A-CAPS 4360

Moral Issues in Society

NEW COLLEGE CAPSTONE HANDBOOK

Revised January 2020

(Note: This is not all inclusive of everything required in Capstone. It is only a supplement to the instructor's notes and guidance)

Graduates should be prepared, through training in critical and creative thinking, as well as moral reasoning, to analyze problems, propose solutions, and make responsible decisions. They should be able to express themselves articulately in both oral and written form. [. . .]

[Students are encouraged] to confront the critical issues of society and to seek justice and peace.

--from the St. Edward's University Mission Statement

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Part 1

Introductory Matters

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Part 1: Introductory Matters

Since a “capstone” is the crowning point of any structure, your capstone project is likewise the crowning achievement of your education at St. Edward's University. This course, *Moral Issues in Society,* provides you with an opportunity to showcase the skills you have mastered during your academic career at St. Edward‘s and to reflect on how those skills may serve your lifelong learning. The New College faculty and capstone instructors are committed to helping all students find their paths to success in this culminating course. Our sincere hope is that you complete your undergraduate program with a feeling of pride in both the work that you accomplish in this course and the knowledge that you gain as a result of rigorous directed inquiry. By exploring and discovering the benefits of sound moral reasoning and decision making, we hope to enhance and underscore the distinctive hallmark of a St. Edward's University education--the ability to engage in critical, creative, and ethical thinking—and to encourage your continued application of these vital skills to your personal, civic, and professional lives.

The St. Edward's University Mission Statement asks each member of the SEU community to "confront the critical issues of society." The capstone course directly addresses that singular charge. In *Moral Issues in Society*, you will conduct an intensive study of a key social and controversial issue. Your first obligation will be to investigate the major public positions regarding the issue. You will identify the key stakeholders in the issue and summarize and analyze the claims, reasons, and evidence for their position. You will also identify and

explain the ethical values that underpin the key points of the conflicting parties' positions. After you have detailed what opposing parties advocate regarding the debate surrounding the controversial issue, you will critique the quality of their arguments. After you have surveyed and critically evaluating all sides, your final obligation is to assert your own position on the issue, defend it, and propose a sound, ethically convincing public policy in regard to the issue.

Moral Issues in Society provides you with an educational opportunity and challenge to explore your own set of beliefs, assumptions, values, and goals. And after thoughtful analysis of the issue and a clear articulation of your recommended policy, you will be better equipped to engage in a reasonable dialogue with others who hold opposing viewpoints. You will have demonstrated that you are the kind of critical thinker, problem solver, and responsible and ethical decision maker needed to face the challenges of the 21st century.

What is an Acceptable Capstone Issue and Research Question?

Since the world is a complex place, continuously embroiled in conflict, vital issues worthy of consideration in your capstone paper are virtually unlimited. To qualify as the basis for a capstone research question, the issue must:

- be **controversial** (i.e., a publicly debated dilemma);
- have **moral implications**;
- be susceptible to a **values analysis**;
- be **potentially resolvable** (i.e., open to a solution that could be implemented as policy by relevant entities such as a private corporation, a

church, a government agency, or an international organization);

- be **researchable** (i.e., there must sufficient research materials available in authoritative and scholarly sources);
- be **posed impartially** (i.e., framed as an open-ended, unbiased “should” question, not as a conclusion).

Also, it is highly advisable that the issue:

- be of **high personal interest** in order to sustain your concentration and energy for the duration of the course;
- be **narrow** enough to allow for adequate treatment in the time available;
- evoke your **curiosity** and appeal to your exploratory urge (i.e., meaning you are eager to investigate alternatives and objectively address and analyze all sides of the question).

What Are Moral Issues?

Moral issues raise underlying value systems to a level of awareness, discussion, and deliberation towards some tentative, subsequent action. Values are ideals that people strive to acquire, and it is through value identification and understanding that we are able to clarify conflicts that drive controversial issues in the first place. In the process, various solutions are offered as a means of settling those issues.

For example, suppose your issue focuses on genetics. One possible topic question about genetics might be "What is recombinant DNA research?" While this is an engaging and timely subject, it does not involve a value-laden dilemma.

Instead, the question merely prompts a descriptive study of the field and, therefore, would not be a suitable capstone topic. A better question in that same arena might be "How could agricultural genetic engineering be used to feed the hungry?" This dilemma sets scientific advancement and the resultant benefits of genetic engineering against the concerns of consumers and a non-scientific community; it also puts into opposition the federal responsibility for maintaining public safety and the practices of unfettered scientific research and free enterprise.

Identify an Appropriate Research Question

It is wise to settle on a topic, narrow the focus, and frame a research question as soon as possible. To that end, the following advice may prove helpful:

- **Generate topics.** Start compiling a list of possible capstone topics in your notebook. Consider controversial topics that you have read about or have seen in the media. Try to recall any questions or discussions that have emerged in other classes that lend themselves to further exploration.
- **Narrow and select.** After reflecting on how suitable the topics are (see “What is an Acceptable Capstone Topic?” above), narrow your list to a few topics, preferably those about which you are interested and about which you want to know more. Identify the one that you find most intriguing, provided that it has two or more debatable sides.
- **Formulate your open-ended question**. The questions should not be

answerable by a simple yes or no. Instead of should immigration policy be fixed, instead ask, what can students at St. Edward's do to improve the quality of life for immigrants in our community. Instead of asking, how can we end world hunger, ask how we can improve hunger locally.

Avoid Biased Questions

So, if your research question is a suitable one, then your current stand on the issue can be influenced; that is, you are open to listening to more than one side of the controversy and are willing to explore alternate possible solutions. A question that reveals that you have already formed an opinion is inappropriate for a capstone topic, since it would result in a very one-sided and subjective final paper. An example of this type of biased questioning might be "Why is it wrong for insurance companies to have access to genetic information on policyholders?" The word "wrong" simply implies that you, the writer, have made up your mind about the issue and that you have not examined the controversy sufficiently to determine why it might also be "right." An acceptable rewording of the question might read "Should insurance companies have access to genetic information on policyholders?"

Another example of a research question that manifests bias might read "How can citizens prevent the construction of nuclear power plants?" While nuclear power plants certainly have their fair share of adversaries, the question simply implies that nuclear power plants are inherently dangerous and that their construction should be prevented at all costs. A viable research question would

be more along the lines of "Should the United States government allow construction of additional nuclear power plants as an alternate energy source?" An unbiased question such as this not only allows for discussion of alternate energy sources but presents a balanced analysis of both the advantages and disadvantages of using nuclear energy.

Remember that the same principle of balanced objectivity applies to your selection of research materials. Obviously, you should not limit your sources to materials provided by only one party of the controversy and certainly not to sources that address only one side of the issue. This demonstrates an inability or unwillingness on your part to look squarely at both sides. Rather, you must use a variety of reputable and scholarly sources that reflect the opinions and arguments of all the major parties.

Evaluate Your Issue

It is essential that you test your issue or topic idea to make sure it is appropriate by asking the following questions: Why is this topic worth studying? What is its significance to me, personally, and to society in general? To what values, goods, and ideals do the parties in conflict appeal in arguing their positions? In other words, what claims are the parties making, and what are the values and supporting premises in those claims?

While many controversies do make legitimate and interesting topics, keep in mind that some are simply not debatable. Such subjects might include child abuse, senseless murders, the re-emergence of Nazism, the proliferation of hate

crimes, the destruction of the ozone layer, and the use of nuclear weapons -- volatile subjects in their own right but difficult to make arguments “for.“ Who would publicly support child abuse? Who would publicly argue for the increase in hate crimes? As an objective researcher, you would be hard-pressed to find legitimate arguments and supporting source material for topics as these.

What you might find, however, embedded in these subjects are sub-topics that could be developed into viable capstone topics; sub-topics that are equally illustrative of some controversy previously unacknowledged and unexplored. The rise of neo-Nazism, for example, might be a manifestation of inner-city class struggles or of socio-economic conditions in which neo-Nazi parties take up hatred and scapegoating as a means of self-defense from the brutality of joblessness, hunger, and ignorance. Some policy on how to deal with the rise of neo-Nazism and its antecedent sources would most likely involve oppositional parties attempting to define that policy, thus allowing for an intriguing capstone topic. The same shift in focus toward policy holds true for the others: how to deal with adults who abuse children; whether to expand hate crimes’ legislation to protect new groups; how best to control global warming; how best to contain the proliferation of nuclear weapons.. Anything that involves controversy and conflict, and that could result in public policy for the betterment of society, makes for a legitimate capstone topic.

Again, keep in mind that your topic must current; it must be controversial; it must be open to debate from two or more sides; and it must have room for a potential and legitimate solution that could result in policy. Be sure to state the

central research problem in the form of an open-ended question, and contact your instructor to discuss your topic idea and to get final approval. Also, try to focus on a problem that is “doable” within the local community if possible.

Documenting Resources

It is important to remember that writing is a process, not a product. Therefore, your Capstone Project Notebook should contain a record of your research sources, such as a (1**) documentation of resource log**, (2) an **annotated bibliography**, or (3) **other written record** such as notecards. (as directed by your instructor). Each resource should be recorded at the time of your research, after your reading, and/or after relevant class discussions. Whatever method and means of keeping track of resources you use, be sure to write an accurate bibliographical entry (i.e., Works Cited entry) and add your own notes and comments to remind you of how valuable and of what use the particular source may be. **Note: This notebook will not be turned in but will help you tremendously as you progress through the semester.**

Documentation of Resource Log

If your instructor requires you to keep a Documentation of Resource Log, you will find that such a record helps to capture spontaneous responses, thoughts, and ideas related to the material being considered. By entering thoughts immediately, you are better able to capture main ideas and key learning points.

Along with additional note-taking, your written reflections in each log entry will provide you with an invaluable opportunity to learn from and succeed in your research experience. Maintaining well-organized log entries enables you to access your material quickly and efficiently, while also providing you with pertinent source information needed for in-text documentation and the Works Cited section of your paper. (See the sample Documentation of Resource Log on page 18, following).

A Documentation of Resource log form is organized in two major sections. The top section identifies the source; specifically, this section should identify the title and author of the source, the date that it was accessed, and all other bibliographic information that will be included in the Works Cited. The lower half of the log provides space for you to record critical notes. Each log entry should include the following kinds of information: your sense of the utility of the source; a summary of the main ideas, evidence, and assertions of the source; personal observations, thoughts, and reflections that affect your current attitude and disposition toward the topic; new and/or additional questions that the reading evokes; how you plan to integrate the new information; and your overall impression of the quality of the source. You should also use your log entries for collecting direct and indirect quotes, adhering to proper source attribution and punctuation.

Maintaining documentation logs for each source can be very useful. This kind of attention to detail will greatly aid in the prevention of ambiguous citations and documentation, and, perhaps, unintentional plagiarism.

