grade reduction if a student has not been an active verbal participant. Students whose native language is not English, or those who are shy, occasionally claim that they are at a disadvantage because

participation does not come as naturally to them as to others. I express empathy and inform them that I will measure whether they demonstrated sincere effort at continuous verbal improvement during the semester.

HOMEWORK SUBMISSIONS

I want students to not only show up and speak out in every class, but also to reflect on class concepts prior to discussing them. Most class sessions have short homework assignments, such as one paragraph reflections about experiencing course concepts at work, responses to ethical dilemmas, impressions of reading assignments, and self-assessment surveys. The submissions must be typed to receive full credit. I grade them on a one to five scale based on how thorough the analysis. Most students earn full credit for most homework assignments. Managers must meet deadlines, so homework submissions are penalized 20 percent for each class period late.

The returning adult class has more applied homework assignments than the traditional undergraduate class because these students have more in-depth work experience. The applied homeworks are based on how concepts in the textbook are experienced at work (Collins, 2009). For instance, a returning adult class session on ethics training is preceded by homework reflections on the extent and effectiveness of ethics training at their current employer. Similarly, a discussion on how to differentiate job candidates according to their ethics is preceded by homework reflections on whether their organization screens job candidates for ethics and how they, their boss, or a human resource manager determines the ethics of job candidates.

The traditional undergraduate students read a book on a contemporary issue. Topics have included the flow of undocumented immigrants into the United States (Navarro, 2006) and best practices in environmental management (McDonough & Braungart, 2002). For the Spring 2009

semester, students were assigned President Barack Obama's autobiography (Obama, 1995). Chapters are staggered throughout the semester, usually one chapter per week, and students write one or two paragraphs about something in the chapter they found interesting and worthwhile sharing.

Also for homework, both classes read *Behaving Badly: Ethical Lessons Learned from Enron* (Collins, 2006b). The book puts the reader in the shoes of Enron executives through the journey of the once prominent and now infamous company. Enron's problems are treated as complex ethical issues managers may face daily – often without recognizing them as such. Key decisions are presented in real-time from several perspectives, including those of Ken Lay, Jeff Skilling, Andy Fastow, board members, auditors, lawyers, and investment bankers. Enron was at the forefront of the new economy, but human nature hadn't changed. The ethical dilemmas Enron experienced have existed for centuries and will exist for centuries to come. For many of the book's dilemmas, the reader must choose between two undesirable options. Students write a justification for the decision option they would have chosen, and debate them in class.

WEEKLY JOURNALING

The purpose of journaling is to deepen student awareness of events that take place in their lives on a daily basis (Dennehy, Sims, & Collins, 1998). Events they currently experience at work or school will influence their attitudes and behaviors throughout life. Students are very busy people and for that very reason need to find some quiet time to reflect on their daily experiences.

Students make dated journal entries in a computer file once a week in response to work-related ethical issues experienced or observed as an employee or customer, and explore their reactions to them. These journal entries highlight situations where values such as honesty,

promise keeping, respect for people or respect for property were either supported or violated. All information in the journal is considered confidential. I occasionally provide advice to a specific student experiencing a work-related situation during office hours. With the student's permission, I will share the situation with the entire class for their awareness and input.

The journals are collected three times during the semester and graded on a ten point scale based on the thoroughness of the reflections. Each successive submission requires an extra layer of analysis. For the first four weeks of class, students describe behaviors experienced or observed at work that were either praiseworthy or blameworthy. For the next four weeks, students also examine why the reported praiseworthy or blameworthy behavior excited them in a positive or negative manner, and what this says about them. For the final four weeks, students also write about what could be changed to foster more repetition of the praiseworthy behavior or less repetition of the blameworthy behavior.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP READINESS QUIZZES

Six class sessions have required textbook reading assignments. In order to maximize classroom learning, it is important for students to have a basic understanding of the reading assignments prior to class discussion.

