

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)
TEMPLATE**

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Core Area: Ethics

Spring 2007

(1) Student Learning Outcomes	(2) Measurement of Evidence	(3) Summary Results	(4) Assessment Informed Improvements
Identify and articulate central ethical problems concerning equality, justice, and rights, and understand the role these play in personal and professional life.	1. Service Reflection Assignment 1 2. Service Reflection Assignment 2 3. Case Study Analysis 4. Topic for Final Paper 5. OPTIONAL: Ethical Issues in Current Events	1. Grade results: 17 A, 10 B, 3 C, 1 D 2. Grade results: 27 A, 2 B, 1 C 3. All but a handful of students could identify a moral problem associated with a Contemporary Moral Problem. Those who could not either restated facts about a situation as though this offered an evaluative account of the situation or offered political analysis without reference to a sense of justice or to a theory of ethics 4. Final papers were due yesterday , not yet graded 5. A small number of students completed this optional assignment and did identify ethical issues they encountered in news articles	
Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.	1. Service Reflection Assignment 4 2. In-class comparison of ethical theories	1. Grades: 15 A, 7 B, 3 C, 3 F 2. Students could recognize that different ethical theories raise different questions about a situation. in the abstract they could name advantages and disadvantages to these theories, when applied to a case, students had a more difficulty connecting each theory to a particular case -- one tended to prevail in the activity	1. Change Service Reflection 4 to questions of commutative, distributive and social justice and assess this outcome more explicitly in the mid-term examinations 2. Spend more class time on activities such as these.

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Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.	1. Case Study Analysis and Responses	1. Students were required to identify an argument that opposes their position on a case study and to respond to that argument. This was the weakest skill of the case study assignment in the class. When students responded, they tended to note their agreement without offering an argument to extend a position. When students did not agree, they could more easily recognize disputess	
Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.	1. Mid-term examinations 1 and 2 2. Final Papers	1. Mid-term examinations grades: 26 A, 17 B, 9 C, 1 D, 1 F 2. final papers not yet graded	
Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.	1. Case Studies 2 and 3	1. When approaching the subject of religion in public life, most students found the argument from philosophical liberalism for a private religion to be compelling a small number were able to recognize the potential for discrimination if people were required to keep religious beliefs private. When approaching issues of sexual ethics, students again argued for private morality. Students have a broad appreciation for the practice of toleration, students do not as readily recognize the limits of toleration.	
Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.	1. Service Reflection 5 2. Service Learning Critical Incident Journal	1. Students were able to describe how priorities in choosing a approach to life reflect ethical values. 2. Students fairly readily made use of virtue theory to assess their engagement with service partners, students were less adept at recognizing questions of justice, quite a few mentioned solidarity -- though	2. Provide examples of critical incident journals for students Focus on theories of justice in Service Reflection 4

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		their working definitions of solidarity tended to mean little more than empathy -- even if they had defined solidarity in terms of distributive or social justice	
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<p>Identify and articulate central ethical problems concerning equality, justice, and rights, and understand the role these play in personal and professional life.</p>	<p>Students will encounter these issues through interaction with a variety of sources, including case studies, newspapers, film, fiction, and their personal and professional lives. In addition, they will meet these concepts as they are articulated by the ethical theorists they encounter.</p> <p>Assessment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twice-weekly reflection papers • Notes from small groups in which students share tasks of facilitation and note-taking * Midterm and final exams • A first- and last-class writing exercise on the question, "What is ethics?" 	<p>Students generally grasp these issues, particularly as they pertain to their personal experiences. The presence in the class of persons from a variety of ethnic, religious, racial, and national backgrounds assists the process.</p> <p>The biggest challenge remains moving students beyond an entirely individualist ethical stance, in which ethics remains merely a matter of personal opinion.</p> <p>Comparison of students' first- and last-class essays often reveals major improvement in their understanding of ethics, both as a philosophical discipline, and as a necessary part of life.</p>	<p>Integrate methodological and applied aspects of ethics earlier in the course, so that students see 1) that there are methods to help them make ethical judgements; and 2) those methods can be meaningful in their personal and professional lives.</p>
<p>Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical</p>	<p>Students learn to identify and evaluate the following ethical theories: virtue ethics and various kinds of teleological ethics, deontology, natural law, casuistry, and feminist</p>	<p>For the most part, students learn to master the distinctions among the major ethical methods. Kantian deontology is the most challenging.</p>	<p>Introduce a "deontology brush-up" session to consolidate understanding of this method and its philosophical underpinnings.</p>

