



ncre National Center for
Professional & Research Ethics

High School Ethics Education Outreach

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Program Overview

The NCPRE High School Ethics Education Outreach Program connects, engages, and embeds University of Illinois undergraduates with local high school students and classes. Under faculty guidance, undergraduates lead workshops on key issues facing high school students, providing tools to articulate values and to act ethically in the face of conflicting messages and peer pressure.

The High School Ethics Education Outreach Program was developed by the the National Center for Professional and Research Ethics (NCPRE) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in response to alarming national studies indicating high levels of unethical behavior among high school students. One recent survey found one in three American high school students admitted to shoplifting, two in five to lying to save money, and eight of ten to lying to their parents. A majority (59%) of respondents admitted to cheating on a test while a third used the Internet to plagiarize an assignment (Josephson Institute of Ethics, 2011).

Serving as a national resource for best practices, educational materials, and scholarly literature, the NCPRE is a natural base from which to positively interact with the local community by engaging local high school students with a talented and trained pool of University of Illinois students. The Ethics Education Outreach Program has the following goals:

1. Develop meaningful relationships with high school students grappling with how to navigate their worlds ethically
2. Disseminate learning strategies and decision-making frameworks for ethics education
3. Use supplemental instruction and student-driven learning to create stimulating classroom environments
4. Capitalize on university resources, chiefly faculty expertise and experience, to bring research-based approaches and undergraduate peer leaders to ethics education into the classroom

Program Footprint

Starting in the Spring semester of 2013, the program has served high school students from 3 area high schools: Centennial High School, Urbana High School and the University of Illinois Laboratory High School (Uni High). In its 4-year history, 29 undergraduate Ethics Outreach Leaders (EOLs) have engaged with more than 830 students in 40 area high school classrooms, expending an annual budget of approximately \$3,000.

Yearly Program Engagement

Year	HS Classrooms	HS Students	EOL Undergrads
2013	6	120	9
2014	8	162	11
2015	12	280	12
2016	14	270	10
4-year total:	40	832	29 (across semesters)



High School Breakdown

	Centennial High	Urbana High	Uni High
School Type	Public	Public	Public/Select Admit
School Size	1400	1100	300 (8 th -12 th grade)
White/Black/Asian/Hisp. (%)	49/34/8/6	41/40/4/10	63/5/26/6
Graduation Rate (%)	82	84	100
Low Income Rate (District %)	56	62	Not Available
Average ACT	21	20	32

Leadership Team

The outreach program is led by Professor C. K. Gunsalus and Dr. Gene Amberg. Professor Gunsalus and Dr. Amberg are assisted by undergraduate program managers.

C.K. Gunsalus, Director of the National Center for Professional and Research Ethics, consults on the development of the curriculum and research efforts. She was for many years Course Director for *Business 101: An Introduction to Professional Responsibility*, as well as teaching *MBA501: Leadership and Ethics*, a required ethics course at the University of Illinois College of Business. She has taught ethics across levels, from high school through executive education programs.

Gene Amberg oversees the program’s curriculum and coordination with local high schools. He previously served as a Clinical Assistant Professor of Education at the University of Illinois College of Education and for 25 years as a school superintendent, including 15 years as superintendent of Urbana School District 116.

Ethics Outreach Leaders

Undergraduate student-instructors, known as Ethics Outreach Leaders (EOLs), are the core of the outreach program. EOLs are responsible for leading classroom sessions and presenting the curriculum to students in an engaging fashion while managing the classroom environment along with their host teacher. EOLs do this in pairs to add nuanced insights based on different experiences and create more personal relationships with students.

EOLs are recruited and selected for their passion for community engagement, leadership experience, and familiarity with ethics and professional responsibility education. Students from the College of Business are a natural fit as they take *Business 101: An Introduction to Professional Responsibility*—which covers many of the same topics as the EOL Program—during their first semester. Business 101 Section Leaders (undergraduate classroom facilitators) have traditionally been preferred candidates for the EOL Program due to their proficiency in the curriculum and teaching experience though the Program has benefited from the service of EOLs across a variety of colleges and backgrounds.



At the start of each term, EOLs undergo an orientation training to familiarize themselves with the curriculum, program goals, guidelines for working with minors, and teaching best practices. They meet monthly to review the curriculum ahead of each classroom session.

