Teaching ethics: Meeting students where they are

Joan Lee, Professor and Chair of Accounting
April 13, 2015
Overview

• Introduction
• Brief Discussion of Learning Preferences
• The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm
• “The Ties that Bind”
• An Interview Assignment
• Individual Reflection Exercise
• Q&A
Learning Preferences

You visit a colleague at another school in her office. The building in which her office is located is under construction and many of the normal paths in/out of the building are blocked. How would you like her to explain to you how to get back to where you parked your car?
Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP)

• Context
• Experience
• Reflection
• Action
• Evaluation
Context

• “We must know as much as we can about the actual context within which teaching and learning take place” (Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach)

• Translation???
Context

• “We go in through their door and bring them out through ours”

• Examples
  – Spring Hill, 1946
  – Fairfield’s “walk of shame”
  – Wesleyan’s women’s hockey coach
Experience = Active Learning

- Student-centered learning
- Accompany the students
- “Guide on the side”
- Discussions, cases, debates
- “3 Solutions Rule”
The Ties that Bind

Lucy owns a young, small business in the medical field. She becomes suspicious when she notices a drop in her cash flow. After some investigation, she discovers that the supervising biller – her sister, Estelle – has been skimming $1000/month for a year. Lucy sits on the info for 3 mos. trying to figure out what to do. Now, she has to make a decision.
Interview Assignment

• Subject
  – ≥ 5 years of f-t work experience

• Informed consent (MUST include)
  – To write a paper
  – To present the paper in class
  – To turn into an instructional case
Interview Assignment – Paper

• Brief intro of subject; his/her work exper; definition of ethics
• Description of the most imp ethical issue related by the interviewee
• Critical evaluation of the issue & the interviewee’s handling of it
• Reflection on the project
• Appendix describing the mechanics of the interview
Reflection

• KEY element of IPP
  – After every class
  – Posted w/in 48 hours
  – Confidential
Reflection – your turn!

- What did we discuss that is most relevant to me and to my life? Why?
- Did I gain any new insights this afternoon?
- What new issues do I want to consider as a result of this session?
- Did anything make me feel uncomfortable?
- Did anything annoy me?
- If there wasn’t anything that affected me or seemed relevant, why wasn’t there?
Reflection – Questions

• How do you grade them?
• What do students write about?
  – EVERYTHING!
  – “I can’t believe I’m writing this, but I agree with “John.” If the rest of the class would just listen to him, they would understand why he’s right about this.”
Evaluation

• This is often the link to “Action”
• Are students changed??????
  – Change of major
  – Join campus fair trade or socially responsible investing group
  – Service year after graduation
Evaluation

• Do the students draw connections, in their reflections, between the classroom material and
  – Other classes?
  – “Real world” events?
  – Events in their own lives?
Evaluation

- Do the students demonstrate:
  - Increased ethical perception?
  - Improved skills for ethical decision making?
  - Better self-awareness?
Evaluation

• “I thought Business Ethics was about WHAT to think, but now I know it is about HOW to think”

• “Own your prejudices”
Back to Learning Preferences

- Visual – PowerPoint, handouts
- Auditory – discussion, lecture
- Reading/writing - reflection
- Kinesthetic – interview assignment
Thank you!

Questions????

jlee@fairfield.edu