Taking Notes

Meticulous note-taking is a skill pivotal to the success of your capstone project. Extensive notes represent the framework of any research paper, and without them, source material simply cannot be sufficiently assembled to produce scholarly work. Photocopying the pages of a book, or marking an article with a highlighter, is merely one step in the note-taking process. The first step in taking notes is to record accurately the bibliographic information of the source you are referencing. There are many types of sources, with varying ways to document, so please refer to a reputable guide. New College students are encouraged to refer Diana Hacker's guide, *A Writer's Reference*, which was required in the introductory critical thinking course. Note: *A Writer's Reference* is now in its 6th edition, so if you have an older edition, you will want to check the latest MLA update, which is available at: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Also, you may refer to Joseph Gibaldi's guide, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, for the appropriate MLA style and format.

It is imperative that you do not take any shortcuts with your documentation. Unintentional plagiarism is oftentimes traceable to inadequate note-taking. If you take shortcuts, you will undoubtedly spend precious time later tracking down missing information, perhaps even double-checking original source material, a laborious and time-consuming chore. Therefore, consider recording your bibliographic material in appropriate MLA form even while you are taking notes. Time spent on precision in the early stages of research will save time and energy later when you begin writing your paper.

Effective note-taking involves more than just writing down information that

you see or hear. Whether you are listening to a lecture or reading from source material, you should always attempt to identify the central idea first. This involves identifying key points. With these key points you can substantiate your notes with details (both major and minor), statistics, definitions, and other anecdotal information (Gardener and Jewler 88).

Substantive Notes

After recording the bibliographic material, summarize the relevant information embedded in your source. The goal is to digest and synthesize the material so that it will be useful later when you begin prewriting and planning for each paper. Find a balance between recording too little and too much information. On the one hand, if your notes are sparse, they will not clearly reflect the original source you are referencing nor will they give you enough information to work from later. On the other hand, verbose notes require precious time, indicating that you are probably not synthesizing the information but that you are just copying it verbatim.

Again, be sure to note the exact page numbers where you found the borrowed information. If you are recording material that you plan to quote directly, be sure to indicate this in your notes and then copy the material word-for-word. Your research notes are the backbone of your final paper, so it is important that you not weaken the product by limiting them too severely.

Personal Notes

Finally, in your Documentation of Resources Log (or in some other prominent place, if you are not using a log), jot down in your log entries any questions or insights that you might have. These notes may help you recall something that at the moment may seem unimportant. Often it is useful to write a brief critique of the document or to note a comment that compares the author's perspective to that of others you have researched. Without these written reminders, you will have only your memory to rely upon and are likely to discover later that some valuable insights have been lost.

Organizing Notes

Your final paper will require extensive research. By the end of the semester you will have compiled a tremendous quantity of notes. All of this material must be organized before you begin to compose your drafts and the eventual final paper. The structure of your paper will depend heavily on the precision with which you take notes.

Once you have gathered together sufficient material, the next step is to develop a detailed outline and/or diagram of your paper. Your notes should serve as the foundation for this activity: well-organized, concise notes will reflect nicely in the final paper. A practical and efficient way to cross-reference your outline or diagram with your notes is to assign a number to each page or index card of notes. At the appropriate place in the outline or diagram, assign a number as an indicator that you should consult a particular note. If several notes are from the same source but will be used in different sections, then add letters

to your reference numbers. For example, page 6 of your research notes may contain specific entries labeled 6a, 6b, 6c, and so on. If you are using index cards, simply use one number for each source, and letters to note specific information from that source. By using this numbering system, you are able to construct a fairly thorough outline or diagram, which, at the same time, will not be so lengthy that it nearly resembles a rough draft in itself.

Additionally, you have the option of creating your own digital, informational database. This allows you to manage and sort your inventory of source material as you progress in your research and writing. It also provides you with an efficiency you might not otherwise have with notecards or loose leaf paper.

Keep in mind that your notes are the backbone of your research and final paper. Do not weaken your likelihood of success through hasty attention to detail.

Organizing Research Materials

Capstone instructors may require that you maintain a Capstone Project Notebook that reflects all phases of your work. If so, you should use either a large three-ring binder or an accordion file. This binder/file material, compiled throughout the semester, should be comprised of in-class activities as well as material from independent research. If requested, you should bring your notebook to each student/instructor conference for review for its thoroughness and currency. Your instructor may also require that the notebook be submitted at the end of the semester at the same time that you turn in your final paper.

Notebooks will be returned upon request, but you should confer with your instructor about the deadline for returns.

There are several reasons for compiling information in a binder or file. It allows you to provide a place to keep the material you have collected for your project; it helps you to maintain organization; it serves as a record of the thoroughness with which you have prepared for and carried out your research; and it documents your research in the event of resource verification.

What to Keep

Your instructor will indicate which of the following are required in your binder/file:

- class notes, handouts, activity sheets, and all miscellaneous items
- pre-writing exercises such as idea-mapping, tree diagrams, and outlines
- cumulative bibliography
- Issue Identification Worksheet
- Worksheet for Paper One
- Resource Materials: Documentation of Resource logs or Annotated Bibliography or Bibliography/Note cards
- notes on all books, articles, and other sources
- assessments of your papers by your instructor
- comments and evaluative grade sheets prepared by the instructor

Some Writing Tips

What follows are a few guidelines for sound composition:

- Know your topic. Educate yourself thoroughly on the material. If you have no clue as to what you are writing about, it will show.
- Readability is the key. Your reader should find the reading process one of ease, so the writer's responsibility is to proceed logically, clearly, specifically, and coherently. Effective topic sentences, clear transitions, graceful style, lack of grammatical and mechanical distractions, and emphasis on key ideas will work wonders.
- Follow a plan or outline. Be familiar with the required components of the paper. Be aware of the desired length of each section so that you can tighten or develop as necessary. See section C1 in Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*.
- Write clear topic sentences for each substantive paragraph. Review section C4 in Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*. Subheadings are also useful visual cues for longer documents such as a capstone paper..
- Use echo devices or repetition to keep the reader on track (e.g., the first reason, the second reason, the final reason, etc.).
- Use effective transitions to show the logical connection or shifts between sections and paragraphs.
- Each section should have a brief, clear preview of what the section will cover and a summary or review at its conclusion.
- Maintain control of proper grammatical conventions. Use punctuation correctly. Avoid run-ons, comma splices, and sentence fragments. Keep your

sentences clear, focused, and coherent. Consult with the Writing Center, the Online Writing Lab (OWL), your professor, and Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* for assistance.

- Use the most appropriate, emphatic word choices. Avoid ambiguity and wordiness. Do not use clichés, colloquialisms, and opinionated language.
- Use strong, active verbs. Avoid passive constructions as much as possible, and prefer the active voice ordinarily.
- Strive for specificity, clarity, and economy of words.
- Use signal phrases to integrate sources. See Hacker's A Writer's Reference, section MLA-3b.
- Always strive for scholarly work, and always document source material.

In Review

You are being asked to select and study a controversial social issue, to consider diverse positions, and, ultimately, to formulate your own argument in defense of a solution to that issue. You will conduct research and evaluation, while also engaging in critical thinking, moral and ethical decision making, and argumentation. You will employ communication skills indicative of clear, thoughtful, and sound analysis synthesized into a single, comprehensive paper. You will meet with your instructor to discuss your work and to make revisions as a result of those meetings. Additionally, you will maintain an organized file of your sources of information such as the Capstone Project Notebook. At the last class meeting, you will share with your classmates the results of your research.

Issue Identification Worksheet

Name_____

Topic. Identify a controversial issue (e.g. prescription drugs sold over the Internet; employer access to employee email; regulation of private enterprise).

Research Question. In the form of an open-ended question, address the ethical dilemma directly related to the issue.

Salience of the issue. Why is the issue important?

Values. What are the primary values at stake?

Documentation of Resource. Complete 3 Documentation of Resource logs.

Part 2

Writing Paper One

Paper One Components

Plagiarism

Part 2: Writing Paper One

After the research question is finalized, the next step in the process is to write Paper One. Think of this paper as the tentative but reasonably informed groundwork for your final paper. Naturally, the first paper will need to be revised and edited for consistency as it is refined and developed in Paper Two. Most likely you will delete a variety of statements--perhaps even whole sections--which turn out to be irrelevant, inaccurate, or beyond the scope of the research requirements and time constraints. However, Paper One should be a coherent, well-written document, accessible to a general audience not necessarily familiar with your topic.

Organization of Paper One

Each instructor will use slightly different criteria, but the following will give you a general idea of what is expected for Paper One. Ordinarily, Paper One will be about five to seven pages in length. It should include a title (which includes the research question), an introduction that acquaints the reader with the issue, and the foundation for a well-substantiated, well-researched main body. The most significant aspect of the first paper is its historical narrative and objective presentation of the various components of the topic.

Components of Capstone Papers

Capstone Outline

(20-30 pages)

Chapter 1: Introduction (5-7 pages)

- Introduction
- Significance
- Definitions
- Secondary Issues and Scope
- Assumptions and Bias
- Parties to the Controversy

Chapter 2: Literature Review (3-5 pages)

- Introduction to the literature
- Major literature on your topic
- Major literature on supporting topics (or subtopics)
- Summation of literature and your study will fit in

Chapter 3: Methodology (2-4 pages)

- Normative Ethical Theory "The Ruggiero Method" and how to apply it to your topic
- Personal ethical statement
- Values in conflict

Chapter 4: (Findings) – Analyzing Competing Arguments (5-7 pages)

- Describe the various stakeholders and their arguments
- Apply Normative Ethical Theory to the arguments
- Summation of Findings

Chapter 5: (Discussion) – Developing Your Arguments (5-7 pages)

- Present your argument
- Justify your argument

Works Cited (12-15 extreme minimum

Title

Your research question should be a part of the title of your capstone paper. It may be the complete title, such as:

What can we do to address homeless camping in Austin?

Introduction

You should begin by writing a general introduction that acquaints your reader with the issue under consideration. Often, it is best to address the issue's significance (see below) in the introduction so that you are clarifying the implications and potential effects of the issue on human lives as well as raising the specific question of your paper. Ordinarily, the research question will appear during or at the end of the introductory section. This question will be the focal point.

Significance

Identify the significance of the issue in the introduction or shortly thereafter. Early in your paper it is your duty to address some or all of these basic questions and thereby engage the reader's intellectual curiosity and moral awareness: Why does this issue matter? What's at stake? Why should the reader be concerned or interested in the controversy you have selected? What makes this topic controversial? How is the controversy likely to affect your reader? What are the costs and consequences involved?

Because people are affected by countless different issues (social issues do not exist in isolation or in a perfect vacuum), you should address how the issue might significantly affect members of society. Keep in mind that this section establishes the groundwork for your reader's concern about this topic in the first place. Although the two opposing sides will most certainly have contrary opinions and perspectives, it is your job to remain objective and analytical. For example, in the case of the issue of "Should the state of Texas permit felons to vote?" you would perhaps want your introduction to remind your readers, on the one hand, of constitutional civil liberties and the significance of denying them to a citizen and, on the other hand, of the prospect of ex-convicts deciding close elections and being as enfranchised as law-abiding citizens. The question relates to our democratic principles and to what they truly mean.