EOLs gain valuable experience from the program and enjoy the classroom environment and building relationships with students. Here are a couple of their experiences:

“I think that the instructional sessions with our high school students were definitely impactful. The majority of our class was always excited to see us and participated greatly. Of course there will always be individuals who do not care or pay attention and I feel our group did a good job in creating activities that got all students engaged, moving, and participating. By the end of the class, our students knew us by name and were truly excited to meet with us each week.”

“I absolutely love this program. I hope it grows and expands into more classrooms. We really make the students think critically, challenging the things they would never think twice about. We don’t lecture them; we interact with them and allow them to express their opinions, not telling them ‘this is what you should think.’ It gives them the freedom to be honest and explore new ideas. I wish more high schools had programs like this.”

Curriculum

Over the course of the school year, EOLs lead six classroom sessions—three each semester—in teams of two or three on a variety of ethical and professional responsibility topics. Each lesson plan is reviewed and updated annually by the leadership team, undergraduate program managers, and EOLs based upon feedback from students and host teachers.

The hallmark of the outreach program is the “Two-Minute Challenge” (2MC) where students are presented with a time-sensitive dilemma that requires choosing one of several difficult or ambiguous choices. Except for the introductory lesson, each session revolves around a 2MC. After the students reach their decisions, the EOLs lead the students through a decision-making framework NCPRE uses throughout its programming to evaluate the underlying issues, applicable rules and regulations, questions one might ask to navigate the dilemma, available resources, and final options. Ultimately, the core moral of the 2MC is that in any ethical dilemma a difficult decision must be made. The decision-making framework provides a useful, systematic method to reach the best decision under the circumstances.

Lessons often incorporate current events to demonstrate the application of the material and how leaders can fail their ethical compass. The Flint, Michigan water crisis and Wells Fargo scandal are recent examples of situations EOLs have explored and analyzed in their sessions.

Each lesson builds upon the previous one, introducing new topics and more complex scenarios. Below is an overview of the progression of the program curriculum:

Lesson Plan 1: Program introduction and icebreakers. Discussion of the meaning and importance of ethics, personal values, and how the two are connected.

Lesson Plan 2: How individual decisions in ethical dilemmas can impact communities.

Lesson Plan 3: How group decisions influence communities and individual group members.

Lesson Plan 4: Personal scripts—communicating ethical decisions and maintaining professional relationships.

Lesson Plan 5: “TRAGEDIES”—understanding the snowball effect of unethical decisions.

Lesson Plan 6: Defining Moments—the culmination of personal awareness and identity within an ethical framework.



Adaptability

The high school classrooms where the program is presented span an array of educational environments, from high school seniors to eighth-grade “sub-freshmen” at Uni High. Some classrooms are college-track AP courses while others are designed for academically-challenged students. Through monthly preparation sessions with the entire program staff and individual preparation time, EOLs adapt the scope, pace, examples, and nuance of their lesson plans to their assigned classrooms based on their students’ ages and interests. The program aims for each student to experience as personalized and meaningful a curriculum as possible, and the expectation of adaptability is emphasized as EOLs prepare for their sessions.

Time Constraints

One challenge faced by host teachers and EOLs alike are time constraints. In order to participate fully in the program, host teachers must allot six class periods over the course of the year. The program recognizes that this is a significant investment, especially in classrooms that follow the AP curriculum. Accordingly, the program makes every effort to schedule sessions at the most convenient times possible while encouraging the host teachers to engage with the lessons by offering insights relevant to their own curriculum. EOLs face time constraints through the short high school class periods they have in which to deliver their sessions. Preparation spent in staff meetings and among individual EOL teams centers around time and classroom management, as well as ethics content, to ensure each portion of the session is allocated sufficient time.

EOL Growth

The program represents an exciting part-time job opportunity for students at the University of Illinois. With a time commitment level that can be reasonably accommodated even in the busy schedules of student leaders, EOLs are able to give back to the local community, expand their professional networks, and hone valuable professional skills including effective communication, planning and time management, and strong understanding of professional ethics. EOLs enjoy the opportunity to learn from each other and develop rapport with the students over the course of the year. For EOLs wishing to become more involved, the program selects one or two students to serve as the program manager each semester, affording them experience consulting on the curriculum, building relationships with high schools, and managing human resources.

Testimonials

Individual host teachers, rather than school administration, invite the program into their classrooms on their own prerogative. Because of this model, the program takes great care to develop strong, accommodating relationships with each of its partners to be respectful of their time. Below are two host teachers’ perspectives on why the program provides value to their class and their students and is worth the time in their curriculum.

