



MODEL STUDENT ETHICS COMMISSION PROGRAM

Students Ethical dilemmas Government

Negotiation Analytical thinking Mediation

Leadership Ethics Accountability

Decision Making

Integrity Peer Pressure Public trust

Critical thinking Transparency

PURPOSE

This program is designed to *teach* and to *engage* students in the policies and issues concerning *ethics, good governance* and *accountability* in the administration of government. Students will review case studies regarding ethical dilemmas, identify solutions to various issues within the local to international arenas and participate in mock public commission hearings to *discuss/debate* public policy issues and to *resolve ethical dilemmas*. Ultimately, students are equipped with the capacity to recognize and to apply different approaches to *ethical decision-making*.

OBJECTIVES

Teach students:

The process of resolving ethical dilemmas;

The elements of critical and analytical thinking, and how to apply them in daily life;

The art of negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution and consensus building skills (through Mock Public Hearings).

Provide students with the capacity to recognize and to apply different approaches to ethical decision-making.

STRUCTURE

The project consist of eight modules [8] delivered in eight months. The Ethics Commission administers the program through the social science/government classes *twice a month, thus four hours per month of instruction*. During each program, five [5] students, through random selection, are appointed to serve as members of the Ethics Commission for the entire module. In addition, other students are randomly selected to participate in the case studies, which involve role-playing (public hearing before the Ethics commission), discussion/debate and a decision being rendered by the Ethics commission. Note: The program can be adjusted to fit the needs of your organization.

ADVICE-GIVING PROCEDURE/PUBLIC HEARING

In this activity students review ethics case studies.

- Students, requesting ethical advice or resolution, stand before the ethics commission and explain their dilemma or other involvement with the specific ethics case study.
- The ethics commissioners have the opportunity to ask questions prior to rendering a final determination. In the meantime, the rest of the students, write down their thoughts and final resolutions to the dilemma.
- The commissioners vote on a final determination, majority rules.
- The chairperson states the commission's final determination, including how and why it made the determination.
- Thereafter, students with different results may state, debate, and discuss their position.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS A COMMISSIONER

- *LISTEN*
- *ASK QUESTIONS, SUCH AS “WHY DID YOU MAKE THAT DECISION?” or “HOW DID YOU DECIDE UPON THAT CHOICE?”*
- *BE RESPECTFUL OF DIFFERENT OPINIONS*
- *BUILD CONSENSUS*
- *KEEP ORDER DURING THE MEETING*
- *ALLOW EVERYONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ETHICS COMMISSION

USE TIME-TESTED PRINCIPLES TO RESOLVE ETHICAL DILEMMAS (ENDS, RULE OR CARE BASED)

CONSIDER ANY RULES WHICH GOVERN THIS BEHAVIOR.

EXPLORE OTHER SOLUTIONS-FUTURE IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS.



CASE STUDY

“Breakfast at a Local Restaurant”

“Speak up” or “Remain silent”

CASE STUDY: “Breakfast at a local Restaurant”

Your high school is having FCAT testing and as a senior you do not have to take the FCAT. You and members of the Senior Class are given permission to go and have breakfast until the testing is completed. After you have breakfast, you notice that two classmates of yours leave money on the table to pay for their meals and you overhear one of them state “I have to go to the restroom and I’ll meet you at the front door”. Shortly after the two students leave the table, a group of students at another table overheard the same comment that you did but, they opt to remove the money from the table and pay for their meals with the stolen money.

As the two students (who left the money on the table) attempt to leave the restaurant manager asks them to pay for their meals. Both students emphatically state “We left money on the table for our meals”. The manager then brings the two students back to their table and points to the table, which no longer has any money on it. The manager then asks you and the students sitting with you, if you have seen anything?

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND?

Analysis. You are caught in a dilemma. You must make your decision from the perspective of ends-based, rules-based, and care-based principles.

Ends-based (greatest good for the greatest number here). If you tell the truth, you may make some new enemies, but it will serve the greatest number (i.e. the restaurant manager, five students (three at your table and the two who left money on the table)).

Rules-based (what would you want other students to do in this case)? If it were your money that was stolen, would you want other students to speak up or keep silent?

Care-based (how would you feel about your decision if you were in the other person’s shoes)?

CASE STUDY: “Breakfast at a Local Restaurant” (Role Playing Scenario)

Role Players: One Restaurant Manager
Four students

Students will read the case study and try to figure out which course of action is appropriate (see page 3).

Students should consider the following:

What to do? Should you speak up? When is the best time to speak up? Ethics and how you would respond (rule, care, and ends based thinking).

Rule-based – If everyone in the world were to do what I am about to do – to follow the rule that I am about to follow, is that the kind of world that I would want to live in? The rule-based thinker says, we must always stick to our principles and let the chips fall where they may.

Ends-based – “Do whatever provides the greatest good for the greatest number.” The ends-based approach is a form of consequentialism because we cannot determine the greatest good without guessing what the future consequences will be.

Care-based -- Commands that we do to others what we would want others to do to us. This is commonly known as the Golden Rule (Rule of Reversibility).

CASE STUDY: “Breakfast at a Local Restaurant”

Should you take a private approach when deciding the best time to tell the restaurant manager?

Should you wait until the students leave and then report them?

Do you tell it straight!!!!

The *options* involved in this case are:

Come forward and turn in your fellow students, or just keep quiet.

What is your final answer??????????????

Turn in your fellow students YES _____ NO _____

Just Keep Quiet YES _____ NO _____

Other/Remarks _____



MEMBERS OF THE ETHICS COMMISSION

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