We begin each textbook class session with a six-question multiple choice "readiness" quiz highlighting the main points of the reading. The quiz serves as an outline for class session. Quiz performance demonstrates how prepared students are for the class discussion. To reduce quiz anxiety, a list of key concepts in each chapter, ones that they will likely be quizzed on, appears in the syllabus.

The quizzes are distributed the first minute of class, thus encouraging all students to arrive on time. Each individual readiness quiz is worth 18 points, or three points per question. The individual quiz takes only five to seven minutes to complete. Students may take the quiz prior to class if they plan on being absent. If they are late, or miss the class, they get a zero for the quiz because the answers are discussed shortly after the quizzes are collected.

Immediately after I collect the individual readiness quiz, students complete the same quiz in groups of two or three. Within the small group, students share their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter with peers and must reach consensus. Students who have not studied typically opt out of the discussion, which creates some public embarrassment for them. Each correct team answer is worth two points, for a combined individual and group quiz value of 30 points. I inform students who score higher on the individual quiz than the group quiz that they must become more assertive during the group decision making process.

We discuss the quiz questions during the class session. This process provides students with immediate feedback on incorrect questions during the group or class discussions. Typically, students become more vocal when they realize the group chose an incorrect answer, requesting further clarification from the professor. This deepens the learning process.

CRITICAL INCIDENT GROUP FACILITATION

Employees are often tempted to hide ethical dilemmas from each other, or to make decisions that have significant ethical ramifications without input from affected stakeholders. I want my students to take a leadership role in organizations by facilitating the discussion of work-related ethical issues as they arise.

Early in the semester we discuss a series of ethical dilemmas I experienced at work when the age of my students. These include misleading customers about product quality, ignoring customer complaints, overestimating the value of damaged products to buffer inventory calculations, and sexual relationships between managers and nonmanagement employees.

As a homework assignment, students compose one short paragraph describing a real-life incident they experienced at work (a part-time job or student organization) that represented an ethical dilemma, something that troubled their conscience. They also compose a paragraph describing an incident at work that was either (1) contrary to the organization's interest, (2) contrary to industry or professional standards, (3) contrary to local or national laws, (4) not to the greatest good of the greatest number affected by it, or (5) disrespectful toward other human beings. In order to preserve anonymity, references to specific people and places are changed. These incidents are then shared in small group discussions.

Next, I choose a handful of incidents that represent a range of ethical dilemmas, such as employee theft, unsafe products, and lying to the boss. In groups of three, including the person who originally submitted the incident, the students further develop the written dilemma for class presentation. The first sentence begins from the perspective of the key decision making, i.e. "You work part-time in a grocery store". Both sides of the issue are described in detail so classmates can understand why the unethical option seemed reasonable for the decision-maker to pursue. Changes are made in the dilemma wherein the decision maker has only two or three

options, and each option appeals to an equal proportion of student respondents. If there are two decision options, the vote should be 50/50. If there are three decision options, the vote should be 33/33/33. The student team ends the written dilemma at the key decision point, asking the reader which option he or should would pursue, and why.

Each team has approximately ten minutes to facilitate a discussion about the critical incident. The team distributes a written copy of the dilemma to everyone in class and briefly acts out the dilemma, stopping at the key decision point. The team then reads the dilemma and addresses clarifying questions. Classmates must choose an option and write one sentence justifying the choice. A vote is taken, with the tally written on the board. Next, a team member asks someone with the minority perspective to persuade others in the class that his or her chosen option is the right thing to do in this situation. The team must then choose someone from a different perspective to respond to the justification just provided and facilitate a discussion between people holding opposing viewpoints. At the end of the discussion the team informs the class what really happened in this situation.

Insert Table 3 About Here

As noted in Table 3, the assignment is graded based on the written dilemma and the facilitation process. The written dilemma should be informative, interesting, understandable, grammar, and follow the appropriate format. Each decision option should attract an equal number of classmates. All team members should participate in the facilitation, and, most importantly, they must connect conversations so that all issues raised are addressed.

SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT TEAM WORK SESSION

Students will serve on work teams throughout their professional careers. Well functioning team experiences can greatly enhance the quality of work life. Ethical issues common to teams include being prepared for meetings, being constructive members during meetings, and sharing the workload.

Approximately twenty to thirty percent of the course is dedicated to a service-learning team project (Collins 2006a, 1996). I teach my students project management skills, which they immediately apply. Every fall the class works on management projects that benefit local nonprofit organizations. Many nonprofits are understaffed and underfunded and I offer my students to nonprofit organizations as “free laborers” who have expertise in all business fields, such as marketing, accounting, finance, information technology, communications, and general management. Recent organizations served include the Vilas Zoo, the Dane County Boys and Girls Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Madison-Arcatao (El Salvador) Sister City Project.

I work closely with the organization’s staff to design projects that are meaningful, yet can be completed by a team working seventy-five minutes once a week for seven weeks. The student team work sessions are held during regularly scheduled class time to minimize the problem of arranging busy student schedules. These are called “work sessions” rather than “meetings” because the students must work on something during the allocated time period. Students also tend to assume that most “meetings” are a waste of time, whereas “work sessions” must be taken seriously. Typical projects include developing a marketing plan, designing brochures, updating web pages, and other items on the executive director’s “to-do” list. In the spring term, the teams manage an annual Eco-Olympics competition among residence halls (Collins, 2008).

Team members assess their performance at the conclusion of every team work session. As shown in Table 4, team members evaluate each other in terms of being prepared for the work session, attendance, and being constructive during the work session. They summarize on an evaluation form what was accomplished during the work session, assignments due prior to the next work session, and the agenda for the next team work session. The team submits a signed copy of the assessment at the end of the work session.

Insert Table 4 About Here

Just as often times happens at work, individuals are sometimes placed on teams with people who are disruptive influences or do not do their fair share of work. In such circumstances, the teams are expected to try and work out their differences prior to appealing to a higher authority. At the very first team working session norms of behavior are established for sharing the work, dealing with conflict, and attending working sessions. If someone does not contribute sufficiently, team members are told to assume that s/he wants to become more involved but is shy or doesn't know how to contribute (particularly if language problems exist). The team must speak directly to the person and hopefully misperceptions are corrected and a more productive role is undertaken. On the other hand, if there is no change in performance, then the team informs me and I provide advice on how to manage the person.

SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT REPORT

Students will also compose reports throughout their careers, some of which will be jointly written. Ethical issues related to project reports include the fair distribution of writing tasks, gathering information in a timely manner, and meeting deadlines. The quality of the finished product can either enhance, or detract from, a team member's reputation.

In addition to a cover page, table of contents, executive summary and issue definition, the final report includes the team's initial project management plan and anticipated obstacles. This is followed by a documentation and discussion of the implementation experience and the results achieved. Unrealistic deadlines and any changes in task assignments are examined. Each team member summarizes his or her primary lessons learned about project management and themselves. The grading rubric used to assess the project report appears in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 About Here

Rewarding team performance at work, and assessing each other's performance, can be an ethical minefield. Not every person has the same talent or motivation. A grade is assigned to the submitted paper, and can be modified based on individual performance. A student can earn the paper grade if all team members perform equally, or a higher or lower grade based on superior or inferior performance relative to other team members.

We discuss these issues at the beginning of the project. The class reviews the seven characteristics of an excellent team member that appears in Table 6. Upon submitting the final report, team members evaluate the performance of each team member, including themselves, according to these criteria. They also rate individual performance relative to each other.

Insert Table 6 About Here

These evaluations are then shared among the team members and consensus achieved. This can be very difficult process, particularly if one student did not perform well. Team members might grade each other equally to avoid a confrontation with the free-rider. I strongly suggest that team performance assessment anxiety can be reduced if the free-rider takes a courageous step by admitting the obvious. Also, given the weekly team work session assessments, most free-rider problems have already been addressed, minimizing the likelihood of

any last minute surprises. On rare occasions there may remain some conflict on the team and I intervene to help the team achieve grading consensus.