“The students were very engaged in the scenarios that were discussed during the lessons. High school students have an innate interest in issues of ethics. This class, in particular, is a great venue for emphasizing the importance of values, and especially community.”

“I’ve always felt students’ values and communities deserve venues for discussion, and it’s something that’s quite overlooked in education. The seminar accomplished this: getting students to reflect and think about what their own values are, and how they may clash with others in their communities. I believe if we could have more sessions, we could really get students taking ethics and values to the next level: having real time discussions about topics and issues in their own community.”

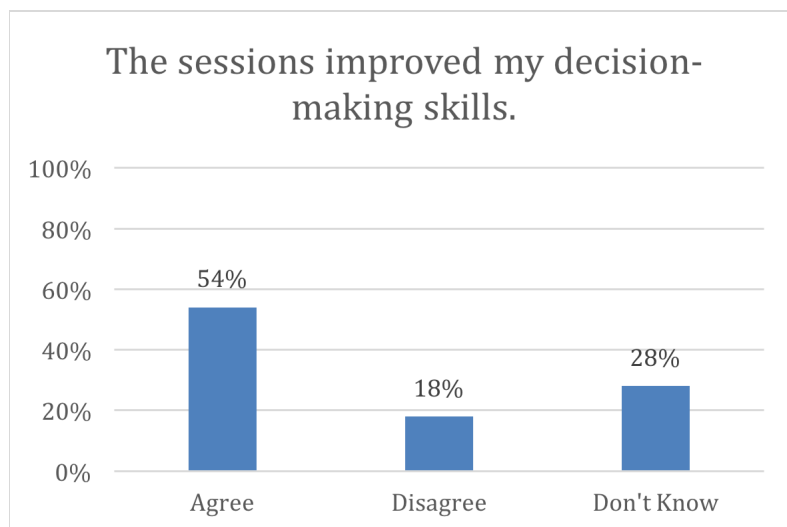
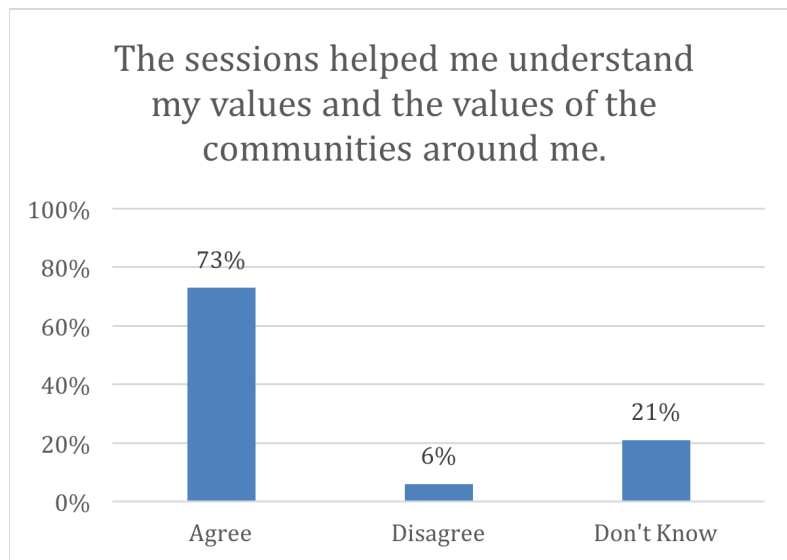


