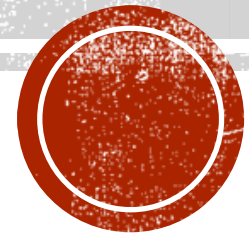


HOW AN ETHICS INITIATIVE CAN SERVE UNIVERSITY GOALS

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THE ETHICS EXPLOSION

- Ethical behavior on the national agenda – COVID, 2020 Election, democracy, social media, athletic scandals
- Dramatic expansion of attention to equal justice and diversity, equity and inclusion
- Daily revelations regarding sexual harassment and “MeToo” violations
- New technologies raising difficult ethical questions – AI, CRISPER, social media
- Expansion of medical ethics concerns due to COVID
- ‘New wave’ of business ethics concerns - corporate purpose, B corps, ESG
- Renewed focus on “professional ethics” in law, accounting, engineering, etc.
- Investigative journalism and whistleblowers uncovering more ethics scandals



WHAT IS AN ETHICS INITIATIVE?

- **Ethical administration** a central commitment of university leadership; commitment to an ethical culture
- **Ethical competence a central promise (or imprint) of an education** at this university
- **University has faculty and expertise** in ethics
- **All faculty welcome/engage ethics** issues in their fields
- **Research in ethics** an essential part of university research
- **Curricular opportunities** (requirements?) in ethics
- **Co-curricular opportunities** in ethics; student engagement
- **Community Outreach:** offer ethics programs and services to external constituencies of the institution



STRUCTURING AN ETHICS INITIATIVE

- **Tone at the Top is Essential**

- President's Ethics Strategy and Communication Plan
- Provost's Strategy/Goals for Curricular and Co-Curricular Ethics Efforts
- University Ethics Office
- University Compliance Office and programs

- **Essential Elements of an University Ethics Initiative**

- Executive Director of University Initiative
 - creative, opportunistic, bias for applied ethics
- Appropriate staffing to implement strategy and programs
- Faculty Advisory Group; External Advisory Board
- Website, newsletters, sharing information about college efforts
- Engagement in selected university ethics programs; leverage
- Evaluation



STRUCTURING AN ETHICS INITIATIVE

- **Strategy/Program Office for Ethics in Undergraduate Education**
 - How imprint will be described
 - How imprint will be implemented on large scale
- **Centers in each Professional College –**
 - Executive Directors - versatile, opportunistic, credible with faculty
 - Appropriate staffing to implement strategy and programs
 - Hiring of faculty with core interest in ethical questions
 - Engagement of faculty to address *everyday* and *new ethics issues*
 - Strategy for curricular, co-curricular, research, community-engagement efforts



TYPICAL START-UP ACTIVITIES

- **PREPARING:**
 - Concept paper – goals, strategy, elements, timeline, method of evaluation
 - Inventory of current ethics courses, research, and faculty interest (baseline data)
 - Survey of faculty and student attitudes towards ethics (baseline data)
- **ANNOUNCING**
 - Initial Announcement of Initiative
 - Major Conference or Event to launch Initiative
- **FIRST STEPS**
 - Faculty workshop on current ethics courses and pedagogy
 - Faculty workshop on current ethics research
 - Pedagogical workshop on teaching ethics
 - Pilot classes to experiment with pedagogical approach of initiative
 - Challenge to schools and departments to develop own approaches



SOME ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Whose ethics? Whose values?
- What to call it?
- Applied versus theoretical
- Controversial issues



WHOSE ETHICS?

- **SOME CONSENSUS ON VALUES**
 - e.g. Academic integrity; Diversity, equity and inclusion; Respect for free speech, free inquiry; Social justice; Democracy; Pluralism; Key virtues -honesty, integrity, respect, tolerance, care, accountability, transparency
- **COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL BEHAVIOR** in all institutions and professions
- **COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL INQUIRY** – value in the inquiry itself
 - Identifying ethical questions and issues
 - Exploring ethical dimensions – five common sense questions
- **COMMITMENT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER** and character development



WHAT TO CALL IT?

