



Ethics in Education Case Studies Competition

Entry Per School	1
Type of Event	Team
State Competition	Yes
National Competition	Yes

(Program Standards: 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 8.0, 12.0, 14.0, 19.0)

Purpose:

In this competition, the FEA chapter will be presented with an ethical education-related dilemma and, acting as the honor council, the chapter must make a recommendation for a course of action. This competition requires FEA members to use ethical reasoning to make an ethical decision.

General Information:

Chapter members will employ critical thinking skills and use persuasive communication techniques to collaboratively solve an ethical dilemma.

To participate, the chapter must first thoroughly discuss the ethical issue. In doing so, the chapter must develop a recommendation for how to handle the situation. The deliberation portion of this competition is chapter-based and should take place prior to the conference.

Once the chapter comes to an agreement on a recommendation, the chapter must select two or three students to present the recommendation to a panel of judges at the conference. The panel of judges, one of whom will be acting as the principal, is acting as a group of school administrators. The chapter must work as a team to develop a presentation even though only a few students representing the chapter will make the presentation onsite.

- A. During a chapter meeting, present the ethical dilemma.
- B. Spend adequate time discussing the dilemma, considering the “things to think about” as if the chapter were the honor council at Brian’s school. This deliberation may take several chapter meetings.
- C. When the discussions have concluded and a decision has been reached, prepare a five-minute presentation from the viewpoint of the honor council. What action do the students (the honor council) recommend in this case? The oral presentation will be made to a panel of judges, one of whom will represent the high school principal.
- D. Student presenters should be prepared to deliver a professional, clear, and decisive response to the dilemma. How the decision was reached and what factors were considered should be included in the presentation.
- E. The judge playing the role of the principal will ask additional questions about how the decision was reached.

THE DILEMMA

Brian is a senior at Rogers High School. He’s captain of the debate team, has been a member of the National Honor Society for three years, and serves as the vice president of the senior class. He’s well liked by his classmates, and his teachers are proud of his success and know he’ll do well in college. But Brian is overwhelmed. And now he’s starting to fall behind in several of his classes. The debate team just won the regional competition and is headed to the prestigious state competition. The practice sessions are grueling and scheduled three times a week right after school. As captain, Brian has full responsibility for organizing the practice sessions. Plus he’s been working extra hours at his part-time job to save money for college. Brian is hoping to earn scholarships to cover most of his costs, but he knows that won’t be enough. His family won’t be able to give him any additional money; it will be all up to him to make ends meet. It’s late Sunday afternoon. Applications to Brian’s three top college choices are all due next week, and he hasn’t even started working on them. A major paper is due in his comparative lit class on Monday and he hasn’t started it either. Brian starts to work on the paper and is doing research online when he finds a paper that would be perfect for this assignment. Brian’s head begins to whirl. He could

write an introduction and conclusion to the paper and then use this online find as the whole body of the paper. He could be finished with the comparative lit assignment in under an hour and spend the rest of the evening working on his college applications. Debate team meets Monday after school and he's working Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. He won't get the applications done in time if he doesn't work on them right now. Brian wrestles with the decision, but ultimately he decides to plagiarize the paper and spend the rest of the evening working on his college applications.

On Monday morning, Brian turns in his comparative lit paper. He's able to finish his college applications Monday evening after debate practice and feels good about being caught up again. During class on Tuesday, the comparative lit teacher asks Brian to stay after class. Mrs. Wilson confronts Brian about the plagiarized paper. She has a copy of the original paper that she downloaded from the Internet. Brian knows there is no point denying that he's guilty. But he does explain about the pressure he's been under with debate team, school activities, work, and college applications. He tells her the pressure has simply overwhelmed him. He's hoping to get a full scholarship to pay for college and he knew his applications had to be top quality and submitted on time. He will be the first person in his family to go to college and his parents are so proud of him, but they can't afford the expenses he will incur. He swears this is the only time he's copied a paper and he acknowledges that he made a horrible decision. Brian volunteers to accept a failing grade for the paper or do the assignment again, but he begs her not to report him to the principal. He knows the consequence could be anything from a notation on his official transcript or refusal to endorse his college applications to suspension or—even worse—expulsion. Any of these punishments could mean the end to his hopes of getting into a top college with a full scholarship. And by the way, Brian aspires to be a high school physics teacher. Mrs. Wilson does tell the principal. She has an obligation to follow school policy. Academic integrity is addressed in the student handbook and clearly states that any student caught cheating must be reported to the school principal, who will turn the case over to the student honor council. The principal convenes the student honor council to review Brian's case. Brian meets with the honor council. He accepts full responsibility for his actions, is remorseful, and apologizes. He again begs not to have this infraction on his permanent record.

