Instructor Guide for Case Studies

# Welcome!

Case studies provide a lot of opportunities for students to work on their critical thinking! To that end, we have worked and are still working on creating case studies for you to use in class, groups, team practices, etc. You can add as much of a technical element as you wish, or if you want to simply use it for a round table discussion, then by all means feel free!

# Overview

Case studies provide an excellent way for students to discuss and wrestle with decisions made and not made when it comes to the technical world around us. This is a collection of case studies developed by Dr. Wells & Dr. Tippey from Montreat College but will grow as the toolkit continues to develop from various sources.

Case studies have been used as discussion pieces within the class and as assignments for reports that challenge the students to dive deeper and decide on the steps taken or not taken. This should allow students to explore their own ethics and how they could apply them in a working environment.

As an instructor, you can decide the best way to incorporate it into your classes and curriculum. You may even look at these as examples to challenge your students to build their own case studies (be sure to try and minimize biases with this approach).

What you want to look for in using case studies is the discussion and challenge of their own ethics as well as expanding their worldview through these discussions.

# How-To

Again, it is entirely up to you as the instructor to decide how to implement these case studies into your curriculum or your class/activity. Montreat has incorporated case studies such as these into some of our classes to help our students wrestle with the various studies, considering various alternatives, and then deciding on what course of action they would recommend and why.

We guide our students using a 4-step ethical decision making, that is also found in more depth in micromodule 10 of the Professionalism & Ethics Course, to help students structure their response. There are other methods of ethical reasoning, and you are free to apply whatever approach would be the most beneficial to your teaching, goals, or expectations. The 4-step ethical decision-making process that has been used at Montreat follows as below:

1. Get the Facts
   1. We encourage students to ask questions, hear both sides of the story and remove non-important information
2. Define the Problem
   1. Students must then define the problem; the actual problem as opposed to just what was simply stated
   2. If you are looking at professional resolutions for a conflict. For example, a verbal conflict between two coworkers may reveal a lot of unnecessary details, but the problem may lie in one coworker feeling unappreciated or looked over.
3. Evaluate Alternatives
   1. Students then weigh out various alternatives, listing and explaining them as well as their rationale for why it is a solution.
4. Choose and Act Responsibly
   1. Finally, students restate the true problem, provide the facts, and then explain the appropriate resolution going forward.
   2. Students may also include negative consequences. Not every solution will be completely positive, but it may be necessary to move forward.

Oftentimes these are case study papers, but you may find it allowing students to present or discuss the case studies and how they resolve it to be equally or more beneficial. It is also not uncommon for students to refer to specific ethics in their rationale for how they approach these issues. Approaches to ethics are also discussed in micromodule 10, and they include:

* Virtue/Character
* Rule/Deontological
* Consequentialist/Teleological

Of course, there are many more ethical approaches that may apply to various case studies. The goal is for students to approach these cases professionally with ethics in mind.