

**Center for Ethics Assessment Plan
for the
Certificate in Practical and Interdisciplinary Ethics
Spring 2006**

Mission of the Center:

The mission of Webster University's Center for Ethics is to stimulate dialogue, encourage awareness, and promote critical thinking about ethical issues. The Center aims to inspire reflection about ethical dilemmas and helps bring together people normally separated by disciplinary boundaries. Through curricular development and public forums, the Center identifies issues of moral importance and supports environments conducive to collegial ethical analysis. The Center serves as a resource for collaboration within the university and throughout the larger community, urging participants to identify their roles and responsibilities to one another as citizens of local and global communities. The Center does not endorse any particular viewpoint; it aims to promote sophisticated discussions through which various ethical positions can be discussed.

**Description and goals of the program
(Certificate in Practical and Interdisciplinary Ethics):**

The undergraduate Certificate in Practical and Interdisciplinary Ethics gives students the opportunity to identify a concentration in the study of ethics. The certificate enhances student awareness of ethical issues, and helps them identify and explore the moral issues and/or dilemmas that arise in various disciplines, fields, and professions. Completion of the certificate sharpens students' critical thinking skills, and provides them with the tools for applying moral theories to moral decision-making. Most courses in the certificate introduce a variety of cultural and ethical perspectives, and students gain considerable practice engaging in ethical analysis, dialogue and debate.

In studying ethics, students have the opportunity to reflect on matters of pressing importance, to anticipate and respond to ethical dilemmas, and to think deeply about what kind of life they ought to lead. Beyond their university experience, certificate students will also be able to: assure potential employers that they have considered the ethical aspects of professional conduct; vote and shape public policy in an informed and thoughtful manner; enhance their academic work with community service.

Student Learning Outcomes of the Certificate

Upon completion of the certificate, students should be able to:

1. identify, interpret, and analyze the ethical issues that arise in various disciplines, professions and cultures
2. use ethical theory to analyze and formulate positions on ethical issues
3. think critically, systematically, and creatively about ethical dilemmas
4. connect ethical analysis to the responsibilities of public citizenship

Specific Courses Targeted for Assessment:

Two courses (with several sections each) will be targeted for assessment in the certificate program: PHIL 2320 and ETHC 1000. PHIL 2320 Contemporary Moral Problems is the core course required of all certificate students. The course with a prefix unique to the certificate is ETHC 1000 Issues and Problems in Ethics.

General Objectives and Learning Outcomes for PHIL 2320 Contemporary Moral Problems

Course Objectives:

1. to promote critical, systematic and creative thinking about ethical issues
2. to expose students to various perspectives on controversial moral issues
3. to promote sophisticated discussions in which various ethical positions can be discussed
4. to explore the relevance of moral theory to moral decision making
5. to help students identify and clarify their own positions on contemporary moral problems and issues

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. analyze ethical issues from various perspectives and/or cultures
2. apply several philosophical theories to current moral problems
3. evaluate moral positions and arguments in a systematic manner
4. construct and defend moral positions of their own, both orally and in writing
5. formulate and anticipate possible objections and alternatives to their own moral positions

General Objectives and Learning Outcomes for ETHC 1000:

Course Objectives:

1. to increase student awareness of ethical issues pertinent to a specific discipline, profession or topic
2. to develop critical thinking skills
3. to stimulate critical analysis and reflection upon the norms and/or regulations that influence the discipline, profession, or topic of the course
4. to promote sophisticated discussions in which various ethical positions can be discussed
5. to help students develop ethical positions of their own

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. articulate and analyze the ethical issues and/or dilemmas explored in the course
2. critically discuss (both orally and in writing) these issues and/or dilemmas
3. develop and defend (both orally and in writing) ethical positions of their own
4. formulate and anticipate possible objections and alternatives to their own positions

Measurement of Student Learning

Assessment Plan/Tasks:

- collect syllabi for all PHIL 2320 and ETHC 1000 courses each year
- ensure that course objectives and learning outcomes appropriate to the certificate are listed on the syllabi
- ensure that all courses include the requirement of at least one critical essay that addresses the learning outcomes of the course
- ensure that course is structured to introduce a variety of ethical perspectives
- administer course evaluations at the end of each term or semester
- meet once per year, typically early in the fall semester, to review syllabi, student evaluations, sample of student essays from ETHC 1000 and PHIL 2320, and exit interviews

Also, communicate with faculty teaching other courses that count toward the certificate, to be sure that their course objectives & learning outcomes generally match those of the certificate.

Students completing the certificate will be asked to complete an exit interview, designed to measure several of the goals of the certificate as a whole. This interview is to be administered in the spring of students' senior year, and reviewed the following fall by the Center for Ethics Steering Committee.

Certificate in Practical and Interdisciplinary Ethics

Questionnaire for Graduating Seniors

1. Has earning the certificate helped you to analyze, interpret or better understand ethical issues in various disciplines, professions and cultures? How? Please explain and/or provide an example.
2. What might you tell someone who is not enrolled in the program (ex. an employer, a family member, a friend) about the value of this program?
3. To what extent do you think learning ethical theory has enhanced your ability to analyze and formulate positions on ethical issues?
4. Describe the impact you think the certificate has had or will have on your ability to:
 - Approach ethical issues from alternative viewpoints
 - Anticipate and respond to moral dilemmas
 - Vote and shape public policy
 - Engage in community projects and/or service
5. Which course and/or topic had the greatest impact on you and why?
6. Are there other courses, topics or issues that you would have liked to study that were not available in the program? Are there any courses on the current list that do not belong in the certificate?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the program?

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY
ETHC 1000 Course Evaluation – Fall 2005

Course _____

Instructor _____

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO COMPLETE THIS EVALUATION.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 = Strongly agree / Highest rating | 4 = Mostly disagree / Below average rating |
| 2 = Mostly agree / Above average rating | 5 = Strongly disagree / Unsatisfactory rating |
| 3 = Somewhat agree / Average rating | NA = Not Applicable |

- _____ 1. The course was what could be expected from its title, course description, and syllabus.
- _____ 2. The course objectives and requirements were clearly explained.
- _____ 3. The texts, materials, and other resources reflected the course objectives and were used effectively.
- _____ 4. Assignments were appropriate for the course objectives.
- _____ 5. Evaluation of student work (examinations, papers, projects, class discussion, etc.) reflected the material and subject matter covered in the course.
- _____ 6. All things considered, how would you rate the quality of this course?
- _____ 7. The instructor was organized and prepared for class.
- _____ 8. The instructor demonstrated broad knowledge of the subject matter.
- _____ 9. The instructor was able to effectively communicate the subject matter to the students.
- _____ 10. The instructor was helpful in responding to student questions and individual needs.
- _____ 11. The instructor was accessible outside of class for extra help and/or discussions.
- _____ 12. The instructor provided feedback on your progress during the course.
- _____ 13. The class atmosphere was one in which students felt free to ask questions, initiate discussion, or express opinions.
- _____ 14. Instructor's feedback on assignments was constructive in helping me know what I do well and what I need to work on.
- _____ 15. In general, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of the instructor?

What did you find most valuable about the course?

What changes would you recommend to improve the course?

What are the instructor's strengths?

Are there other ETHC courses you would like to see offered?