Definitions

Each topic will likely have special terminology that needs identifying in order for the reader to have a clear understanding of that topic. Conceptual definitions are beneficial in setting the parameters for discussion. Let us assume, for example, that your topic question is "Should the government regulate the use of electroconvulsive therapy on psychiatric patients?" You will need to define "government"; does that mean federal, state, or local government? Also, what is the precise definition of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)? How does it work? If current laws are to be changed, what exactly are those laws? The type of psychiatric patient requiring such treatment would also need to be

stipulated, which may mean identifying and defining types of psychiatric disorders that might receive ECT, as well as identifying the varying degrees of severity of the disorder. Most psychiatric disorders are fully defined in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Psychiatry*; therefore, you would need to identify and define that source as the accepted standard in diagnosing psychiatric disorders. You would also need to define any specialized terminology, technical language, or abbreviations that the reader might not be familiar with. Subsequent definitions may be woven into the final paper.

Scope and Secondary Issues

Scope is the range of your consideration of the issue or research question. For example, what limitations, if any, will you put on your investigation and your paper? You may want to avoid getting distracted by certain elements of an issue that are inconclusive and somewhat irrelevant to the positions of most reasonable people on the issue. Or you may find that there are too many arguments to cover in the length of a capstone paper, so you will have to prioritize arguments, focusing on the major ones and not addressing fully or at all some of the typical arguments. In either case, you would explain your rationale for excluding or diminishing consideration of some of the arguments. For example, let's say you have chosen the topic "Should corporal punishment be applied in American schools?" During your research you have discovered that this controversy is being played out in the public rather than in the private schools. The nature of private schools, where parents can remove their children

if they are uncomfortable with the discipline policies, is very different from that of public schools, which are supported by American tax dollars and open to everyone. Therefore, you decide to limit the scope of your research to public schools only. Indeed, the overall fluidity and direction of your paper depends on such an exclusion of private schools. By clarifying the scope of your paper, you are providing a helpful explanation about what your research question will or will not include or cover.

Secondary issues are also a matter of scope in that you may not want to address them in your paper because of length implications or because of their irrelevance or minor relevance. Secondary issues very often arise from the various positions you are researching. Secondary issues may involve cost, who the decision-makers are and are not, who the beneficiaries are, and/or who incurs liability. If there are secondary issues that are worthy of mention, but that you will not discuss in any detail, it is proper, then, to identify them. One way to think of secondary issues is to imagine them as orbiting the primary issue, your chosen topic. While they may be very important in and of themselves, in your judgment they are subordinate to that of the parent issue. For example, in a capstone paper that addresses whether the statue of limitations should be extended in regard to the sexual abuse of minors, you might decide that the controversy over “repressed memory” is not a major, but a secondary issue. So you would explain why. Undoubtedly, your consideration of secondary issues may continue to evolve as you develop the capstone paper because the question of what is and is not a secondary issue may continue to shift during your

research and investigation.

Assumptions

One of your jobs as a researcher is to identify the assumptions you think the general public holds regarding your topic. As objectively as you can, you should explicate the biases people might harbor as they consider your issue. For instance, if you are writing a capstone paper on whether the United States should explore and drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), you might encounter individuals and groups who assume that the oil reserves in ANWR are virtually unlimited and sufficient to satisfy consumer demand in the United States, and that fuel prices would drop significantly. Or you might find individuals who assume that any oil exploration and drilling would result in the complete environmental destruction of ANWR. It is your task to identify and articulate those assumptions. You may choose to devote a specific section of your capstone paper to naming and explaining various assumptions, or you can fold these assumptions into your discussion of the parties and their positions. You should incorporate this discussion of assumptions wherever it seems most appropriate.

History and Background

Next, you will need to provide a brief history of your topic, a history which will be often be modified or expanded in subsequent drafts as you become more aware of new historical information or re-evaluate the relative significance of

historical developments. The length of the historical narrative will vary depending on the topic. If your topic revolves around email surveillance, your history will be somewhat limited, namely to the past fifteen years. However, if your topic deals with juveniles being tried and incarcerated as adults, your history may extend as far as a few hundred years, in which case you will summarize the historical highlights and legal precedents as succinctly as possible.

You may develop a chronology or timeline to accompany your history and background section. Ideally, the chronology should be limited to one page; it can use a 9- or 10-point font size.

Parties to the Controversy

Identifying the specific parties, groups, and individuals involved or likely to be affected by the controversy adds dimension and credibility to your capstone topic; therefore, you must provide the names and concerns of those groups and individuals most notable or influential in the public debate.

Examples of specific organizations might include Planned Parenthood, The Sierra Club, Greenpeace, Centers for Disease Control, the National Institute of Health, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Civil Liberties Union, The Salk Institute, Persons for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Microsoft, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration. Also, it may be relevant to identify key “think tanks” (foundations and lobby groups) who are involved in researching the issue and who promote their conclusions. Google “list of think tanks” and you will be able to get to many

of the resources of these influential organizations.

As you research, you will see the names of executives, experts, and public officials who play a major role in the public debate on your issue. Depending on your issue, relevant individuals might include Michael Dell, Chairman of the Board; California Congresswoman and Democratic Leader of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi; Sandra Froman, President of the National Rifle Association; and Dr. Michael DeBakey, M.D., world-renowned physician and heart surgeon.

As you will note, identifying individuals by name, professional title, and institutional affiliation establishes credibility for both you and your source.

As a way to organize your paper, you are advised to divide your groups into general proponents and general opponents. Realize that groups often posit themselves differently depending on the issue but may actually align themselves on the same side of the controversy. For example, both feminists and religious fundamentalists oppose pornography but for different reasons. Therefore, you would need to identify the underlying values and ethical principles in conflict. In addition, you must provide a general statement that explicates the arguments of both the proponents and opponents.

In many cases you will find the same professional groups on both sides of the issue; it is extremely rare that any single group will be purely of one mind on any controversy. Therefore, you are likely to find parties to the controversy identified by their personal stances as opposed to their professional association or affiliation.

For example, suppose your question is "Should the United States government endorse surrogate motherhood?" In your research, you have identified one side as those who argue that a woman's right to control her body as a financially rewarding surrogate service amounts to child selling, leading to the exploitation of women. You find that lawyers, physicians, theologians, and parents involved in this issue articulate essentially the same point of view, albeit from diverse backgrounds. All members of any single group are unlikely to be completely aligned with one side or the other. It is possible that research might reveal that some lawyers, some physicians, some theologians, and some adoptive parents are of the pro-surrogate persuasion. Likewise, some lawyers, some physicians, some theologians, and some birth parents might represent the opposition to surrogate service.

Issues and Arguments: You need to identify the areas of concern and specific issues that each side will argue. In a controversy such as "Should water quality standards be more stringent in Austin?" cost is certainly an issue about which all groups, both pro and con, will be concerned. Each side will have developed arguments that relate to the issue of cost. For example, the anti-stringency perspective may argue that "Increased regulations will cost too much for the benefits they will bring," whereas the other side might argue that "No matter the cost of increased regulations, stringent standards are worth implementing if water quality improvements benefit overall community health."

Values: You will need to consider the values that each side holds as determined by their position on the controversy you are researching. Realize

that there will be little explicit information about values in most of the material you will encounter. The values will, most likely, be implicit, and your own analysis will be needed to discover the values that underlie each side. Keep in mind, however, that values are often revealed in corporate, academic, and non-profit mission statements, as well as in printed or posted codes of ethics. These codes ultimately dictate the objectives each party seeks to achieve; therefore, identifying and understanding party values is crucial when considering solutions and policy implementation. For instance, with a topic such as "Should the United States establish government-supported red light districts?" both proponents and opponents may value health and safety, but one side will most likely value traditional morality, while the other will place greater value on freedom of choice.

Proposed Solutions: In addition to the various stances on a given issue, those holding a position will have ideas about how their proposals should be implemented. These proposals should encompass the practical concerns of the issue, such as cost, enforcement, accountability, and measuring of outcomes. Notice that those holding each position may have more than one proposal relating to their stand on the controversy. You will need to identify the proposed solutions each side advocates.

Works Cited

You must include a bibliography of at least five sources that have been appropriately integrated into your first paper. (You may include a separate Works Consulted section for sources that were consulted for your own edification but not cited in the paper). If you are writing a paper surrounding the notion of the

right to privacy in the lives of public figures such as presidential candidates, you will need to consider the legal aspects of this idea. Therefore, you must consult some law books and journals, as well as an array of other historical references and case studies. You might also speculate that some psychological references would be useful, since being a public figure with limited privacy entails psychological adjustment. Whether you quote these sources directly or indirectly, you must ensure that they are included on the Works Cited page. **Any material cited in the composition of your paper must be included in the Works Cited.** If you are not familiar with the proper procedure for documentation, or for compiling a Works Cited section, refer to either the Diana Hacker guide, *A Writer's Reference*, or to Joseph Gibaldi's guide, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Here are a few basic documentation rules you must follow:

- Document all ideas, statistics, charts, graphs, pictures, illustrations, and other information gleaned from your sources. See Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, section MLA-2a.
- Document ideas and information that is summarized or paraphrased from sources.
- You need NOT document common knowledge (see Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, section MLA-2a), your comments or analyses, your transitions, your introductions or your summaries of the ideas you are presenting, and anything else not derived from a source.
- Lead into quotations (as well as summaries and paraphrases of sources)

with appropriate signal phrases and source attribution, as well as institutional affiliation. See Hacker MLA-3b.Generally, it is best to avoid ambiguous authorship; credibility is all but lost in the absence of an identifiable author.

- Do not over-quote. Use direct quotes sparingly and only when the phrasing is so distinguished or remarkable that a summary or paraphrase cannot do it justice. Prefer summary and paraphrase to direct quotations (and document the source). See Hacker MLA-3.
- Make proper use of quotation marks and block quoting (four lines or more) whenever you employ the exact wording of a source. Indent these block quotations 10 spaces or 1". See Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, section MLA-5a.
- Keep in mind the public domain information rule: that which is generally considered "common knowledge." This simply refers to commonly known facts and figures with which you can assume any well-informed reader is already familiar. If you have doubts about what other individuals may or may not know, then go ahead and document.
- Keep in-text documentation simple. See Hacker MLA-4. Provide either a parenthetical citation with a page number, and with author and source already established in a signal phrase, or provide the author's last name and the source's page number (except for online unpaginated material), together, in the parenthetical citation.
- The Works Cited must be organized alphabetically, and always by an

author's last name. In the absence of an identifiable author, make sure that the first word of the citation or source attribution leads to the same first word in the Works Cited, be it an editor, publisher, title of work, database, or website, and that it is organized alphabetically. See Hacker MLA-4b.

Plagiarism

The word plagiarism comes from the Latin *plagiarius*, which means "kidnapping." Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's work, creating the impression that the work is actually one's own. You are aware that the deliberate copying of all or even a part of someone else's work and passing it off as your own is *intentional* plagiarism. The University's policy for academic integrity is clear, and is explicitly outlined in the course syllabus, as well as in the *St. Edward's University Student Handbook*, available at: http://www.stedwards.edu/studenthandbook/academic-integrity.

