Facilitator's Guide

"We are the future."

—university student

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION: WHY ETHICAL FITNESS™ IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Institutions of higher education prepare students for their future roles and responsibilities in society by facilitating development in the intellectual, moral, and psychosocial domains. To enhance a student's capacity to function as a mature, socially responsible, and critically thinking citizen and to achieve his or her vocational and personal life goals, faculty and student affairs personnel create diverse learning opportunities that contribute to this ongoing process of growth. This formidable task is complicated by the extensive and often conflicting demands made on students today, as well as by the distracting and competing influences of the media, pop culture, consumer ethic, work site and family needs, and peer social pressure. Nevertheless, the future quality of life for the individual, family, community, and the world may well depend upon the success of this developmental endeavor. In no area of development is growth and change more critical than in the moral domain.

Moral Development

Concern about the moral development of college students is not new. In 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson addressed the Phi Beta Kappa national honor society at Harvard University and stated that "character is higher than intellect." He, among others, observed that intellectual brilliance and achievement were valued more highly than character development and disagreed with this prioritization. Today, leaders in the field of ethics and character development also express concern that in our efforts to develop the intellect of students, we are neglecting the development of character, the skills and knowledge fundamental to reasoned ethical decision making, and the motivation to take courageous moral action, which is the basis of being a good, decent, and responsible human being (Coles 1995; Gough 1998). The Institute on College Student Values at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, and the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, are two examples of a growing number of organizations recently founded on college campuses to support the moral development of students in higher education and to promote the idea of colleges as moral communities.

What are the compelling reasons for this outcry for moral development and what more can be done to enhance the ethical decision-making skills and motivation for college students to become morally responsible and to attain what Freeman (2000) calls an "informed ethical conscience" (p. x)? Reasons include the need to prepare our future lead-

ers, the deficiencies of current students, the challenges of life on a college campus, and the need for moral dialogue and the building of moral communities in higher education.

Preparation of Future Leaders

Tomorrow's political, civic, military, business, financial, media, religious, educational, technological, scientific, and professional leaders are today's college students! The power to influence others toward the common good versus self-interest lies in the hands of these future leaders in our country and the world. What is the responsibility, then, of institutions of higher education in adequately preparing these individuals to take the reins of leadership in the complex and rapidly changing world of the twenty-first century? The ethical challenges of this new century are linked to the explosion of technology, electronic communication, and international commerce; the shrinking of the global village and the resultant increase in cultural diversity within communities and nations; the unprecedented breakthroughs in science and medicine; and the threat of terrorism and violence as intolerance of differences grows and the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" continues to expand. The increased scale of systems and rapidity of change in this new century will magnify the consequences of every unethical action and jeopardize the well-being and even survival of human beings and the environment worldwide (Kidder 1995).

Remedial Moral Education

Aside from preparing students for ethical leadership in the twenty-first century, higher education also faces the need to play a remedial role in students' moral development. This need is due to the inability of societal institutions to provide role models and to educate young adults to have: (1) hope for the future of society, (2) a sense of responsibility to others, (3) an appreciation of differences, and (4) a sense that one's life can make a difference (Levine and Cureton 1998). In their critical work, *When Hope and Fear Collide* (based on extensive surveys and interviews on college campuses), Levine and Cureton conclude that in failing to instill these four attributes, the family, neighborhood, school, church, youth groups, media, and government have not provided young adults with the tools and values necessary to build a new world. Consequently, the attitudes and values of college students today reflect distrust of and disenchantment with the political systems and structures of society and a questioning of external authority.

