Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Detailed Assessment Report
2007-2008 Core Philosophy

Mission/Purpose

The University Core Curriculum Programs develop, implement and evaluate undergraduate academic and academic-support programs that establish a foundation for general education, provide lifelong learning skills and support the attainment of academic and career goals. The First-Year Learning Communities Program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi immerses students in an active learning environment, providing a context to integrate curricular content, to develop skills, and to develop a sense of academic community.

This discipline is included as part of the Core Curriculum.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

O 1: Personal Values

Develop personal values for ethical behavior.

Associations:

General Education or Core Curriculum:

11 Develop personal values for ethical behavior

Related Measures:

M 2: Ethics Questions

Four questions from several sections of PHIL 3340 Professional ethics exams are used to measure whether students are able to acquire an understanding of a variety of ethical theories, principles, and concepts, and of their use in ethical reasoning (EEO#1). These results demonstrate an ability to develop personal values for ethical behavior. The four questions are:

True of False -- If Cultural Relativism is true then we would be able to decide whether our actions are right or wrong merely by consulting the standards of our society.

True of False -- Psychological Egoism is the view that that person ought to pursue his or her own interests exclusively.

According to the “slippery slope” argument in the Tracy Latimer case.

A. it was morally permissible to kill Tracy since her physical disabilities were only going to get progressively worse and she would thus be in increasing pain.
B. it was morally impermissible for Robert Latimer to kill Tracy since his actions lead to a general disrespect for the law.
C. it was morally impermissible for Robert Latimer to kill Tracy since his actions lead to a cheapening of life, thus putting at risk all those with disabilities.
D. none of the above.
Kant’s *Categorial Imperative*, or what he regards as the supreme principle of morality, is expressed as follows.

A. act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.
B. do not lie.
C. act only according to that maxim by which you can will that it be desired by all people.
D. A and C above.
E. all of the above.

Source of Evidence: Performance (recital, exhibit, science project)

Documents:
- Professional Ethics Exam
- Professional Ethics Exam
- Professional Ethics Final Exam
- Professional Ethics Exam

Achievement Target:
The average % correct on the aggregated results for the two items will equal or exceed 70% correct.

Document:
- Professional Ethics Context for Measures

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met**
87% -- average % correct on the aggregated results for the two items in spring 2008.
85% -- average % correct on the aggregated results for the two items in summer 2008.

Documents:
- Professional Ethics Exam Item Results
- Professional Ethics Context for Measures
- Professional Ethics Calculations

**O 2: Logical Reasoning for Problem Solving**

**Associations:**

General Education or Core Curriculum:

13 Use logical reasoning in problem solving

**Related Measures:**

**M 1: Logic Questions**
Two questions from several sections of PHIL 3340 Professional ethics exams are used to measure whether students are able to acquire an understanding of a variety of ethical theories, principles, and concepts, and of their use in ethical reasoning (EEO#1). These results demonstrate an ability to use logical reasoning for problem solving. The two questions are:

*A sound argument is one that is valid and contains only true premises.*

**True**  **False**

**A valid argument:**

1. has all true premises and a true conclusion.
2. has a fairly high degree of probability of being true.
3. is one that if the premises are true then the conclusion must be true.
4. none of the above.

The results for the two items are aggregated across sections.

Source of Evidence: Performance (recital, exhibit, science project)

Documents:
- Professional Ethics Exam
- Professional Ethics Exam
- Professional Ethics Final Exam
- Professional Ethics Exam

Achievement Target:
The average % correct on the aggregated results for the two items will equal or exceed 70% correct.

Document:
- Professional Ethics Context for Measures

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
88% -- average % correct on the aggregated results for the two items in spring 2008.

Documents:
- Professional Ethics Exam Item Results
- Professional Ethics Context for Measures
- Professional Ethics Calculations

Analysis Answers

What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?
The assessments represent an initial attempt to assess logical reasoning and ethical behavior. These findings suggest the program is achieving the learning outcomes.

What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?
The continued attention is in the form of developing new measures for both logical thinking and personal values for ethical behavior. This initial analysis in the 2007-08 academic year yielded positive results for a more rigorous assessment.

Annual Reports

Executive Summary
Personal values for ethical behavior and logical reasoning assessments were conducted on an experimental basis in Professional Ethics. The goal was to determine if it was possible to provide direct measures for core learning outcomes by assessing specific courses in the core curriculum.

The results from this initial assessment are encouraging. A more rigorous assessment will be conducted in the 2008-09 cycle.

Closing the Loop / Planned Actions
The plan for 2008-09 is to conduct a more comprehensive assessment in Professional Ethics.