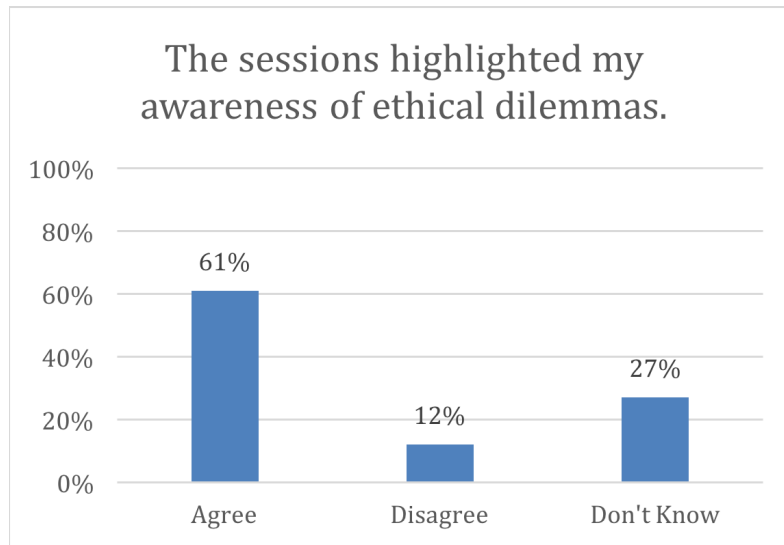
Assessment

As part of a continuous effort to improve the curriculum, the program conducts regular assessments of program efficacy through student, EOL, and host teacher responses to provide the most engaging learning experience possible for students. The program reviews and assess the impact of the program on students, the curriculum, presentation methods, activities, underlying themes, and the effectiveness of prep sessions.

Students

A reflective survey was distributed to students across each section of the EOL program. The results are summarized here:





Top responses for most effective classroom activities: ‘Rip-it-up’ values exercise; 2MCs; Group work activities (including Kidney Dilemma and Newspaper activities).

Top responses for least effective classroom activities: None—all activities were interesting and effective; Community and Newspaper activities; large group work/discussions.

Top responses for most surprising thing learned during the ethics sessions: My own values; classmates’ responses to moral dilemmas; that there can be many different solutions to situations.

Top responses for suggestions to improve sessions: Make activities more fun and interactive, more enthusiasm and friendliness from EOLs; more interesting/realistic/entertaining scenarios; more frequent sessions.

Host Teachers

Qualitative feedback is solicited from host teachers at the end of every year. As a consensus, host teachers are impressed with the professionalism modeled by EOLs in the classroom. Most felt the EOLs developed good rapport to relate well to their students, helping students reflect on their own values in the process. The host teachers could observe how the sessions helped their students develop an internal compass of professional responsibility and gained an understanding of their community values. In particular, by consensus host teachers agreed the 2MCs were especially relevant, engaging, and instructive. For improvement, one common feedback is that while EOLs are professional and passionate their teaching abilities may be somewhat raw, especially if they don’t have prior classroom experience. More time spent preparing as a staff on classroom instruction best practices will help refine the topics to be more relatable to students and strengthen the application of lessons to daily life.

EOLs

EOLs continuously assess the state of the program through monthly prep sessions in addition to annual qualitative reviews. EOLs provide micro-level input into the efficacy of individual lesson plans and activity by debriefing as a staff after each series of lessons. This feedback prompts holistic review of the curriculum, often resulting in improvements that better reflect classroom interests and time constraints. With EOL input, three of the program’s six sessions were revamped over the summer in a consultative process. EOLs also provide important assessment on the operation of the program, citing prep sessions as a useful



resource for brainstorming, planning, and professional development while suggesting broader recruitment to satisfy classroom demands and keep time commitments reasonable.

Conclusion

For the past four years, the NCPRE High School Ethics Education Outreach Program has successfully connected dozens of undergraduate students with over 800 local high school students in 40 classrooms to teach ethics and professional responsibility. Student surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the program, with a vast majority of participants feeling the program benefitted their awareness of ethical dilemmas, personal values, and decision making skills. Feedback from all stakeholders will be utilized to update curriculum, improve use of staff prep time, and recruit effectively to fulfill our growing demand throughout the community. We have appended one of our lesson plans for public review; any educator interested in becoming a host classroom for the program should contact Gene Amberg at gamberg@illinois.edu.



Appendix 1: Program 4-Year Summary of Teacher/Admin Sponsors

Teacher/Admin Sponsors:

- Tamera Bajema, UHS
- Kristy Bandi, Uni HS
- Louie Beuschlein, UHS
- Ryan Cowell, CHS-Admin
- Sharlene Denos, Uni HS
- Jennifer Heinhorst, UHS
- Christopher Hidaka, CHS
- Greg Johnson, CHS-Admin
- Patrick Kearney, UHS
- Brian McAndrew, UHS
- Rob Meagher, CHS
- Lisa Micele, Uni HS-Admin
- Janai Rodriguez, Uni HS
- Brian Schmitt, UHS



Appendix 2: Kidney Dilemma Lesson Plan

Today's Goals and Agenda

- Discuss the kidney dilemma
- Engage students in the Two-Minute Challenge, making a connection between values and communities
- Close the class with an open discussion for questions and/or college life chat