However, a person can commit *unintentional* plagiarism by the careless handling of research materials. For example, suppose a researcher keeps poorly organized notes that do not clearly differentiate between a direct and indirect quotation, or the researcher maintains notes that represent a confused mix of quotes, paraphrases, and personal observations. When beginning a rough draft, the researcher may copy those notes, words, and ideas as they are, without proper source attribution. Unfortunately, the result of such casual and careless note-taking is an unacknowledged borrowing of another's work, thus creating the impression that authorship is original with the researcher. Unintentional

plagiarism is no less serious than intentional plagiarism and must be avoided from the outset.

Plagiarism Activities

The following examples of plagiarism, transcription, and paraphrasing should help you distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable uses of research materials. The following exercise begins with a source for a hypothetical paper that deals with abortion.

Original Source

> In the heat of the controversy over abortion, as assault and even murder become more commonplace, the primary issue seems to have been overlooked, even forgotten - the personhood of the fetus. Is not the pivotal question whether or not the fetus is a person? Some heatedly answer, 'Yes!' While others shout, 'No!' The answer is difficult, but perhaps it is even more complicated if one focuses on the rational and not the emotional aspects of the controversy. For example, 'person' can be defined in a legal sense or in a moral sense. The question of timing, i.e. when personhood is conferred on the fetus, must also be factored in. (Rogers 61)

Plagiarism

> Abortion is a heated and controversial issue, which has led to assaults and even to murder. But the main question, the personhood of the fetus, has been overlooked, even forgotten. Some answer "yes," while others say "no" to the question. The answer is difficult, but perhaps even more

> complicated if we focus on the rational and not the emotional aspects of the problem. For one thing, "person" can be defined in the legal or in the moral sense. Also, the question of timing, or when the fetus becomes a person, needs to be factored in.

This is an example of intentional plagiarism. The original source has been retained almost verbatim, without any significant attempt at paraphrasing and source attribution, thus giving the reader the impression that what is said, and how it is said, is entirely original with the student writer. In addition to the lack of a signal phrase and source attribution, there are no quotation marks that indicate the exact wording of Rogers, the original author.

Activity

Select a short excerpt no longer than fifty words from an article that relates to your topic. Write an intentionally plagiarized version of the article, then identify two characteristics that define the plagiarism.

Transcription

Transcription involves changing only a few words and then presenting the slightly altered statement as one's own summary of a duly cited source. It is not as overtly deceptive as the previous example but does not serve as paraphrasing; therefore, it is an academic violation as set forth by St. Edward's University policy. A transcription of the same original source by Rogers might look like this:

> In the heat of the controversy over abortion, the primary issue seems to have been overlooked: the personhood of the fetus. Is not the

pivotal question whether the fetus is a person? The answer is difficult, but perhaps it is even more complex if we focus on the rational rather than the emotional parts of the problem. "Person" needs to be defined, and this can be done legally or morally. Also, the timing question needs to be addressed (Rogers 61).

Although source material is provided, much of the original wording has been retained. This is an example of transcription. The student author is claiming, albeit unintentionally perhaps, that the words are original; therefore, an erroneous impression is created that the student writer is summarizing rather than quoting directly. Transcription is not allowed, in that it fails to use signal phrases and proper grammatical conventions for differentiating between the primary source and the student's own words.

Activity

Using the same excerpt, provide an example of transcription.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing takes practice. It is not an easy task to accomplish, nor can it be mastered overnight. The best rule of thumb for paraphrasing is to simply read the material from the original source for content only, set it aside, reflect upon it, then frame the main idea or ideas on paper. Then, in your own words, write what you know about that subject, what you have learned. One thing to consider, not just with paraphrasing, but with your paper as a whole, is to think of yourself as the "expert" on your selected topic. Once you have educated yourself sufficiently about your topic, you should feel confident enough to elaborate on it

in your own words. Such confidence comes from rigorous study and review of the material and, with practice, should manifest itself well in your writing.

What follows is an acceptable example of both paraphrasing and direct quoting, while also adhering to the proper use of signal phrases, punctuation, and source identification:

Abortion is one of the most controversial issues in America today. Rogers writes that the emotion involved in the controversy has led us to overlook the central issue of whether or not the fetus is a person. The question is complex, especially "if one focuses on the rational and not the emotional aspects of the controversy." For one thing, "person" is not easily defined. Are we discussing "person" in a legal sense or in a moral sense? Furthermore, the question cannot be answered without a consideration of the timing involved, such as understanding precisely when a fetus becomes a person (61).

Activity

Using a source provided by your instructor, write an acceptable paraphrase.

Worksheet for Paper One

Name_____

1. What precisely is your question? (The question should serve as the title of your paper.)

2. What is the significance of your topic? (One way to approach this question is to look at who is directly affected by the issue, who is indirectly affected, and what the short and long term costs will be if nothing is done to resolve the issue).

3. What are the terms and concepts that require defining? What are those definitions?

4. What are the secondary issues related to the main topic? Identify them and indicate which ones will be addressed in the paper.

5. What assumptions do you think the general public holds about the issue at this stage in your research?

6. Briefly, what is the history and background of this topic?

7. At this point, what do you see as the chief arguments on both sides of the issue - as the pros and cons? Briefly touch on each side's argument. What are the primary values that each side intends to uphold?

Part 3

VALUES ANALYSIS

AND

ARGUMENT ANALYSIS

for Chapter 4 of the Capstone

Part 3:

Values Analysis and Argument Analysis

Note: Some of the following material has been adapted from N. Neil Browne and Stuart M. Keeley's book *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking,* as well as from Professor Danney Ursery's Ethical Analysis website, which is available at: http://faculty.stedwards.edu/ursery/phil2329/index.htm . We encourage you to review your Ethical Analysis class notes as well as the material on Ursery's web site, which includes audio lectures and other information about values, ethical theories, and moral reasoning. You are also well advised to reread your *Moral Reasoning* handbook, which includes texts of primary sources. Additional information is available at the Capstone web site: http://faculty.stedwards.edu/s_acaps4360/index.html (enter "Resources" for moral reasoning and ethics information).

As you conduct your research and begin to conceptualize your final paper, you will quickly realize that your topic is highly complex and dynamic. Indeed, you might at first find yourself bewildered by the array of issues and arguments of the various parties to the controversy, some of whom agree on solutions but for quite different reasons, others of whom state the same or similar reasons to support vastly different proposed solutions. It is important to realize that, in analyzing complex problems, the various positions often derive from the different values and desired outcomes held by those involved in the debate.

You will grow both intellectually and morally if you take the time to comprehend the ways in which human beings, who actually share values, may sometimes disagree on many matters, including social policy. You may also be

surprised to learn, odd as it may seem, how people who subscribe to very different values sometimes find themselves in agreement on particular issues. They then become the "strange bedfellows" so frequently found in politics.

Once you have identified the different positions of the parties, and understand the case that each presents, you will begin to develop keener insight into the debate if you are able to identify and think critically about the values that are embedded in the various arguments and proposed solutions. Furthermore, you will need to identify your own values and understand that, where values are concerned, we often find ourselves in conflict, not only with others, but sometimes with ourselves. That is, we must occasionally decide to sacrifice personal satisfaction over some greater good: for example, when we decide we should give up a personal prerogative (smoking in public buildings) in concern for others whose health is imperiled by secondary smoke. To decide upon and support your own position in the final paper, you will have to understand how the opposing parties have resolved such conflicts over a set of values. You will then do the same based on your own position and your own set of values.

Identifying and Defining Values

It is difficult to give a simple definition of a concept as abstract as that of a value. However, values may be considered as presumed goods, something worth acquiring or striving for. Values are our ideals. They are what we choose or believe to be worthwhile or to have merit. Values, therefore, should be freely and thoughtfully chosen. Another way to define a value, as novelist Ayn Rand writes, is to consider it as “that which one *acts* to gain and/or keep” (13).

Our highest values are implicit in our ideas about how the world *should* be, while our more trivial values lie behind simple preferences. For example, if a person deplores violence and believes that human beings should always seek to resolve their differences through rational and compassionate discussion, then that person clearly values peace and civility. If an individual values financial prosperity, but not enough to harm others to increase that financial prosperity, then that person may be seen to value the inherent dignity of others over wealth.

It is important to remember that not all values are so lofty. Even when you go to the grocery store and choose double-chocolate-fudge ice cream over cherry-vanilla ice cream, you are expressing a preference based on the fact that you think chocolate is "better" than vanilla. Your preference for a certain kind of ice cream will probably never affect another human being one way or another, whereas your valuing peace, compassion, and civility will, most likely, have an impact on the greater human community. “In general,” as James Griffin so eloquently expresses in *Value Judgment: Improving Our Ethical Beliefs*, “what is valuable to a person is what the person desires when sufficiently informed about the natural world” (22).

Perhaps the simplest characterization of values is that they are what explain, and in most cases dictate, our actions. Humans are purposive creatures, rarely acting for no reason whatsoever, or with no end in mind. If we can identify the purpose of the action, we can then ask what the actor hopes to get out of it, or why the action seems worthwhile, and this will be a value. It may take several steps, but unless the person is coerced, physically forced, or

mentally unbalanced, we should be able to point to a “good” he or she hopes to achieve: a value.

You must also understand that the terms "values" and "ethics" are *not* interchangeable. Simply put, “ethics is the study of right and wrong. It is concerned with providing people with a normative system, i.e., a set of coherent rules about what ought to be done in a given situation. Ethics requires individuals to study their moral judgments and moral rules to determine whether they are supported by generally accepted reasons” (*Undergraduate Capstone Handbook* 65). Many values do concern ethics, as they pertain to beliefs of right and wrong: but many values do not; they simply define the things we prize or seek in life the most. For instance, you might value your washer and dryer because you enjoy clean clothes. The washer and dryer, then, merely represent an *instrumental value*, that which allows you to achieve something you value even more, namely clean clothes. We could then go on to ask why you value clean clothes, which would lead us to the identification of further values such as good hygiene, appearance, and making a favorable impression on others. In most cases, if we continue to ask why a person values *those* things, we will arrive at a moral value such as the need for maintaining self-esteem and confidence, as well as the value of maintaining good relationships with others. Ethical values relate directly to beliefs concerning what *is* right and proper, effective and expedient, as opposed to what *may* be right and proper. The ethical values that we rank highest are our core values, which in turn often define personal character.

Value-Laden Statements

When people argue, they rarely state their values directly. Frequently they take their values for granted as if those values were already apparent to others, and that no further argument is needed for clarification about what is good, right, or proper. Instead, the means for achieving this assumed good is often what drives conflict in the first place. Values tend to remain implicit or assumed in most arguments. It is, therefore, important to learn to recognize the difference between statements that are value-laden and those that are not.

Descriptive statements frequently contain and describe the evidence that substantiates a claim, but are not value-laden. Descriptive statements are grounded in fact or, at the very least, in relatively non-controversial matters.

Normative, or prescriptive, statements are value-laden. They declare outright, or perhaps even imply, and then prescribe, how something *ought to be* because some state of things is better that way than another way.