Of the five specific elements higher education needs to include in the curriculum to compensate for these deficiencies in learning and the attitudes engendered by fear of the future and self-doubt, a serious encounter with values is necessary and underlies each of the other elements. The authors assert that "students must learn the meaning of values, be able to distinguish between values and facts, understand the difference between relative and absolute values, and differentiate between good, better, and best values. They also

need to develop mechanisms for weighing and choosing among values [a process known as ethical decision making]" (p. 165). Clearly, current undergraduate students, a "transitional generation," need a curricular and co-curricular learning experience that prepares them to become engaged with the moral issues and challenges of society and empowers them to take a stance and make a difference. Moral and intellectual development go hand in hand during this critical stage of young adult development when traditional undergraduates are solidifying their identities and commitments and establishing lifelong patterns (Loeb 1994). Traditional-age undergraduates are not, however, alone in their need for a serious encounter with values.

Nontraditional-age students as well as pre-professional and graduate students of all ages can also benefit from building critical thinking skills, a knowledge base for effective ethical decision making, and the moral courage to confront many of the moral temptations and ethical dilemmas they face on a daily basis in their professions, families, and communities. As Gough contends in his book, *Character is Destiny,* entering adulthood does not end the process of moral development. Striving to grow ethically is everyone's responsibility, particularly in a democracy where a high degree of civic virtue or ethical character is required of citizens. Improvement of individual lives or society as a whole is contingent upon adults becoming fully developed moral agents. Nevertheless, the traditional-age student faces a unique set of ethical challenges related to the social, financial, and academic pressures of college life itself.

Ethical Challenges of Student Life

Campus life poses many ethical challenges that affect the integrity of both academic and personal life. Strike and Moss (1997) address many of these issues in their book, *Ethics and College Student Life,* and Levine and Cureton cite results from their surveys substantiating the prevalence and seriousness of these issues. According to this research of the mid-1990s, eight percent of college students believed that cheating was necessary to get good grades; 21 percent of student-affairs personnel reported an increase in incidents of cheating or plagiarism over the last ten years; and 75 percent of deans of students stated that students were less likely to judge plagiarism as wrong. Although reliable estimates of cheating are difficult to verify, McCabe at Rutgers University found that 52 percent of students enrolled at nine state universities admitted to cheating on at least one exam, and 38 percent admitted to cheating on three or more occasions (Strike and Moss). Opportunities to plagiarize are also more available through Internet sites where students can purchase term papers (Hickman 1998).

Diversity and tolerance issues also confront college students who are finding that many college campuses are multicultural communities. Levine and Cureton report that in the 1990s diversity issues were a main cause of interstudent conflict for 60 percent of college campuses. During the last decade, both racial and gender hate incidents have escalated,

and more tension surrounding diversity issues was reported by 41 percent of college deans.

Illegal substance use and underage drinking are a well-recognized part of college life for many students. Although the Harvard School of Public Health found that 25 percent of students used some kind of illegal drug—primarily marijuana, cocaine, other hallucinogens, and more recently, heroin—over the past year, 84 percent of college students, many of them under the legal drinking age, admit to having used alcohol within the past year. Of those who drink, 44 percent qualified as binge drinkers, and 19 percent as frequent binge drinkers (Wechsler 1996). The prevalence of binge drinking rates varied considerably from campus to campus depending on culture and traditions, geographic location, and whether the school was primarily a commuter or residential campus. The negative effects of this excessive consumption include life-threatening alcohol poisoning, sexually transmitted diseases caused by unprotected sex while intoxicated, suicides, vandalism, date rape, and other violent crimes. Secondary effects of problem drinking based on lack of consideration and respect for others included unwanted sexual advances, loss of sleep, property damage, inability to study, and aggressive, insulting behavior. Clearly the decision to abuse alcohol and other substances has ethical consequences for college students.

Finally, sexual experimentation and, unfortunately, exploitation are also part of college student life on most campuses. Whereas students appear to have retreated from dating and committed intimacy, the majority are sexually active and many have multiple partners. While almost all students claim to be well informed about "safe sex," only 49 percent actually practice it regularly (Levine and Cureton). In addition, 41 percent of colleges report a rise in acquaintance rape and sexual assault cases, and 55 percent of college deans claim that sexual harassment has increased. Overall a lack of concern and respect for sexual partners is on the rise, and casual sex more the rule than the exception.

