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Teaching a Method of Case Study Ethical Analysis Online [1]

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The project that I propose for the University of Colorado Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Program (SoTY) involves developing a method for teaching case study ethical analysis online and measuring student learning in this activity.

In the literature on teaching ethics, there is debate about whether students learn about analyzing and resolving ethical conflict from ethical theory (Gentile, 2010, 2012). The debate focuses on what constitutes the starting point for teaching analysis and ethical decision-making. In addition, there is debate about how to measure student learning about ethical decision-making (e.g., Gentile 2012). The debate focuses on what methods best assess student learning in ethics education.

The proposed project addresses both issues. First, the proposed project develops a method that can be used in an online course in ethics (e.g., biomedical ethics, practical ethics) that draws from the strengths of normative ethical approaches (e.g., in biomedical ethics, Beauchamp and Childress, 2013) *as well as* action-based ethical approaches (Gentile, 2010). I'll develop the method for my undergraduate class, PHIL 3130 OL (Biomedical Ethics). The method includes: (1) a series of steps that guide students in thinking through an ethical conflict, (2) a series of steps that guide the practical means (or "scripts") one follows to address an ethical conflict, and (3) a forum by which students offer peer-review of each other's views. Second, the proposed project develops (1) a rubric that can be used in such exercises. The rubric includes assessments for: (1) the steps in ethical decision-making and (2) peer-review feedback and discussion.

Students complete each step in the assignment and are then assessed using the rubric. The proposed project attempts to study the character and depth of student learning that results from (or does not result from) teacher practice. Learning about how best to teach ethical decisionmaking is important not only for a course on ethics but for any of us interested in working with others who are faced with ethical dilemmas.

Both the method and assessment of student learning will be designed for an online class. Online classes in ethics are increasingly available on college campuses and current textbooks do not offer helpful advice about how to format online case study ethical analysis.

The written project will be submitted to the *International Journal of Ethics Education* (Springer) for consideration of publication.

Citations

Beauchamp Tom L. and Childress, James F. 2013. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*. 7th ed.

New York: Oxford University Press.

Gentile, Mary C. 2010. *Giving Voice to Values: How To Speak Your Mind When You Know What's Right.* Connecticut: Yale University Press.

Gentile, Mary C. 2012. "Value-Driven Leadership Development: Where We Have Been and Where We Could Go," *Organization Management Journal* 9: 188-196.

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