For example, a claim such as "St. Edward's University maintains a student population of approximately five thousand students" is a descriptive statement. This is either true or not true; enrollment numbers are not a matter of how one looks at the situation. Whereas a claim such as “Small classes consisting of fifteen to twenty-five students are best because they allow everyone the chance to participate and demonstrate leadership ability" is a value-laden, prescriptive statement. It prescribes an ideal class size based on the assumption that participation is better than non-participation, and that it is good to show leadership ability in the class. Advocates of larger, more cost-effective and

efficiently managed classes might easily refute the statement by arguing that vocal participation is not essential to learning course material, and that not every student sitting in a class necessarily wants, needs, or ought to be a leader. Hence, we have a debate centering on different values relating to an ideal educational experience.

Naming Values

Think for a moment about the words and phrases people commonly use when they talk about moral and ethical issues. The kinds of values that are controversial and socially significant tend to pertain to those abstract ideals or codes of conduct that we wish more people would observe, and perhaps adopt. For the most part, they are the kinds of values and codes of conduct we wish to see in ourselves.

privacy	competition	compassion	family	peace	justice
security	cooperation	adventure	freedom	prosperity	wisdom
comfort	generosity	tolerance	friendship	individuality	efficiency
beauty	honesty	courage	loyalty	spirituality	charity
equality	civility	order	health	self-reliance	education

The majority of the time these values will not appear in the direct statements of debating parties. Quite often they will be implied; therefore, you will have to infer the values as they are advocated by these parties.

Identifying Values

You can actually practice making such value inferences every day and learn to become more adept at discriminating between significant, value-laden choices and trivial preferences. For example, if you notice that your neighbor's house has burglar bars over the doors and windows, you might easily infer that the neighbors place a high value upon security. If the bars do not enhance the appearance of the house, you might also infer that your neighbors further value security over beauty. If you go to the grocery store with your friend and gather up all the ingredients you need to make a cake from scratch, while she grabs a box of cake mix that promises to take only thirty minutes to prepare, you may infer that she values efficiency over old-fashioned traditions, careful preparation, and even the joy of cooking.

These questions will help you identify implicit values:

- What good or goods do those holding a given position expect to achieve?
- What interests do those holding a given position wish to protect or gain?
- What harm do those holding a given position wish to prevent?
- Why might the present situation or policy be unacceptable?
- What is right, or not right, with the alternative proposals of others?
- If you were to argue the opposite perspective in the debate, what concerns would suddenly become apparent to you?

For example, imagine you encounter a person claiming that the federal

government should ban tobacco advertisements of all kinds because smoking may cause lung cancer. You decide to play the role of the opponent, defending the claim that tobacco advertisements of all kinds should be allowed. What are some of the values you would uphold in the argument? Why is it good to protect advertisers' prerogatives? And which is better: protecting consumer health through paternalistic, federal legislation, or protecting freedom of choice and free enterprise through limited federal regulation?

Thinking Critically about Values

Once you have learned to identify the values embedded within the normative statements and claims of the parties to your controversy, your next task involves analyzing those values in terms of their integral relationship to the arguments and proposed solutions of each party. You do not want to approach the values component of your paper in a simplistic fashion. Merely identifying and listing values, but stopping short of a substantiated discussion of them, would render your paper superficial. Therefore, you must think critically, and articulate a clear understanding of those values inherent in each side's argument.

Analyzing a Value-Laden Argument

Perhaps the best way to think critically about values is to analyze a specific, value-laden argument. Notice in the following examples how certain leading questions may help you conduct a more substantial investigation of the

issue.

Claim: Due to the hazards of smoking, the United States government should prohibit the sale of cigarettes.

Argument, with premises and supporting evidence: Based on years of reliable scientific studies, it has been established that cigarette smoking causes serious health problems for smokers and for individuals exposed to second-hand smoke. Approximately $72.7 billion is spent each year in the United States to cover the costs of the adverse effects of smoking. Health care costs are 40% higher for smokers than for non-smokers, and smoking accounts for approximately 30% of all cancer deaths in the United States each year (American Cancer Society).

Conclusion: Therefore, due to the hazards of smoking, the United States government should prohibit the sale of cigarettes.

Question: Do the premises stated in the argument support the conclusion? If not, could this be due to some unexamined assumption about a value?

You need to identify the values upheld by the argument. Obviously, the individual or entity making the claim values personal and public health. The individual or entity also believes that the United States government has a responsibility to protect its citizens, and perhaps the health care industry, from those who would sell harmful products. Another value, then, involves responsibility for the public good. However, here is where we might raise

questions about the relationship between the conclusion (that the government should take responsibility and prohibit the sale of cigarettes) and the reasoning that led to it (the studies and statistics showing that smoking is harmful). Does the fact that smoking is harmful and costly automatically lead to the conclusion that the federal government must act? Who else is responsible for personal and public health? The individual is responsible, certainly, for he or she makes the conscious choice to smoke or not. Therefore, while you might agree that smoking is harmful, thus consenting to the veracity of the premises, you might disagree with the conclusion that it is the government's place to regulate personal choice.

Thus we see that persons holding different values may agree on the facts, but disagree on the conclusion about what to do in a given situation. Had we not taken the trouble to identify the values implied in the argument, we might have missed our chance to evaluate the argument critically. We might have merely assumed, by unconditionally accepting the implied value of paternalistic government, that the argument was airtight.

Question: Are there value conflicts inherent in the argument?

When two cherished values seem impossible to uphold simultaneously, there is a value conflict and dilemma. Suppose the proponent of the stated argument really believes that the individual is responsible for his or her own health and also contends that the government should not be involved in matters

of personal health. However, the proponent also realizes that the issue is somewhat more complex, for research has indicated that Joe's smoking can harm not just Joe, who has made the choice for himself to smoke, but harms his wife Marie, his children, Billy, Walt, and Erica, and maybe even his dog, Cooper. Does Joe's right to choose whether or not to smoke supersede his family's right to breathe clean air and maintain good health?

Clearly, the prohibition of smoking in public settings has already established a precedent for us to argue that Joe's rights are indeed limited. Social groups may, through active politicking, limit the rights of the individual in the interests of the greater community, and they do so every day. One example is the principle that underlies the seatbelt law. Some people will argue that it is their prerogative to risk serious injury by not wearing a seatbelt. Yet the American public, through lobbying and democratic processes, has affirmed the argument that the public good is better served by a mandatory compliance to wear seatbelts; the rationale being that the treatment of severe injury oftentimes costs more than the individual can afford to pay, thus driving up the cost of insurance and taxes for everyone else.

This same reasoning can be applied to the argument about smoking. The individual's right to smoke is valued by one party, as is the right to breathe clean air a legitimate concern and prerogative of another party.

Danney Ursery states, “Value conflict occurs when individuals experience uncertainty about what they really believe or want, or when they are not clear on how they should rank their values” (*Moral Reasoning* 5). Thus exists a conflict of

values in which one must be selected over the other. A decision must be made about which value is the best, and about which value is in the best interest of those involved. This decision usually rests upon some higher normative principle. In this case, the proponent of banning the sale of cigarettes insists that individual freedoms ought to be sacrificed in the name of public health.

Please note that you will be making a more elaborate and convincing argument in your final paper when you directly discuss how you arrived at your position, by opting one value over another or one set of values over another set.

Prioritizing Values

In this course you are asked to analyze the values of the different parties regarding the moral controversy you are researching. In the process, you will most likely discover values you hold that may or may not align with the parties involved. Danney Ursery notes:

> Ranking or prioritizing values must be established, since this is one of the best ways to help decide what our primary values are and to assist in making a moral judgment. Those values which you consistently rank higher than others are called your core values. . . . The values involved in a moral dilemma are usually both good and moral values in which you believe; but both, in a particular case, cannot be ranked as the highest value. Very simply put, to understand and solve a moral dilemma you must know what your values are, prioritize them, then act upon the primary value. The act must be grounded in a moral rule, and the moral rule justified or defended using normative ethical principles which are part

of a normative ethical theory. (*Moral Reasoning* 5)

Values Identification: In-Class Activity #1

John Doe works for a firm that manufactures electrical space heaters. His job is to carry out routine safety inspections in the firm's production division. One day, test results indicate that a problem might exist. John suspects that during a one-week period, space heaters with defective wiring were shipped to retailers. The defects can cause fires, so he immediately brings the matter to the attention of his superiors. Further study indicates that the wiring problem, if it exists in any units other than those tested, was confined to one hundred units that went out in a single shipment. The company makes slight changes in the manufacturing process that will prevent similar defects in the future.

There are lengthy discussions on what to do about the possibly dangerous heaters already shipped. Almost all have already been sold. No reports of fires have been received, and company officials are divided on whether to issue a recall of these heaters. The head office decides that a recall would generate too much bad publicity, so nothing is done about the previous shipment. John remains convinced that there is a real danger of fire caused by the defective wiring in the units already in the hands of consumers.

What should John do? What are the primary values upon which he is operating? What are the primary values upon which the company is operating? Construct a table of the values of the two parties as you consider the dilemma.

John's Values

Company's Values

Values Identification: In-Class Activity #2

Identify two major parties on different sides of the issue you have chosen to research. State the position of each party with regard to the issue. Identify the most important values each party seeks to realize.

Issue: _____

Parties: Proponents and Opponents	Positions	Values

A Brief Overview:
Vincent Ruggiero's Moral Decision-Making Model

Source: Ruggiero, Vincent Ryan. *Thinking Critically about Ethical Issues*. 5th ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 2001.

While Ruggiero's model is not a normative theory, it does provide us with a strategy for making moral decisions. Ruggiero states that "Respect for persons is an important value in most ethical systems " (73). Philosophers and theologians alike accept the value of respect for persons. Ruggiero quotes Errol E. Harris to show that respect for persons has three requirements:

> First, that each and every person be regarded as worthy of sympathetic consideration, and should be so treated; secondly, that no person should be regarded by another as a mere possession, or used as a mere instrument, or treated as a mere obstacle, to another's satisfaction; and thirdly, that persons are not and ought never to be treated in any undertaking as mere expendables. (Ruggiero 73)

According to Ruggiero, three important criteria are closely associated with the standard of respect for individuals. "These criteria [are] *obligations*, *moral ideals*, and *consequences* . . . (73). About obligations, he says, "Every significant human action occurs, directly or indirectly, in a context of relationships with others. And relationships usually imply *obligation;* restrictions on our behavior, demands to do something or to avoid doing it" (74). Often obligations conflict, such as when an employer's obligation to employees conflicts with an obligation

to stockholders. In these cases, preference must be given to one obligation over another. When analyzing a values conflict, one needs to identify and define what the obligations are to the stakeholders in the dilemma (90-91).

In Ruggiero's terms, moral ideals are what we have been calling values. He states that values "are notions of excellence, goals that bring greater harmony in one's self and between self and others. . . .They are also specific concepts that assist us in achieving respect for persons in our moral judgments" (74). Ruggiero provides us with some examples of values, including "fairness, tolerance, compassion, loyalty, forgiveness, justice, amity, and peace" (75). He adds that, when "there is a conflict between ideals [values] or between an ideal and an obligation, we should choose the action that will achieve the greater good" (107).

The third criterion that relates to the respect of persons is the notion of consequences. These "are the beneficial or harmful effects that result from an action and affect people involved, including, of course, the person performing the action" (75). These consequences may be physical, emotional, intentional, or even unintentional, and with both long and short term effects (75).