Need for Moral Dialogue

Based on these self-reports by college students and feedback from other college personnel, choices made by students are jeopardizing the quality of their academic and personal lives and those of their peers. The health, social, and academic behaviors of this population are not generally addressed by attention to ethical reasoning or motivated by a desire to become morally responsible human beings. Students are neither overtly encouraged to see these college-life issues as ethical in nature nor challenged by the campus environment to reflect critically and engage in moral dialogue about these problems.

According to Strike and Moss, colleges should strive to become "moral communities" where students and all community members take moral dialogue seriously and work to achieve a shared understanding of what is right and wrong. The foundation of a moral

community is moral dialogue, the goal of which is mutual understanding and, when possible, mutual consensus. Essential to moral dialogue is respect for the opinions of others and the ability and courage to argue one's position even as one is open to the possibility of changing his or her viewpoint. The alternative to moral dialogue is "moral deafness" (p. 194) and the extremes of moral absolutism or moral relativism, all of which may in fact be afflicting college students today. Their inability to understand or care about another person, to respect or tolerate another's position, or to casually accept any position with a cavalier "live and let live" attitude tends to undermine civil society and the trust needed for true community.

Through a process of moral dialogue, students will experience cognitive and moral development as they are challenged to think critically and analytically, to weigh the right and wrong of a situation, to wrestle with the agony of prioritizing among two or more highly esteemed values, and to draw upon their moral courage and take action. Fundamental to this capacity for moral dialogue are the language and concepts of ethical reasoning and the skills of interpersonal communication and ethical decision making. This capacity for moral dialogue and moral behavior is best developed through an intentional, facilitated process wherein college students are guided and encouraged to resolve ethical dilemmas by thinking rationally, communicating clearly, listening carefully, and weighing their alternatives deliberatively before taking action. Institutions of higher education have an important role to play in providing these essential learning experiences for their students.

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Overview of the Curriculum

Based primarily on Rushworth M. Kidder's book *How Good People Make Tough Choices: Resolving the Dilemmas of Ethical Living*, this publication has been designed by the Institute for Global Ethics for use at the post-secondary level. The facilitator guides students through a series of logical steps so they can learn to independently apply specific decision-making tools to any ethical issue encountered. The process works best in a small group or classroom setting, but can be adapted to larger groups for workshops with multiple facilitators.

Goals of *Building Ethical Fitness*

- To cultivate an awareness that sound ethics is a precondition for a civil society and the well-being of the self, others, and the environment
- To provide a language for moral dialogue and to encourage discussion of ethical issues
- To raise awareness of the degree of congruence between personal values, codes of behavior, and actual behavior, and to identify areas for change
- To empower students to act courageously in accord with their own values
- To provide practical experience in negotiating a set of values that reflects a group's common ethical ground
- To promote Ethical Fitness by providing practical tools to use in dealing with difficult dilemmas

Intended Learning Outcomes

As a result of this program, students will be able to:

- Explain the changing role of ethics in a diverse yet interdependent and technologically driven world
- Discuss ethical issues in the context of moral dialogue using effective communication skills and ethics terminology in a clear and concise manner
- Define personal values and a code of behavior
- Identify the level of congruence between defined values and actual behavior
- Compare and contrast the theories of moral absolutism and moral relativism and define the area of controversy between them
- Describe the difference between right and wrong and understand the concept of right-versus-right ethical dilemmas

- Analyze right-versus-right dilemmas using four paradigms and develop an ability to resolve them using three decision principles
- Define moral courage, identify what part it plays in ethical decision making, and describe what factors strengthen or weaken moral courage in a given situation

Curriculum Outline

Building Ethical Fitness is organized into four units subdivided into twelve sequential lessons that build on each other. Each unit contains the materials, exercises, and instructions necessary to complete the session plus referrals to supplemental readings and resource materials, teaching aids, assessment tools, additional handouts, and case studies. An outline and brief synopsis of each lesson follow.