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL PROGRAM

Adam Smith conceived of capitalism in the 1700s as an economic system that would eradicate poverty (Collins, 1988). This hasn't happened yet. As future leaders, and being people who have benefitted from capitalism, students need to deepen their understanding of the nature of poverty. People find themselves in the need of a free meal for a variety of reasons, including: low-wage job, sustained job loss without sufficient economic savings, loss of savings due to an accident or expensive family situation, mental illness, and alcohol and drug addictions.

Some businesses and nonprofits give back to the community by encouraging groups of employees to serve food at free meal providers. This is a very nice offering, but sometimes serving food solidifies the power imbalance between the “haves” and “have nots” rather than leveling the playing field. The executive director of a “free community meal” program and I have created an immersion experience where students experience a free community meal from the perspective of the meal recipient. Students are encouraged to experience this on their own. They may go in pairs, particularly if English is not their native language or if concerned about safety issues, but then must sit at different tables so as not to overwhelm the usual guests. This experience pushes most students out of their comfort zone. We discuss in class that it is natural for students to feel nervous, anxious or even scared if they have never shared a dinner at a free community meal center. The meal experience only takes about thirty minutes.

Many ethical issues may arise during this experience. These include the student’s fear of the unknown, prejudices about this population, determining the type of clothing that would

enable the student to “fit in,” waiting on line outside a free community meal location where a passersby might observe them, observing clients in an intimate setting, engaging clients in a conversation, and new prejudices students might develop as a result of this experience. If questioned by a client, students are encouraged to tell them that this is a class assignment designed by the executive director. The students meet with the executive director after the meal to discuss their experiences, and they are also debriefed in class toward the end of the semester. Some students are concerned about taking food away from clients, but there is always food leftover and any client needing extra food can get some.

Students submit a two-page essay after the experience that discusses their preconceptions about free community meal recipients prior to their visit, what they did and learned during their visit, whether their expectations were confirmed or disconfirmed, and new preconceptions they may have regarding free community meal recipients. The value of the assignment is calculated at a level where a student who does not complete it loses an entire grade.

PURPOSES IN LIFE ESSAY

My traditional undergraduate students are on the verge of more fully entering adulthood. Many returning adult students are in a transitional period between promotions or changing careers. For both student groups, this is a good time to take account of who they are and where their lives are heading. Students compose a six to nine page essay articulating their values and purposes in life based on life experiences. The essay also prepares them for job interviews, where they must express their values and ethics to strangers in a very short time period.

First, students discuss three characteristics that best describe who they are. Next they discuss their work organization in terms of the five values in the college’s mission statement –

truth, justice, compassion, partnership, and community. For instance, are employees truthful and compassionate, do they pursue fairness, develop partnerships and engage others in the spirit of community? Students also explore their reactions to an injustice and ethical dilemmas discussed in class, and categorize their ethics, and those of society, in terms of being egoists, social group relativists, cultural relativists, deontologists, and utilitarians.

The second part of the essay is a direct answer to the question: What are your purposes in life and how will these purposes be fulfilled through their work, career and family? These essays are assessed based on demonstrating self-exploration and systematic analysis.

FINAL EXAM

The traditional undergraduate class final exam consists of eight short essays based on material contained in the textbook. The exam is designed as a conversation between the student and his or her boss about basic information I want my students to share with others. Ethically, the fictitious organization is like many others. Most employees are very conscientious and have good intentions, though a few don't. Upper management assumed everyone had been behaving ethically, but a few anonymous comments placed in the employee suggestion box indicate otherwise. The boss is very impressed by my student's energy, experience, intellect and ethics and asks for clarification about some key business ethics concepts, such as how does being ethical impact profitability, what are the major ethical theories and would they suggest that a poor performer be fired, and what are the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines?