Ruggiero reminds us that our analysis of consequences is a "prediction of future events and not a certainty. . . . For this reason, we must be thorough in accounting for all possible consequences and willing to modify our earlier judgments as actual consequences become available. . . "(118). When there are mixed consequences, "the morally preferable action is the one that will produce *the greater good*, or in cases where no good can be achieved, *the lesser harm*"

(115).

Danney Ursery points out that the three criteria Ruggiero highlights, obligations, moral ideals (values), and consequences, “are common to almost all ethical systems” (*Moral Reasoning* 11). Ruggiero's method of using these criteria, according to Ursery, “would be a useful starting point when attempting to resolve a moral dilemma, since an action which does not pass scrutiny after the obligations, values, and effects are analyzed will be morally suspect. In other words, any action that honors obligations, while respecting values and benefiting people, can be presumed to be moral” (*Moral Reasoning* 11). Ursery cautions us, though, by stating:

> One should not assume, however, that each concern will be represented equally in each and every moral decision. Sometimes the issue may be largely a matter of obligations; other times, some value may predominate; still other times, consideration of effects may be the overriding concern. These are just guidelines, but a moral individual without some form of a moral decision-making procedure is like a sailor without a compass; sooner or later he or she will get lost. (*Moral Reasoning* 11)

It is important to note that the Ruggiero method alone does not offer a *solution* to a moral dilemma. Rather, its usefulness is in gaining a deeper understanding of the moral lay of the land in which the controversy as a whole is found. If we are to make reasonable, responsible, justifiable decisions, it is essential that we truly understand the problem for which we are proposing a solution. Thus, while Ruggiero’s method leads us to identifying the values,

obligations, and consequences involved on both sides of the issue, it does not instruct us on how to adjudicate between them. It does not, in other words, tell us which values should be ranked the highest, or to which obligations we owe the greatest fealty. As such, it is only a beginning – a part of the discovery process. In the end, Ruggiero's method requires us to carefully investigate *all* of the consequences for *all* who are affected, the good as well as the bad. A responsible moral agent has to think about who will be affected, and how.

Argumentation

Argumentation tends to carry different connotations. Some see arguing as impolite or even as aggressive behavior. Others relate argumentation to debate, something used by politicians but not by the average person. In reality, we all argue much of the time. Whenever we express an opinion and give reasons to support our conclusion, we are arguing. Argumentation is a form of rhetoric, which is very broadly defined as the art and practice of using language effectively, namely to persuade others. All rhetoric, and all sound argumentation for that matter, rests upon a triumvirate of elements: the speaker, the message, and the audience. With this in mind, anyone can argue just about anything to anybody, and with great effect.

Identifying Arguments

The kinds of arguments capstone is concerned with are those based on informed opinions. We build our arguments around claims that are grounded in informed opinions and well-substantiated premises and warrants. One way to start identifying arguments is to consider what kinds of things can and cannot be argued about.

What We Cannot Argue About

Facts cannot be argued about, assuming the information is verifiable and not a matter of opinion. For example:

- Japan attacked United States military installations at Pearl Harbor on Sunday, December 7, 1941.
- On average, the earth and sun are separated by 93,000,000 miles of space.
- Worldwide, 40,000 children die every day from malnutrition.

Impossibilities cannot be argued about. For example:

- Mars is a suitable planet for immediate human settlement and habitation.
- Juvenile delinquents should have to swim the Atlantic Ocean.
- All Americans must learn to speak Farsi by the end of next year.

Preferences cannot be argued about. Preferences look like opinions, in that they do not involve logic and reasoning. For example:

- Vanilla ice cream tastes so much better than chocolate ice cream.
- Greek mythology is culturally more stimulating than Roman mythology.
- *The Munsters* was a better sitcom than *The Addams Family.*

Beliefs that require proofs beyond human experience or observation cannot be argued about. For example:

- God sent AIDS to punish society.
- Crystal balls are windows to the future.
- Alien abductions occur with great frequency in the United States.

Words for Recognizing and Constructing Arguments

We use cue words both as a means for recognizing arguments and as a way for constructing arguments. Cue words often signal to the reader that a claim is being made, and that it will be supported by evidence. Cue words also serve as transitions between main ideas.

What follows is a sampling of cue words often used for signaling claims, for recognizing reasons and premises, for use in comparison and contrast, and for demonstrating cause and effect:

> *accordingly, again, also, as indicated by, as shown by, because, despite, for, for example, for instance, for the reason that, given that, however, in contrast, indeed, in the same way, in view of, likewise, may be deduced that, moreover, nevertheless, on the contrary, rather, regardless, similarly, since, specifically, still, the following example, though, to illustrate, yet*

Some cue words that signal concession and conclusion are:

admittedly, as a result, consequently, granted that, hence, in conclusion, in light of, it follows that, leads me (one, us) to believe that, of course, on the whole, so, then, thereby, therefore, thus, to summarize

Analyzing Arguments

Throughout the research of your capstone paper, you will be identifying arguments in each of the sources that you read. The array of conflicting opinions may seem overwhelming. As a critical thinker, you should realize that you cannot take arguments at face value. It is your job to analyze conflicting arguments and take a position in the most informed and reasonable manner possible. You may end up on one side of the issue, aligning yourself with the arguments and evidence already established by parties supporting that position, or you may be somewhere in between. The main thing, however, is that your position is supported and balanced by well-reasoned, well-articulated arguments and not by emotionally-laden appeals.

Keep in mind that arguments are generally constructed as a set of statements, with the claim serving as a primary declaration supported by premises, of which there may be any number. The premises, in turn, should be grounded in facts, data, and evidence, as well as in the authoritative testimony of credible scholars. Under the best of circumstances, the conclusion should then follow logically, provided that the premises are relevant and true.

What follows is an example of an argument employing this format:

Claim: Further explorations of Mars will yield greater findings in our understanding of how life began, and how it may continue to thrive, both on Earth and in the solar system.

Premise 1: There are indications that water once flowed abundantly on the surface of Mars.

Warrant: Aerial surveys of Mars reveal geological features indicative of deep aquifers that may still exist beneath the Martian surface (David).

Premise 2: The acidic Spanish river, Rio Tinto, serves as an example and terrestrial laboratory for speculating about, and searching for, life in extreme environments such as those that exist on Mars.

Warrant: NASA scientists Carol Stoker and Larry Lemke report that discoveries made at Rio Tinto, as well as the detection of gaseous "methane signatures" on Mars, are highly suggestive of life existing beneath the Martian surface (Berger).

Premise 3: Upon landing on Mars in 2004, the NASA rover *Opportunity* discovered and identified hematite-rich rocks, evidence of a once-wet Mars.

Warrant: "The porous rock is rich in water-deposited minerals: magnesium sulfates similar to ordinary Epsom salts, bromides, chlorides, and iron-rich compounds" (Petit 74).

Conclusion: Given the evidence that water once existed on Mars, and may still exist beneath its surface, possibly harboring subterranean microbial life forms, further exploration of Mars will provide us with a

greater understanding of how life began, and continues to thrive, both on Earth and in the solar system.

Do not be intimidated if you are unfamiliar with the study of logic or with some of the terminology used in argumentation. The following are tools to help you analyze the arguments of others and to construct your own. The best rule of thumb in assessing the veracity of an argument is to use your common sense.

Is the Argument Accurate?

An argument may be considered sound if it meets two criteria:

- The supporting reasons are true and accurate, or plausible.
- The structure of the argument is valid.

The Truth of the Supporting Reasons

First of all, realize that there are often no simple or definitive answers. Your analysis will be a matter of evaluating each premise given to support a claim and its conclusion. There are several questions you might ask when considering the soundness and legitimacy of a claim that you have found in your research:

- Do the premises logically support both the claim and the conclusion?
- Does each premise seem true based on your own experience?
- Is there credible evidence, and do the sources support the premises?

For example, take the statement “Movies are harmful to children.” There is

a problem with the truth of this as it is stated: it is too vague. While some movies may be harmful to children, common sense tells us that not all movies are harmful to children. Another problem is the lack of a definition for "harmful." Is the reference to physical harm, psychological harm, or moral harm? The veracity of the claim that movies are harmful to children could be elaborated if the statement were changed to "Some violent movies are psychologically damaging to some children." Remember: the more specific the claim, the better your chances are at either supporting it or refuting it.

The Validity of the Structure

One way to test an argument is to look at the relationship of the two parts of the claim: the premises and their warrants, and the conclusion. When the premises and warrants support the conclusion so that the conclusion follows logically, the argument is valid. If the premises and warrants do not support the conclusion, the argument is invalid. It is important to note that the truth or accuracy of the premises does not affect the validity of the overall structure of the argument. What is being considered is the logic of the relationship between the parts of the argument; that is, the claim, the premises, the warrants, and the conclusion should be congruent and consistent with one another. In a valid argument, you cannot both accept a set of premises and deny a conclusion; in that case, the argument would be incongruent and inconsistent, and invalid.

Consider the following statements: "Former President Clinton is in favor of allowing federal funds to be used in support of embryonic stem-cell research. He is a known liberal, yet his morals are questionable. It then follows that federal

funds, on the advice of former President Clinton, should not be allocated to support embryonic stem-cell research."

This is an invalid argument. Even if the two premises given involving former President Clinton's politics and morals are considered true, the conclusion that federal money should not be used to support embryonic stem-cell research does not logically follow. The premises may have some peripheral validity but are essentially irrelevant to the controversy regarding research funding.

Common Logical Fallacies

In the course of your research you should be aware of fallacious arguments that individuals and groups may use as a means of persuasion; politics and advertising often provide the best examples of fallacious reasoning. Fallacious claims often look and sound legitimate; their force lies in their subtle yet duplicitous manner of manipulation, often preying on one's emotions or ignorance rather than appealing to one's intelligence and common sense. Do not be intimidated by the study of logical fallacies. You do not need to remember the name of each fallacy, but you should become adept at spotting faulty reasoning as you analyze the arguments of your parties. Ideally, you should strive to avoid using fallacies in your own argumentation. Here are some examples:

- **Hasty Generalization:** A generalization based on insufficient or unrepresented evidence. "All my friends are allowed to stay out late, so staying out late must be safe."
- **False Analogy:** The assumption that because two things are alike in some

respects, they are alike in others. “If it’s okay to euthanize dogs and cats, it should be okay to euthanize people.”

- **False Dichotomy:** The “either…or” approach to reasoning, in which “contrary possibilities are wrongly presented as though they were exhaustive and exclusive” (Barnet and Bedau 357). “Live Free or Die.” “You’re either with us or against us.”
- **False Cause (Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc):** The assumption that because one event follows another, the first is the cause of the second. “Every time I water my grass it rains. Therefore, my watering causes it to rain.”
- **Circular Reasoning:** An argument in which the writer, instead of supplying evidence, simply restates the point in other language. “Smoking marijuana has got to be illegal, otherwise it wouldn’t be against the law.”
- **Bandwagon Appeal:** A claim that an idea should be accepted because a large number of people favor it or believe in it. “Everyone at the meeting thought that cutting pension plans was a good idea, so it must be right.”
- **Argument to the Person (Ad Hominem):** An attack on the person proposing an argument rather than on the argument itself. “Bill Clinton smoked marijuana when he was young, so you shouldn’t support any of his policies.”
- **Appeal to Authority:** An inappropriate appeal when the person is not an expert in the field or is no longer an expert in the field. The authoritative status of an individual or group of individuals does not in itself support the veracity of a claim. “My podiatrist, who is a reputable doctor in this town, claims that life exists elsewhere in the universe.”
- **Appeal to Emotion:** An inappropriate play on people’s emotions, such as fear, excitement, grief, pity, and paranoia. “Evil lurks among us.” “Terrorists

may be living next door." "When you ride alone, you ride with Hitler."