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<p>theories.</p>	<p>ethics. Assessment will be based on a demonstrated ability, in written and oral work, to identify the ethical methods employed in a particular ethical argument, to assess the effectiveness of the argument, and to assess the suitability of the ethical method to the problem at hand. Occasional quizzes assist students in retaining the material and preparing for exams.</p> <p>In group work and in midterem and final exams, students apply multiple ethical methods to specific problems.</p> <p>In groups, students design and teach ethical cases, leading the class through the application of particular theories.</p>		
<p>Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.</p>	<p>This will be accomplished through the use of small-group discussions, in which students will learn to: identify and articulate their own positions; identify and articulate the positions of others; identify and articulate areas of agreement and disagreement. A unit on casuistry will provide one</p>	<p>Students generally display thoughtful sensitivity to their fellows in discussions; indeed it is sometimes difficult to surface ethical disputes.</p>	<p>Make more consistent use of the rhetorical tools introduced in the units on analyzing and making arguments.</p>

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	<p>example of an ethical method which allows people who may disagree about general principles to arrive at ethical consensus in particular cases.</p> <p>Assessment is based on student small group and class participation, and on written work which reflects an ability to fairly assess the ethical arguments of others. In particular, the midterm exam requires students to apply the "Toulmin" method of analysis to an argument made in a newspaper article.</p>		
<p>Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.</p>	<p>Students wrote twice= weekly reflection pieces, prompted by study questions. As the course progresses, these questions grew less directive and require students to do more summary and synthesis. In addition to these reflection papers, students wrote a midterm and final exam. each of which required applying ethical methods to a particular contemporary moral issue.</p>	<p>In many cases - but certainly not all - students' critical writing capacity increased between the midterm and final exams.</p>	<p>Find ways to help students incorporate in their future work the relatively extensive comments they receive on their short papers and exams.</p>

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<p>Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.</p>	<p>Beginning with the first assignment – an excerpt from Amy Tan’s <i>The Joy Luck Club</i>, the course emphasizes the role of factors such as race, gender, culture and class in the formation of groups’ and individuals’ ethical thinking. In addition, the final unit of the course focuses specifically on this question, using Susan Muller Okin’s essay “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?” together with several of the responses contained in the volume by the same name.</p> <p>Group exercises, such as a worklife simulation game assist in assessment of students’ assimilation of these issues.</p>		
<p>Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.</p>	<p>Student groups practice formulating ethical cases and teaching them to the class. Each student submits a written ethical case; questions for the final exam are selected from among these student-written cases.</p>	<p>Students apply ethical theories with varying success; everyone understands utilitarianism, but deontology is harder to grasp</p> <p>Final student "What is ethics?" essays often include examples of how the student has applied the theories learned to a particular situation.</p>	<p>None at the moment.</p>

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Identify and articulate central ethical problems concerning equality, justice, and rights, and understand the role these play in personal and professional life.	Paper assignments two and three require the application of general ethical theories to their personal and professional life.	Average grades of papers two and three were "B-."	Subtle variations to the paper assignments will be made to better focus the students on the relevant ethical theories, rather than their own view of the matter, as was occasionally exhibited in student papers.
Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.	Paper assignment number one requires the comparison and contrast of at least two ethical theories with respect to right and wrong and the notion of how to live the good life. Objective style midterm and final exams also provide a way of testing knowledge of various ethical theories.	Average grades of paper one and the midterm/final exams were "B."	The next first paper assignment will focus on virtue, rather than Aristotle's notion of happiness, or the good life.
Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.	Class discussions focus on attempting to articulate and settle a variety of ethical disputes. The discussion of moral relativism is especially relevant here.	Though not formally assessed, a strong sense that students were acquiring an understanding of settling ethical disputes was exhibited by the class discussion as a whole.	No changes in this category foreseen.
Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.	The first two paper assignments force them to bridge the gap between classical and contemporary ethical theories, as well as the issues involved.	The average grade of the first two paper assignments was a "B-."	More time in class will be spent preparing students for these two paper assignments.

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Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.	The third paper assignment on affirmative action and reparations is a prime example of the role of diversity in contemporary ethical discussions.	The average grade of the third paper assignment was a "B+."	No improvements foreseen in this category.
Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.	Both the papers and class discussion challenge students to apply what has been learned to examples relevant to their personal lives. Topics vary from term to term.	The average grade for the paper assignments was a "B."	Several in-class group projects are being implemented to effect a better performance in this category. Morally charged topics will be chosen from the news and students will be challenged to reach a consensus about what they could do in their personal lives to address these issues.

Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met:Both students and fellow faculty have offered very encouraging remarks about the effectiveness of the course, though further feedback is always desired.