The returning adult final exam is very different. Given their work-related responsibilities, it is more important that they actually educate their boss, peers, and direct reports about what

they are learning in class, rather than hypothetically writing about what they would say if asked. I also want the returning adult students to impact organizational performance by initiating some ethics-based change during the semester. If not employed, they can do so for a nonprofit or community organization.

For their final exam, returning adults write about their efforts to share class information and initiate or inspire workplace change. The information shared may be about how ethics improves organizational performance, lessons learned from Enron, public policy issues, qualities of an ethical employee or environmental management, to name a few. Changes students may initiate include modifying the code of conduct, providing ethical dilemmas to be used when interviewing job candidates or for ethics training workshops, and revising performance appraisals to reward ethical behavior.

In terms of grading, the returning adults earn all available points if they continually shared class information at work and initiated and inspired one change to improve the organization's ethical performance.

EXTRA CREDITS

Students can earn points for two extra credit assignments. These assignments are designed to expand the student's knowledge base or personal experiences. One-page extra credit essay possibilities include:

- Watch 60 minutes of C-SPAN and write a reaction to the discussion.
- Attend a political or business talk and discuss an ethical issue associated with the issue.
- Attend a religious service not of your tradition and write about your experience.

- Watch a movie that dramatizes an ethical dilemma that might be experienced at work and write a reaction to it.
- Do something that you've always wanted to do but have not yet had the time to do, such as attending an opera or visiting the local zoo, and write a reaction to having done it during the semester.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Business ethics professors can provide students the experience of making the world a better place, particularly through the organizations that employ them. This chapter discusses twelve different assessments I use to help my students lead well-integrated lives based on self-understanding and creative action. By the end of the semester students are better public speakers and much more fully aware of the ethical issues they experience on a daily basis. They experience improving the management of a nonprofit organization or campus activities, and have personal interactions with people needing the services of a free community meal program.

All of these activities are aimed at creating ethical managers who practice kindness on a daily basis, in a way that benefits: (1) all those whom they interact act and (2) bottom-line profitability.

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Table 1: Performance Measures

Assignment	Point Value
Non-Quiz Class Attendance	8% (80 points)
Verbal Class Participation	10% (100 points)
Homework Submissions	8% (80 points)
Weekly Journaling	3% (30 points)
Readiness Quizzes	18% (180 points)
Critical Incident Group Facilitation	2% (20 points)
Service-Learning Project Team Work Sessions	7% (70 points)
Service-Learning Project Report	12% (120 points)
Community Meal Program Essay	7% (70 points)
Purposes in Life Essay	4% (40 points)
Final Exam	21% (210 points)
Potential Extra Credit	2% (20 points)
Total Potential Points:	1,020

Table 2: Verbal Participation Grading Scale

Each student is graded at the end of the semester using the following scale:

- 100 points: You verbally contribute very informative and insightful comments in every class; if not a member of this class, the quality of our daily discussions would diminish significantly.
- 80 points: You verbally contribute informative and insightful comments in most classes; if not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would diminish considerable.
- 60 points: You verbally contribute informative and insightful comments occasionally; you contribute in small groups but rarely in the large class discussions; if not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would diminish somewhat.
- 40 points: You verbally contribute very little in large or small group discussions; if not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would change very little.
- 0 points: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation and are seldom informative, insightful, or constructive; if not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would not change or valuable air time would be saved!

Table 3: Critical Incident Facilitation Grading Rubric

TEAM MEMBERS:

	Unacceptable: C-F	Good: B; Nice effort but needs a major change	Very Good: AB; Needs a minor change	Superior: A; No change
Written Dilemma: Informative, Interesting, Understandable, Grammar, Follows Format, Even Vote [50%]	0-18 points	19-21 points	22-24 points	25 points
Discussion Facilitation: All team members involved, empowered minority, challenged majority, connected conversations [50%]	0-18 points	19-21 points	22-24 points	25 points

Professor Denis Collins' Grade Summary.