- **Slippery Slope:** "The fallacy here is in implying that the first step leads to the second, and so on down the slope to disaster, when in fact there is no necessary connection between the first step and the second at all" (Barnet and Bedau 362). "If you legalize marijuana, you'll then have to consider the legalization of ecstasy, and after that the legalization of cocaine and heroin."

(Unless otherwise noted, fallacy definitions are taken from Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* 46-52).

Evaluating Statistics

A very useful tool used by all researchers is empirical generalization; that is, facts gathered about populations through direct observation. This is just a technical term for using a small sample to generalize to a larger population. It usually involves statistical analysis. In your capstone research, you will be dealing with this kind of evidence. In addition to looking for the fallacies described, you can use the following questions to help you evaluate the statistical evidence you have discovered.

- **Is the sample known?**

The more specifically the sample is described, the better the evidence. For instance, a weak sample might read "Many young Americans," while a strong sample reads "Seventy-three percent of students in Austin high schools."

- **Is the sample sufficient?**

The sample must be large enough to give an accurate picture of the group

as a whole. A weak sampling, for example, would read “Five out of nine doctors sampled felt that health care workers should be tested for AIDS. Therefore, we should institute a policy to that effect here in Texas.” A strong sample, with greater specificity, might go like this: “Two percent of all high school students in Texas were randomly sampled about whether or not they wanted condoms in the schools. The results showed that 67% did, with a margin of error of +/- 3%. “

- **Is the sample representative?**

It is important that the sample be comparatively similar to the larger group from which it is drawn. One way to ensure this is by using random selection.

A weak sample representation might read “A poll of Austin women at the First Baptist Annual Convention indicates that women in Austin favor abstinence-only sex-education curriculums in schools.”

However, a stronger representation would read “A random sampling of 3,200 women from all geographical areas of Austin indicates that abstinence-only sex-education is their main concern.”

Constructing an Argumentative Response

In addition to analyzing and evaluating the arguments of others, you will need to construct and articulate your own arguments as well. When we are talking, reading, or writing about controversial subjects, we want to do more than simply state our opinions: we want to *justify* them. In other words, we want to tell our audience *why* we think one way rather than another. For instance, it is not enough to simply say “Executing minors is wrong.” If we are to persuade others of our view, we need to give our *reasons* for thinking that our position is the best

one.

If we are dealing with factual disputes, our job is usually straightforward. If we say, for instance, “It is my opinion that it is five miles from here to Town Lake,” all we need to do is measure the distance to prove our point. These are called empirical (descriptive) statements, because they can be proven through experience. Not only is this straightforward, but it is terminal in nature: by proving the point, we can be done with the dispute.

Controversial issues, such as the ones you will encounter in your capstone paper, are very different from empirical statements, for there is usually no way to *prove* that you are *right*. Instead, we rely on normative statements that tell us how we *ought* to act or how something *should* be done. Such statements must be argued *for.* Argumentative writing, therefore, requires the same degree of rigor as does argumentative analysis and evaluation. Diana Hacker describes argumentative writing as follows:

> In argumentative writing, you will take a stand on a debatable issue. The issue being debated might be a matter of public policy:
>
> --Should religious groups be allowed to meet on public school property?
>
> --Should a state enact laws rationing medical care?
>
> On such questions, reasonable people may disagree…. When you construct a *reasonable* argument, your goal is not simply to win or have the last word. Your aim is to reveal your current understanding of the truth about a subject, or to propose the best solution available for solving the problem – without being needlessly combative. (37)

Anthony Weston also elucidates on argumentation by stating in *A Rulebook for Arguments*:

> "to give an argument" means *to offer a set of reasons or evidence in support of a conclusion*. Here an argument is *not* simply a statement of certain views, and it is not simply a dispute. Arguments are attempts to *support* certain views with reasons…. Argument is essential, in the first place, because it is a way of trying to find out which views are better than others. Not all views are equal. Some conclusions can be supported by good reasons, others have much weaker support. But often we don't know which are which. We need to give arguments for different conclusions and then assess those arguments to see how strong they really are. (xi-xii)

Additionally, Hacker offers a detailed approach on how to construct an argument to support your position. Listed are a number of useful steps.

Planning a Strategy

- **List your arguments and any opposing arguments**

". . . A good way to begin is to list your arguments and the opposing arguments" (37). By familiarizing yourself with opposing viewpoints, you can be reasonably sure you have not overlooked any important arguments.

- **Rethink your position**

" After exploring all sides of an argument, you may decide to modify your initial position " (39). This is your opportunity to reconsider, or even reinforce, your own position.

- **Frame a thesis and sketch an outline**

Describe the course of action you think should be followed regarding your issue. State your value judgments; be explicit in stating the ethical values you are trying to uphold in recommending this course of action. Rank and explain your ethical values in the order of most importance to you. Clearly, forcefully, and unequivocally, present the evidence you will use to persuade the reader that your course of action is best and that those who do not agree with you should rethink their position. Then, construct a conventional outline of your paper or sketch a tree diagram.

- **Support each argument with specific evidence**

"When presenting the arguments for your position, you will of course need to back them up with evidence: facts, statistics, examples and illustrations, expert opinion, and [scholarly sources]" (41). Remember that an argument is considered sound if the supporting reasons are true and accurate and if the structure of the argument is valid; that is, the premises logically support the conclusion. Rather than taking an argument at face value, your objective is to think critically and to consider all claims and points of view presented. One of the hallmarks of a democratic society is its willingness to allow everyone to be heard.

Since nearly all of your evidence is based on readings, you will need to document your sources. Documentation not only gives credit where credit is due but establishes credibility for you, the researcher and writer, as well. It also allows you and your readers to track down a source should any discrepancy

arise, or to explore an issue further.

- **Anticipate objections: Refute opposing arguments**

If possible, you should interview someone who disagrees with your viewpoint. By familiarizing yourself with opposing viewpoints, you can be reasonably sure you have not overlooked an important argument that might be used against you. Once you have identified those opposing viewpoints, state whatever reservations or doubts they have about your stance and plan of action. Remember that we debate and argue with informed opinions and valid arguments by using sound premises and conclusions. The same should hold true when refuting opposing arguments.

- **Avoid common mistakes in reasoning**

In both your reading and writing, you want to be alert to the logical fallacies as previously described. In other words, do not let your emotions dictate the course of your own argumentation, which may erroneously ensnare both you

Part 4

MORAL REASONING

AND

NORMATIVE ETHICAL THEORY

Part 4:

Moral Reasoning and Normative Ethical Theory

In the capstone paper, your analysis of a significant, controversial issue entails an in-depth examination of values and arguments as well as ethical theories and principles that guide your decision-making. Your third and final paper proposes a practical solution which you are to articulate and defend as clearly as you can. A key part of your defense is an ethical justification based on an appeal to a normative ethical theory. It is not as important which ethical theory you draw upon but how well you justify and argue your position based on that theory. Most importantly, you must demonstrate clear and consistent reasoning in a thorough application of a normative ethical theory. And if you logically and consistently appeal to a generally accepted, normative ethical theory, you become a much more credible voice in the debate about your issue.

The Discovery Process

You have been researching a moral dilemma (your issue or research question) that you find especially relevant and interesting. Through judicious reading and note-taking, you have established a general overview of the dilemma as identified in a guiding “should” question. The dilemma is such that at least two or more positions are reasonably justifiable. While reading and reflecting upon the arguments made by parties to the controversy, you have probably

encountered multiple proposals for resolving the dilemma. Suspending any personal assumptions and biases allows you to entertain multiple perspectives. After a reflective assessment of the values and arguments behind all these perspectives, you begin to see the ramifications of advocating for one position or another. Now you will make a decision; you will advocate a position and propose a resolution to the dilemma embodied in your research question. To give your resolution credibility, you must demonstrate that it has a sound moral basis. Your final position and your proposed resolution or policy recommendation will be, in essence, a judgment supported by a moral rule.

Your moral rule is the reasoning behind your moral judgment. For example, imagine that your paper concerns the outsourcing of factory work and that research has shown that, while much less expensive than what could be produced domestically, outsourcing runs a high risk of supporting sweatshops. If you decide to argue against the practice, your moral judgment and moral rule might be: “Domestic businesses *should not* outsource factory work *because* human dignity and overall safety are more valuable than economic savings.” The first half of that statement establishes the moral judgment by emphasizing what should or should not be done, while the second half, hinging on “because,” determines the moral rule.

The Justification of Your Position

Your position should reflect mature moral reasoning. It should not rest upon an appeal to emotion; your argument is weak if it only exhorts emotion.

Your position or recommended solution reflects mature moral reasoning when it is supported by a normative theory and when the supporting ethical principles justify it. What normative theory best supports your position? What values underlie the argument, evidence, and reasoning for your position, and are those values clearly articulated? Is your claim supported by a reasonable set of premises grounded in the values that dictate your desired course of action and policy? Are those premises well-articulated? These are key questions to consider as you go through the process of developing a moral basis or justification for your position.

STEPS IN THE JUSTIFICATION PROCESS

- STATE YOUR JUDGMENT AND ITS MORAL BASIS. Clearly state your moral judgment and moral rule, and briefly discuss how the moral rule supports the moral judgment.
- SELECT A NORMAL ETHICAL THEORY. Choose one normative ethical theory that best defends your moral judgment and moral rule; then, clearly argue for the validity of your position using that ethical theory. Keep in mind that normative ethical theories consist of a collection of principles that, in effect, define the theory. When justifying your position, be sure to implement these principles; without the principles, there is no theory.
- REVIEW THE NORMATIVE ETHICAL THEORY. Before you begin, however, you should review the information available to you about the

normative theory you have selected (notes from Ethical Analysis class, relevant chapters from your Ethical Analysis textbook, or other information such as that available in your Capstone Notebook or at the capstone web site). Again, you must defend your judgment and final proposal using a normative ethical theory. This is by far the most important part of your justification section and requires careful reasoning. You should not merely list principles and simply claim that they defend your moral rule; instead, you must demonstrate *how* the principles support your position and your solution. Also, remember that you must focus on one theory only, rather than trying to mix them.

- COUNTER OBJECTIONS. Address any ethical and/or philosophical objections that may be raised regarding your position and the defense of your solution. Be specific. How would you respond to these objections? Does your solution violate any obligations or values that you discovered earlier in your research? What are the consequences of adopting your solution, both positive and negative? Finally, address how this process has changed your perspective regarding your original stand and moral judgment of the issue.