There are seven lessons essential to building basic decision skills—lessons 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 12. Supplemental lessons that enrich and enhance the learning experience are indented in the list below. The Institute for Global Ethics recommends that all of the essential lessons be presented in sequence for the optimum and complete coverage of ethical decision-making skills. Lesson 12 allows for assessment of learning outcomes, and the Institute highly recommends that this final lesson be included to provide feedback in all workshops or courses.

Unit I: Moral Awareness

Lesson 1: Why Ethics Matters

What are the learning expectations for students and how can they most effectively build their own Ethical Fitness? Why does ethics matter to all of us? Is our nation's ethical barometer rising or falling? How do changes in technology, communication, and globalization influence current and future ethics?

Lesson 2: Ethics within Communities

What is the nature of real community? Is the ethical barometer rising or falling in higher education communities and in our particular college or university community? Why? What do we, as community members, need to do about it?

Lesson 3: Building a Moral Community

What is a moral community, how does it develop, and what knowledge and skills are necessary for participation in and creation of a moral community? Building cooperative argumentation skills allows us to actively engage in the communication processes essential to this community.

Lesson 4: The Development of Character

How do we develop into moral agents and acquire lifelong habits of good ethical decision making? How have real people faced ethical dilemmas and made tough choices? Through the process of self-observation and self-reflection, we can assess our habits and begin to make better ethical decisions.

Unit II: Values Definition

Lesson 5: Defining Shared Values

What role do our values play in ethical decisions? How are ethical values different from other kinds of values? What are codes of ethics and what function do they fulfill in bringing groups of people together? By what series of steps can we build a shared code of ethics?

Lesson 6: Building and Operationalizing a Code of Ethics

How do we come to consensus on shared values as a class? Is stating our values sufficient, or do we need to operationalize them so we know what specific behaviors are congruent with our values? How can shared values help us move toward consensus when problem solving as a group?

Unit III: Values Definition

Lesson 7: Ethical Analysis: Right versus Wrong

Sometimes making an ethical decision depends upon a person's ability to understand the difference between right and wrong. What tools can help us detect ethically wrong choices? Once detected, moral temptations can still entice us to do what we believe to be wrong. How can we strengthen our resolve and moral courage to act in accord with our values?

Lesson 8: Ethical Relativism versus Universal Values

Are all values and actions relative to an individual, time, place, or culture? Or do universal values exist? What are the different arguments supporting moral relativism or moral absolutism? Where do you stand and why?

Lesson 9: Right versus Right: Analyzing Ethical Dilemmas

The most difficult ethical dilemmas occur when two of our core ethical values come into conflict. How do we know when we have a right-versus-right dilemma? What types of right-versus-right dilemmas can we identify?

Unit IV: Dilemma Resolution

Lesson 10: Right versus Right: Resolving Ethical Dilemmas

Understanding what kind of ethical problem we are facing is simply not enough. How can we approach identifying the higher right? What series of steps can lead us to a resolution? Ethical Fitness is like physical fitness—it needs to be practiced to be achieved. What real-life stories can we find to practice the analysis and resolution process we have just learned?

Lesson 11: Moral Courage

Identifying our moral values is only the first step. We need to act upon them as well. What role does moral courage play in promoting ethical action? Why is moral courage important, even though it may be difficult? What examples of moral courage in the world around us can we identify?

Lesson 12: What Have We Learned about Ethics and Ourselves?

What have we learned from our *Building Ethical Fitness* experience? In what ways can we continue to apply our learning in the future? What ethical responsibilities do we have to our selves, our families, our communities, our nation, and our world?