- Ethics
- Applied Ethics
- Leadership Ethics
- Ethics and Values
- Ethics in Society
- Global Ethics
- Teaching and Study of Ethics
- Ethics and Sustainability
- Character and Leadership
- Professional Responsibility
- Ethics and Public Responsibility
- Ethical Inquiry
- Human Values



THEORETICAL VS. APPLIED

- **Theoretical:**

- More consistent with academic activity in other courses and in research
- Builds on existing university competence
- Expands university intellectual agenda to incorporate ethics

- **Applied:**

- More emphasis on how ethics is encountered by students and alumni
- More emphasis on day-to-day ethical dilemmas
- More emphasis on ethics in the **professions** and policy questions
- More emphasis on contemporary and immediate ethics questions
- Enables initiative to serve the community

- **Conclusion:**

- Must be **both** theoretical and applied, but must meet people “where they are”
- Theoretical must **inform the applied**
- The **applied should provide** questions for research



CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

- Impossible to completely avoid controversial issues. Examples:
 - Use of animals in research; university policies and practices
 - Use of medical products developed with abortion products
 - Right to not be vaccinated vs. Community need to vaccinate all
 - Union rights/ organization efforts at university
 - Election integrity vs. voter suppression
 - Ethics of war or other conflicts; military ethics
 - Defend or criticize university administration re: ethics decisions
 - Ethics of individual university donors
- Solutions
 - Emphasize role to encourage and sponsor ethical inquiry
 - Sponsor debates: try to bring rational and respectful dialogue
 - Sponsor paired speakers – both a pro and a con speaker
 - Pick annual themes with care; avoid the most inflammatory speakers
 - Center scholars have freedom of speech; Center does not take positions



WHAT DOES A UNIVERSITY HAVE TO GAIN?

- **Reputation for managing ethically**
- **Reputation for moral and ethical education of each graduate**
- **Reputation for having nationally known faculty in ethics**
- **National reputation for ethics expertise in selected fields**
- **Reputation for cutting edge research** in important areas of ethics
- **Reputation for being concerned about ethics** in the lives of its students, alumni and the community
- **Reputation for supporting** faculty and students interested in ethics
- Reputation for being **Michigan's primary resource for ethics**
- Reputation for a **global approach to ethics** as to all MSU education





RESOURCES



EXAMPLES OF CURRICULAR EFFORTS

1. **Required course** for all undergrads – content varies – Ethical Reasoning? Ethical inquiry? Current ethical issues? Options?
2. **Ethics segment** of “Gateway to College” freshman course
3. **Required course for professional fields** – Ethical obligations of engineers, professional standards for lawyers, ethics for Veterinarians, medical ethics, research ethics for doctoral students,
4. **Ethics electives** in majors and subfields
 - *Marketing Ethics, Finance Ethics, Software Engineering Ethics*
 - *Psychology and ethics; Archeology and Ethics*
5. **Ethics electives on emerging topics** of ethical importance
 - *Ethics and Artificial Intelligence*
 - *Ethics and Social Media*
 - *Ethics of Self-Driving Vehicles*
 - *Ethics of Gene-Editing*
6. **Required ethics capstone projects (or ethics portion of capstone)**



EXAMPLES — CO-CURRICULAR STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Research assistants** to faculty on ethics projects
2. **Summer research grants** on ethics topics
3. **Senior Project** research grants on ethics topics
4. **Ethics internships** in hospitals, businesses, professional firms
5. **Service opportunities** — all year, summer, spring break, etc.
6. **Ethics Bowl Team** — regional and national competition
7. **Business Ethics Case Team** — national competition
8. **Partnerships** with existing university and college initiatives
9. **Senior Year discussion groups** on life purpose and values



EXAMPLES — CO-CURRICULAR EVENTS

1. **Annual conference/symposium**
2. **Speaker series** targeted at faculty, students, or both
3. **Speaker series** on annual theme
4. **Briefings/Debates** on Breaking Issues
5. **Student discussion groups** – “Socrates Café”, “Socrates at Sunset”
6. **Discussion groups on difficult ethics topics** – students, faculty, alums, community members
7. **Student-led speaker series** on ethics topics



EXAMPLES — CO-CURRICULAR ELEMENTS

1. Ethics **summer reading** for entering freshmen
2. **Orientation** ethics training on **academic integrity**
3. **Orientation** ethics training on **student conduct standards**
4. Strong ethics theme in **president or provost commencement talk**
5. **Residence-based discussions** of ethics issues
6. Ethics training for **student leadership and clubs**
7. Ethics training for **university athletes and teams**
8. Ethics training for **Greek organizations**
9. **Ethics segment** of other cocurricular initiatives
10. **Program grants** to any university organization that addresses ethics



EXAMPLES — RESEARCH ELEMENTS

1. **Research grants** to faculty for **ethics related topics**
2. **Research grants** to faculty for research on **priority themes**
3. Graduate and undergraduate **research assistants**
4. **Post-doctoral** research fellows
5. **Faculty research seminar/workshop** on ethics topics
6. **Departmental or school research seminars** on ethics topics
7. **University research** on ethical attitudes, ethical learning at institution
8. **Joint research** with companies, government, nonprofits, professional societies on ethics questions