Kidney Dilemma (15 minutes)

- Remind the students of the dilemma
- Discuss the dilemma
 - o Format for discussion could be in pairs and/or groups with a class discussion at the end

Two-Minute Challenge (30 minutes)

- What is a 2MC?
 - o Two-minute challenges present real-life professional responsibility challenges for students to work through individually and in group settings. These are issues that “come up” in two minutes or less and require a quick response, and they may take much longer to talk through!
- 2MC #1: Not Expired or You're Fired
 - o Pose the two-minute challenge for students
 - o Ask students what they initially think; how many would show their boss their friend's Facebook, and how many would not?
 - o Take students through the framework
 - o Consider: you may wish to divide the class into two or three groups to encourage more participation
 - o Provide the takeaways for students (or see if they can come to them) based on the 2MC key

Questions (5 minutes)

- Open up discussion for possible questions and college life chat

Not Expired or You're Fired

You have just been promoted at the restaurant you work at. Your family desperately needs you to keep this job for financial reasons. The extra income you are making is set aside to pay for college. Without it, you will not have the money you need to pay for tuition.

During your second week in your new position, your boss approaches you and asks you to make burgers with a few packages of meat that are past their expiration date. Your boss says that there is no safety risk to customers and the grill will easily kill any extra bacteria anyway. If you do not use the meat, there will not be enough for the rest of the day, turning customers away and hurting business. He tells you that he trusts you will keep this matter between the two of you. What do you do?

Takeaways

- Prioritizing your values: your job, your family, your future, your personal moral code, etc.
- Questioning authority; Authority does not give someone the right to violate the rules or minimize health consequences.
- Incrementalism; Drawing the line is difficult. Your boss may continue to use you to violate rules.
- Getting help is important and there are many ways to do so, especially in a large corporation.



Issues

- Job security
 - Your future (being able to pay for college)
 - Contributing to your family's finances
- Personal integrity
- The risk of questioning authority
- Food safety and health consequences
- Community may get sick from expired meat
- Impact on the store and your coworkers by not selling the meat
- Public relations—how will this affect the restaurant's reputation

Rules and Regulations

- City health regulations
- Company policy on supply levels
- Company policy on limits of employer's authority

Questions

- Are you sure there is no other meat available?
- How long has the meat been expired? What are the health implications?
- Ask yourself—would you be willing to eat this food? If not, why?
- What are the repercussions for the restaurant and those involved by selling or not selling the meat?
- Would your boss be able to legally fire you on these grounds? Is there another reason your boss could use against you to fire you without mentioning this reason?
- What are the consequences of losing this job?
- Is there another job you could apply for at another company?
- Would you want this printed in a newspaper?
- What if someone you knew, a family or a friend, was a customer at the restaurant? Would you act differently? Would you tell them?
- Is it a common practice to serve expired meat at the restaurant?
- Would this be considered coercion?

Resources

- Employee Handbook
- City health regulations
- Ethics Hotline
- Suppliers of meat (can they deliver more?)
- Trusted coworker
- Another boss
- Friends and family

Options

- Involve another boss
- Talk to the corporate office of the restaurant
- Quit the job and find another one
- Refuse to sell the meat and see what the consequences are
- Say no, but find another way to get more meat



- Serve the meat
- Serve the meat and warn the customers
- Call the Corporate Ethics Hotline

Freshmen/Sophomore Activities

- Community Matters (materials: post-it self-stick wall pads and markers)
 - o Divide the students into four groups. Each group represents one affected member of the community: boss, restaurant workers, YOU (the worker in this situation), and the customers of the restaurant.
 - o On post-it self-stick wall pads, have each group write down how their respective member of the community is affected by the situation and some possible consequences. Each group will present its thoughts.
- **Please note:** Use the following statement in the introduction in place of the one that says your job pays for your tuition
 - o The additional income allows your older brother to continue attending college
 - o Consider presenting other motives besides financial need including:
 - It's your first job and you don't want to be fired
 - You have the opportunity to keep this job during the summer/school year and make some extra money
 - You've been saving up and your new promotion will help you reach your goal (concert tickets, Xbox, vacation, etc.)
 - o Additional discussion:
 - What would happen if your boss told you selling this expired meat was something that the company always did?
 - What if your boss told you all the other employees were selling it?
 - What if your boss told you his family (and he has a 2 year old son) would starve for the month if he didn't get business from the expired meat?