Student Notebook

Active group participation in the learning sessions, combined with individual reflection and responses in writing to new ideas and concepts, enhances the educational experience. The completion of readings and worksheets distributed by the facilitator encourages students to reflect more personally on the material, to synthesize ideas more fully, and to apply these ideas in a practical way to their own lives. Facilitators are encouraged to require students to keep all of their assignments in a notebook as a record for the student of his or her progress and ethical awakening. Adding a requirement that students keep a reflective journal noting personal responses and questions related to the course materials throughout the seminar can also deepen their engagement with the seminar experience. This notebook can also be used as one form of evaluation in for-credit courses.

Each lesson in this manual has related readings and assignments that the facilitator can copy and distribute to students. Facilitators can choose to assign those readings and exercises that are of greatest relevance and interest to the students in their seminar or class. In addition, supplemental readings, handouts, exercises, and assignments are suggested in each lesson plan.

Icons

WORKSHEETS:
For in-class use or as homework and for the purpose of review.

READINGS:
To be read at home and discussed the following class period. Also for the purpose of review.

HANDOUTS:
For use in class and for the purpose of review.

Supplemental Activities

This curriculum comprises twelve separate lessons of approximately 90 minutes in length. Activities not core to the basic process, labeled as "supplemental," can be included in additional sessions or by extending the time frame. The success of the curriculum relies heavily on each facilitator's ability to adapt the materials to his or her specific group of students. You are encouraged to work creatively within the provided framework and make the material relevant to students' interests and needs.

Supplemental Resources Offered by the Institute

This curriculum can be used with the following supplemental materials available from the Institute. For more information, call toll free 800-729-2615, fax 207-236-4014, or write to *education@globalethics.org*.

How Good People Make Tough Choices: Resolving the Dilemmas of Ethical Living
This landmark book by the founder of the Institute for Global Ethics lays out the innovative thinking central to the Institute's approach. In clear, straightforward, and compelling prose, Dr. Rushworth M. Kidder explains how to resolve the toughest kind of dilemma people are likely to face: that of choosing between right and right. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Shared Values for a Troubled World: Conversations with Men and Women of Conscience
Rushworth Kidder documents 24 highly personal testimonies that advocate a universal quest for love, freedom, truth, and respect. Included are interviews with influential thinkers such as Reuben Snake, Oscar Arias, Jill Ker Conway, John W. Gardner, and Jeane Kirkpatrick. Camden, Maine: Institute for Global Ethics, 2001. Paperback edition forthcoming, 2002.

Building Decision Skills (Third Edition)
This popular curriculum guides teachers and students through a practical and conceptual process of defining shared values and making ethical decisions. It includes a teacher's guide; ten lesson plans; readings, overheads, and handouts; numerous examples of ethical dilemmas appropriate to middle and high school students; assessment tools; and a listing of additional character education resources.

Elementary Decision Skills
Through games, role playing, and other active, experiential modes, elementary students begin considering the themes of ethical awareness, personal responsibility, and decision making as appropriate to their stage of development. Includes teacher's guide; lesson plans, including readings, overheads, and handouts; numerous examples of real-life ethical dilemmas; assessment tools; and listings of additional resources.

Ethics & Service Curriculum and Student Workbooks
This curriculum provides a hands-on, interactive classroom model for integrating service learning and character education. The 12-lesson curriculum shows teachers and students, step by step, how to develop community service-learning projects that also promote ethical awareness, values-based reflection, and problem solving. Included with the curriculum, you will find a teacher's guide; lesson plans, which include readings, overheads, and handouts; numerous examples of service-based ethical dilemmas; and reflection and assessment tools.

Ethics & Choices Curriculum and Student Workbooks
Designed for use with youth at risk within a small-group or classroom setting, this curriculum includes 14 lesson plans with supplemental activities keyed to an accompanying workbook.

Tough Choices: Today and in History Video and Teacher's Guide
Designed for middle-school students, this interactive video helps students in social studies classrooms understand the connection between history and ethics. Its purpose is to engage students in values-based critical thinking and decision making about real-life dilemmas today and in history. Includes a teacher's guide.