Things to Think About

1. Brian is a student body officer, captain of the debate team, and member of the National Honor Society. Does his leadership within the school affect your deliberations? In what way?
2. A negative consequence could greatly impact Brian's chances at getting to go to college. Without a scholarship his family won't be able to afford to send him. How does this fact affect your deliberations?
3. Should you consider the fact that Brian wants to become a high school teacher? Is it possible that Brian's horrible decision to plagiarize as a high school student has the potential to make him a better teacher? Or maybe this bad decision is just the beginning of more to come and Brian should have no business teaching.
4. Can the honor council make an exception in this case? If so, how would the council justify the decision if another similar case comes up that it does not make an exception for?
5. What should the honor council do?

A. CONTENT

The presentation includes a clear and decisive verdict based on careful deliberation. 20 pts.

The presentation includes information on how the verdict was reached. 10 pts.

The presentation includes factors that were considered in reaching the verdict. 10 pts.

Responses to the principal's questions indicate the honor council has thoroughly examined the dilemma. 10 pts.

B. DELIVERY

The presenters are professional and convincingly portray the seriousness of an honor council deliberation. 10 pts.

The presenters use appropriate gestures and body language. 10 pts.

The presenters make eye contact with the judges. 10 pts.

The presenters' voices are easy to hear and demonstrate a variety of tones as appropriate. 10 pts.

The presenters demonstrate command of the English language and use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. 10 pts

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 100

Ethics in Education Case Studies Scoring Rubric

SCORING				SCORE
Speech Content	GOOD 1 2 3 4	VERY GOOD 5 6 7	EXCELLENT 8 9 10	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some components of guidelines missing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Followed most of the guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Followed all of guidelines 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation is somewhat clear, lacks evidence of any careful deliberation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes a decisive verdict but no evidence of careful deliberation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes a clear and decisive verdict based on careful deliberation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation doesn't include information on how the verdict was reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes some information on how the verdict was reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes information on how the verdict was reached 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation doesn't include factors on how the verdict was reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes some factors that were considered in reaching the verdict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation includes factors that were considered in reaching the verdict 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to principal's questions indicate the honor council did not fully examine the dilemma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to principal's questions indicate the honor council did examine the dilemma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to the principal's questions indicate the honor council has thoroughly examined the dilemma 	
Delivery	GOOD 1 2 3 4	VERY GOOD 5 6 7	EXCELLENT 8 9 10	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters are not professional and do not portray the seriousness of an honor council deliberation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters are somewhat professional and somewhat portray the seriousness of an honor council deliberation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters are professional and convincingly portray the seriousness of an honor council deliberation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters do not use appropriate gestures and body language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters use somewhat appropriate gestures and body language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters use appropriate gestures and body language 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters make limited eye contact with the judges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters make to some extent eye contact with the judges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters make eye contact with the judges 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters' voices are hard to hear and somewhat demonstrate a variety of tones as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters' voices are somewhat easy to hear and demonstrate a variety of tones as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters' voices are easy to hear and demonstrate a variety of tones as appropriate 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters demonstrate some command of the English language and poor use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters demonstrate some command of the English language and use some appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presenters demonstrate command of the English language and use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation 		
TOTAL SCORE:				
Judge's Comments:				