EXAMPLES — PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS

1. **Teaching workshop** on how to teach ethics
2. **Course development workshop** to design courses and modules
3. Faculty workshop on **how to handle an ‘ethics question’** in class
4. **Faculty led ethics training** for professionals



EXAMPLES — COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

1. **Speaker series** open and promoted to the public; addressing topics of public interest
2. **Annual conference** on topic of public interest – sport ethics, AI and ethics, civility
3. **Speaker series targeted at specific professions** – law, business, engineering, etc.
4. **Partnerships** with professional societies to address ethics – state bar, state medical society, etc.
5. **Annual ethics presentations at professional societies** (e.g. state bar, professional fundraisers)
6. **Annual college ethics conference** for students and alums
7. **Continuing education programs** on ethics for professions that require it – law, accounting, etc.
8. **Speeches to community groups** – annual conventions, service clubs, award programs, etc.
9. **Ethics modules for community leadership programs**



EXAMPLES — COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

ETHICS TRAINING FOR THE COMMUNITY

1. **Ethics education for high school students**
2. **Ethical parenting classes** for parents, alumni, etc.
3. **Collaboration with local schools** on “character education” or “social emotional learning” programs
4. **Ethics education for individual companies**, law firms, accounting firms, etc.
5. **Ethics consulting** engagements with cities, hospitals, businesses, professional groups
6. **Participation in studies** or development of ethics codes by professional societies, etc.

ETHICS RESOURCES FOR OTHERS

1. **Model courses/online courses** for use by other institutions
2. **Resource materials** on ethics for use by public
3. **Case collections** on ethical issues in selected fields



MISSION STATEMENTS - IN MICHIGAN

- **MSU BIOETHICS:** The mission of the Center for Bioethics and Social Justice is to critically engage with clinicians, researchers and policymakers in order to build our society's health system to be compassionate, respectful, and responsive to people's needs, so that equity, inclusion and social justice are available to all.
- **MSU LAW:** The Frank J. Kelley Institute of Ethics & the Legal Profession at MSU Law addresses issues of ethics and the legal profession through teaching, research, and outreach programs.
- **UMICHIGAN SCHOOL OF INFORMATION:** The Center for Ethics, Society, and Computing is dedicated to intervening when digital media and computing technologies reproduce inequality, exclusion, corruption, deception, racism, or sexism.
- **UMICHIGAN BIOETHICS:** The mission of Center for Bioethics and Social Sciences in Medicine is to be the premier intellectual gathering place of clinicians, social scientists, bioethicists, and all others interested in improving individual and societal health through scholarship and service.
- **UMICHIGAN BUSINESS (new):** The Mitchell Program for Business Ethics and Communications to bolster the development of ethical, diverse business leaders.



MISSION STATEMENTS ELSEWHERE

- STANFORD: The McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society is committed to bringing ethical reflection to bear on important social problems through research, teaching, and community engagement.
- SANTA CLARA: The mission of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics is to engage individuals and organizations in making choices that respect and care for others.
- HARVARD: The Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics seeks to **strengthen** teaching and research about pressing ethical issues; to **foster** sound norms of ethical reasoning and civic discussion; and to **share** the work of our community in the public interest.
- EMORY: The Emory Center for Ethics is dedicated to exploring how ethical issues underlie the decisions that shape our minds, lives, and society.
- DUKE: The Kenan Institute for Ethics is a think and do tank dedicated to understanding the moral challenges of our time and creating scholarly frameworks, policies, and practices to address them.
- USC: The Neely Center for Ethical Leadership and Decision Making seeks to advance the practice of ethical business leadership through research, educational programs, curriculum development, seminars, and community outreach.



WHAT IS ETHICS?

1. Behavior and Virtue - administrators, faculty, staff, students
 - Demonstrate honesty, caring, responsibility, respect, civility, etc.
 - Demonstrate self management and discipline
 - Concerned with character development
2. Skill: ethical inquiry, reasoning and decision making
3. Skill: recognizing and understanding ethical dimensions of issues, decisions, situations
 - Everyday situations; commonly encountered ethical dilemmas
 - Emerging ethical choices – due to technological and social change
4. Skill: designing ethical systems to make ethical behavior easier in organizations and society



FIVE COMMON SENSE ETHICS QUESTIONS – THE BASIS OF ETHICAL INQUIRY AND REASONING

1. **UTILITARIAN:** Which solution produces the greatest good and the least harm?
2. **RIGHTS AND DUTIES:** Which solution best respects and legitimate rights of those affected and delivers most faithfully on the duties of all involved?
3. **JUSTICE:** Which solution is fairest to all parties?
4. **COMMON GOOD:** Which solution contributes the most to the common good?
5. **VIRTUE:** Which solution represents a person acting with virtue and integrity?