Using a standardized 100 point scale -- Superior [A], 95-100 points: Could facilitate discussion at company. Very Good [AB], 85-94 points: Need to make a few minor changes before facilitating. Good [B], 72-84 points: Need to make a few major changes before facilitating. Unacceptable [C-F], Below 72 points: Need a lot more practice before facilitating.

Table 4: Team Work Session Assessment

The team project is worth **190 points** – **70 points** for your performance during team work sessions and **120 points** for the quality of the final product.

Team Work Session Performance Evaluation

You must meet as a team an equivalent of 7 class sessions to work on your team project. Each work session is worth 10 points. After each team work session please Xerox this page, insert the points representing each team member’s effort for the work session, have each person in attendance sign the sheet, and then give it to me at my office [LLL 28] or slide it under my door. Please be honest in your assessments.

CLASS:		DATE:		
TEAM MEMBERS	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>
1) Work session preparation: Fulfilled expected work tasks due – Point Scale: 0 (none), 1 (little), 2 (half), 3 (a lot), or 4 (all)				
2) Work session attendance – Point Scale: 0 (missed it), 1 (some); 2 (most), 3 (attended all of it)				
3) Was a constructive participant during work session – Point Scale: 0 (no), 1 (a little), 2 (most of the time), 3 (all the time)				
TOTAL POINTS EARNED BY EACH TEAM MEMBER				

What did team members do during the 75 minutes set aside to work on the project?

What will team members do before the next team work session?

What will team members do during the next 75 minutes set aside to work on the project?

Table 5: Service-Learning Project Paper Grading Rubric

HUMAN ISSUES PROJECT GRADING RUBRIC	Unacceptable: C-F	Good: B; Nice effort but needs a major change	Very Good: AB; Needs a minor change	Superior: A; No change
Class Presentation: Informative, Interesting, Within Time Constraints, All Members Involved [10%]	0-4 points	8 points	9 points	10 points
Report Appearance and Writing Quality: Format, Neatness, Grammar [10%]	0-4 points	8 points	9 points	10 points
Executive Summary and Action Plan: Thorough and Logical [30%]	0-12 points	24 points	27 points	30 points
Implementation Experience and Results: Thorough and Reasonable; Data supporting your statements [20%]	0-8 points	16 points	18 points	20 points
Newspaper Article: Thorough and Appropriate [10%]	0-4 points	8 points	9 points	10 points
Task Activity Team Log (Appendix A): Thorough and understandable [10%]	0-4 points	8 points	9 points	10 points
Personal Reflections (Appendix B): Thorough and Appropriate [10%]	0-4 points	8 points	9 points	10 points

Professor Denis Collins' Grade Summary.

Excellent [A], 95-100 points: Could hand in report to the boss. Very Good [AB], 85-94 points: Need to make a few minor changes before giving to boss. Good [B], 72-84 points: Need to make a few major changes before giving to boss. Unacceptable [C-F], Below 72 points: Need to start over again.

Table 6: Peer Evaluation Form

Your Name: _____

Please evaluate yourself and each group member in a fair and accurate manner. Your ratings will be kept *anonymous*. Take your time and provide a useful and complete evaluation.

1. Point Allocation – below, rate yourself and your team members using a zero to four point scale (4 = superior, 3 = adequate, 2 = average, 1 = poor, and 0 = no contribution).

<u>Team Member Names</u> <u>(Include Yourself):</u>				
Organizational Ability				
Cooperativeness				
Originality or Creativity of Ideas Contributed				
Functional Contribution— Analysis & Recommendations				
Dependability				
Quantity of Work Contributed				
Quality of Work Contributed				
TOTAL POINTS				

2. Percent Allocation – below, rate yourself and your team members using the following 80% to 120% scale:

120%: This team member performed **a lot more** than everyone else

100%: This team member performed **the same** as everyone else

80% (or less): This team member performed **a lot less** than everyone else

Your and Team Member Names	120%, 100% or 80% using scale above

PLEASE PROVIDE COMMENTS ON BACK EXPLAINING YOUR EVALUATION