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Identify and articulate central ethical problems concerning equality, justice, and rights, and understand the role these play in personal and professional life.	Weekly papers and blog entries. Class discussions. Final research project presentations.	Over the course of the year students became articulate about the social issues we were discussing. They made public presentations, gave interviews to media.	Begin the public presentations earlier in the year. The students became much more articulate once they were given this opportunity.
Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.	Students compared public testimonials made by officials with that of NGO's working directly with social issues.	Students demonstrated an understanding of the complexity of social issues and their solutions.	Providing a wide range of viewpoints led to a great understanding of possible solutions.
Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.	Case studies used in class reading and discussion	Through class discussion students articulated an understanding of ethical practices	Case studies worked well, more social analysis, after community based work may provide a greater understanding of ethical principles.
Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.	Weekly papers and blog entries, media presentations	Students addressed various groups and media outlets reporting their research findings	Providing more of these opportunities allows students to represent their research.
Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.	Students worked in extremely diverse situations gathering evidence on social issues	Demonstrated an understanding of diversity and the injustice/justice related issues.	Diversity demands broader solutions and not one-size fits all. Students need opportunities to understand this complexity.
Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.	Students engaged in research alongside practitioners and demonstrated their abilities to apply classroom knowledge.	The more "hands on" opportunities resulted in greater understanding of ethical theories and practices.	Providing as much direct research contact with NGO and other practitioners benefits the students directly in their learning.

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Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.	Student presentations of argumentative dialogues, which include the application of an ethics of purpose, principle, and consequence (based on the ethical theories of Aristotle, Kant, and Bentham	Most students were able to follow the steps in applying these theories to concrete cases and recognized their general differences	Most class work on comparing and contrasting the three different ethical traditions.
Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.	Student argumentative dialogues include developing arguments on alternative views of controversial issues, these are presented in class and submitted in writing	Most students were able to use syllogism in understanding the reasons for different views. This is a new type of thinking for many of them, since they are rarely asked to explore their reasons behind different positions	I don't think improvements are needed here
Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.	Paper on Aristotle and work relationships	This paper explores the relationships between friendship and justice and the moral issues involved in relationships at work	Right now, I think focusing on the issue of civic and work relationships is worth pursuing

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<p>Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.</p>	<p>Class participation is 20% of the grade and we often work in diverse groups. So students learn from each other. Also, the basis for the argumentative dialogue is respecting diverse points of view and engaging in dialogue rather than debate.</p>	<p>This is more difficult to assess, but the quality of the argumentative dialogues give some indication of the students ability to recognize and appreciate differences</p>	<p>I think I need to spend more time on the issue of diversity in the workplace. Perhaps connect it with the paper on Aristotle and relationships at work</p>
<p>Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.</p>	<p>Students select their own issues for the argumentative dialogues and many of the conversations in class related to their own relationships as well as relationships in the work of work.</p>	<p>In student evaluations, both by the University and the evaluations I ask students to submit to me, it is evident that many students do see the importance of ethics for themselves.</p>	<p>I think this learning ourcome depends largely on the learning environment I can create in the classroom, which I try to promote through my attandance policy and everyday interactions with students.</p>

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Identify and articulate central ethical problems concerning equality, justice, and rights, and understand the role these play in personal and professional life.	CASE STUDIES	Students completed case studies with an average grade of 95%	This is the last semester the course will be offered in St. Ignatius Institute, expect changes in subsequent semesters
Compare and contrast major ethical theories, to show how actions can be determined to be just or unjust, right or wrong, or good or bad, and to demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of major ethical theories.	IN CLASS DISCUSSION	Students were less capable of identifying different ethical theories, this was the weakest outcome.	Spend more time on these questions
Investigate ways of settling ethical disputes in arriving at ethical judgments.	CASE STUDIES	Students were able to respond to prominent argumetns against their conclusions in case study analysis.	
Think and write critically about classic and contemporary moral issues.	CRITICAL READING PAPERS, FINAL EXAM AND A BOOK REVIEW	Students exhibited a high level of skill in critical analysis and writing critically	
Identify the contributions of diversity and recognize the challenge that it presents in resolving contemporary ethical issues.	CRITICAL READING PAPERS AND IN-CLASS DISCUSSION	Students were capable of examining philosophical liberalism and of critiquing this position from the perspective of feminist theorists who critique this position, studnets were less adept at comprehending communitarian critiques of this tradition	Spend more time on communitarian critiques of liberalism
Demonstrate an ability to apply ethical theories and values in personal decision-making.	RESPONSES TO CRITICAL REFLECTION PAPERS AND CASE STUDIES	Students were able to apply ethical theory to practical decisions	

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