Guidelines for Analyzing Your Dilemma

These guidelines are designed to help you analyze and think critically about the dilemma you are addressing in your capstone paper. In your research, and in your own analysis, you have employed five basic kinds of statements, or

categories of information, each embedded in the process of argumentation:

- Statements which identify and define your issue
- Assertions of fact and evidence concerning the issue
- Statements concerning cause and effect
- Value judgments indicating what is desirable or undesirable
- Statements which present and advocate sound resolutions to the issue

What follows are some examples of the five types of statements. Each statement is followed by questions you should ask in your critical analysis of your controversy. The topic for consideration is "Homelessness in America."

- **IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ISSUE**

  Example: Homelessness in America is a serious problem.

  Questions to ask: Who says that it is a problem? What values lead these people to see the situation as a problem? Is the problem identified and defined in clear and consistent terms? Who is affected by the problem? How many are affected? Is this a new problem or an on-going problem? What is its history? Does any group profit from the situation?

- **EMPIRICAL AND FACTUAL ASSERTIONS ABOUT THE ISSUE**

  Example: The number of homeless children in America is greater now than at any time since the Great Depression.

  Questions to ask: What are the sources of the facts? Are the sources biased in any way? Is the evidence sufficiently objective? Is the evidence accurate and timely? Were sound methods used in producing the facts? Are

the facts both logical and appropriate to the actual problem? Are generalizations appropriate?

- **STATEMENTS CONCERNING CAUSE AND EFFECT**

  Example: As long as we have a population of low-income individuals and families, many of them will not be able to afford adequate housing.

  Questions to ask: What are the principal causes of the problem? Have alternative possibilities been considered? Does the evidence support the assertion of the cause? Has sufficient data been collected and analyzed? Are assertions of cause and effect logically related to the evidence? Is the evidence itself sound? Are the means advocated to address the issue both logically and empirically related to the cause?

- **VALUES AND VALUE JUDGMENTS**

  Example: Every American should be afforded the same right to obtain decent housing because all people are entitled to adequate shelter.

  Questions to ask: What values underlie both the problem and its solution? Are you or the sources biased? Are the stated or assumed values the most important ones at play? What other values are at stake? Based on those values, what normative ethical theory should we use to judge the issue and its proposed solution?

- **ADVOCACY OF SOLUTION AND POLICY**

  Example: The United States government should provide financial aid to families who house their destitute, unattached adult members.

  Questions to ask: What specific solutions or policies are advocated? Do

they represent a change in current policy? Who benefits and who suffers from the policy alternatives? How are costs and benefits distributed? Do policy differences stem from different interpretations of facts, causes, and values? What solution or policy would best serve the underlying ethical values at stake? Can the solution be justified on principled, normative grounds?

Normative Ethical Principles and Theories

Danney Ursery describes our understanding of ethical theories and distinguishes between descriptive and prescriptive theories by stating:

> Descriptive theory tries to explain how things are (e.g., this paper is white) whereas normative or prescriptive theory attempts to tell us how things ought to be. Since we are focusing on ethical behavior and actions, we are concerned with what morally *ought to be*: that is, how human beings *should* act. All ethical theories employ various normative ethical principles in assessing or justifying the actions and behavior of people.

Foundational Principles

Ursery instructs us that "[f]oundational principles are generally those basic principles which do not by themselves constitute any theory but which should be considered a prerequisite to understanding and developing a normative theory" (*Moral Reasoning* 14). One foundational principle discussed in Vincent

Ruggiero's moral decision-making model is the idea of respect for persons: all human beings are worthy of fair and impartial treatment. From this basic idea of respect for persons stems a handful of other foundational principles that come to define many ethical codes.

- The **Principle of Rationality** states that all legitimate, moral acts must be supported by generally accepted reasons.
- The **Principle of Least Harm** states that, if you must choose between evils, choose the one with the potential for least harm.
- The **Principle of Consistency** states that moral reasons, including moral actions, if they are valid, are binding to all people at all times and in all places, given the same relevant circumstances.
- The **Principle of Impartiality** forbids us from treating one person differently from another when there is no good reason to do so.

Major Normative Ethical Theories

Kantianism, Utilitarianism, and Social Contract Theory are the three major normative ethical theories that you studied in Ethical Analysis. In order to complete the justification section of your capstone paper, you will need to review these three theories.

When justifying your moral judgment and moral rule, do not simply list one or two principles which pertain to the normative theory you have selected.

Instead, you must use the theory holistically, of which the principles are a part.

Kantianism

Immanuel Kant believed that moral judgments must be dealt with by reason, not by feeling. He argued that the basis of moral action is duty. The inherent good character of human beings is what leads them to action based on their sense of duty, and acting out of duty provides their actions with moral value. At the center of Kant's theory is the idea that there is a command, what he called a 'categorical imperative' that binds all people at all times. Every rational person then accepts the obligation to follow reason simply because that categorical imperative is affirmed by reason (*Undergraduate Capstone Handbook* 74).

There are three principles which form the basis of Kant's deontological theory. These principles are listed as only guidelines and are not definitive of Kantian ethics. In addition to reading your *Moral Reasoning* handbook, please review your Ethical Analysis textbook and class notes for a greater understanding of Kantian ethics.

- The **Categorical Imperative** states that you must "act only on that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it would become a universal law."
- The **Principle of Ends** sates that you must act so that you treat humanity never as a mere means to an end, but always as an end in itself.
- The **Principle of Autonomy** states that every rational being is able to

> regard him or herself as a maker of universal law, and everyone who is ideally rational will legislate exactly the same universal principles (Ursery http://www.stedwards.edu/ursery/norm.htm#Kantian).

Utilitarianism

John Stuart Mill is the most prominent philosopher of Utilitarianism. The cornerstone of Utilitarian theory is the Greatest Happiness Principle, which affirms happiness, good, and pleasure as the standards of moral judgment. Utilitarian theorists believe that the consequences of an action determine if the action is right or wrong, therefore we refer to it as a consequentialist theory. As the *Undergraduate Capstone Handbook* illustrates:

> People can follow the Greatest Happiness Principle for various reasons; however, the higher motivation is internal, which has been termed 'generalized benevolence.' To Utilitarians, people are moral equals. This means that everyone's happiness is equal to everyone else's, and one's own happiness should not be pursued at the expense of another's. (74)

To be sure, there are four general principles that form the basis of most Utilitarian ethical theories. These principles are listed only as guidelines and are not definitive of Utilitarian ethics.

- The **Greatest Happiness Principle** is that principle which approves or disapproves of every action according to whether it increases or diminishes the amount of happiness, good, or pleasure of the party whose interests are in question.

- The **Principle of Non-Interference** states that society is justified in coercing the behavior of an individual in order to prevent him or her from injuring others (aka other-regarding actions), and that society is not justified in coercing him or her simply because the behavior is immoral or harmful to him or herself (aka self-regarding actions).
- The **Principle of Consequences** states that, in assessing consequences, the only thing that matters is the amount of happiness and good, or unhappiness and bad, that is caused. The right actions are those that produce the greatest amount of good over bad. The point is that we look only to the outcome of an action, not to the intentions or methods of achieving that outcome.
- The **Benevolent Spectator Principle** states that whenever we are considering the course of action which will yield the greatest amount of happiness (and thus the right action) we must consider everyone's happiness as equally important and act as though we were a "benevolent spectator," even if that means sacrificing someone else's happiness for the overall aggregate happiness of others.

Social Contract Theory

Like any good ethical theory, Social Contract Theory begins with the question of why we should be moral. Being moral almost always involves following certain rules, and these rules necessarily curtail many of our freedoms. For instance, if I am to follow the moral rule that it is wrong to lie, there are a

number of things I am no longer free to say to others. So why are we willing to do it? The answer, for the social contractarian, lies in the following set of indisputable facts:

- Many, or most, of the endeavors we want to engage in involve a communal setting of some kind. Public facilities and activities such as schools, concerts, hospitals, libraries, soccer games, driving on public roadways, and shopping--all involve many other people besides ourselves.
- Activities taking place in the social or public realm require coordination. In the examples cited above, for instance, it is not enough simply to have many people engaged in each activity; these people must be performing certain tasks and playing particular roles, often intricately coordinated with the expectations of other people also fulfilling particular roles (for instance, the shopkeeper must open the store at a specific time each day in order to meet the business demands of the buying public).
- The coordination of public and social activities requires adherence to many different rules. Given the complexity of most of the activities we are talking about, such as running a busy airport or directing buses in and out of a downtown terminal, participants must closely follow certain rules in order to make the whole endeavor work. (Imagine the chaos if an air traffic controller

ignored all the activity on his screen and just directed planes to land whenever he felt like it, or whenever the pilots felt like it.)

- Following rules requires that we give up some degree of freedom. For instance, the shopkeeper cannot sleep in as late as he'd like to; the pilot cannot just arbitrarily fly to the destination of his choice; the student cannot randomly blast loud music in the middle of a class; and the surgeon cannot just take a break by walking away from the patient on the operating table.

The main task of the Social Contract Theory, then, is to show why it makes sense for us to give up some of our natural freedom as a condition for following rules. The answer is already implied in the facts stated above: if we are not willing to do so, many of the activities that we do want to engage in would simply be impossible. Therefore, it is in *our own best interest to give up some freedom in order to gain other goods*, such as transportation services, entertainment, education, healthcare, security, and social stability in general.

Thomas Hobbes wrote in 1668 that, without the duty to follow rules, a condition which he called the State of Nature, in which there are no laws, rules, morality, or justice, there would be:

> no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently, no culture of the earth, no navigation nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea, no commodious building, no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force,

> no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. (Hobbes 76)

Thus, as Hobbes indicates, total natural freedom usually leads to total chaos, at least if we insist on continuing to live in groups (as all empirical evidence seems to confirm). It only makes sense, then, that we be willing, even eager, to give up some of this freedom so that we may gain the order and coordination necessary to carry out our life projects and everyday affairs. Again, simply put, it is in our own best interest to do so – to forego some freedom in order to gain some civility. Therefore, the answer to the question of why we should be moral (or law abiding) is that, if we were not, life in civil society would be a chaotic and dangerous affair at best, and virtually impossible at worst.

There is one final requirement, and this is at the heart of the contract referenced in the very name of the theory: playing by the rules will only lead to successful social coordination if everyone, or at least the vast majority, agrees to follow those rules. If I am the only one who refrains from lying, my moral stance will have little impact on the success of group projects and general social coordination. For if everyone else lies on a regular basis, no one will trust anyone else, thus no one would be willing to give up any freedom on the off-chance that the other person will do his or her part, too. The only way out of this problem is through the social contract, in which everyone agrees to follow a set of rules (or be governed by a particular body). In other words, coordination,

which is essential for any activity taking place in the social realm, only works if reciprocity is generally in place. I promise (or contract) to give up my freedom to take your things without your permission only if you promise the same to me; such a contract of rules is required of all agents in the moral realm, or civil society.

The principles of the Social Contract Theory can thus be summed up as follows:

- **The Principle of Justifiability**: Moral and legal rules are justified only if they limit freedom in order to make a desirable or necessary social activity possible. This principle provides us with a "test" to determine whether a rule or law is valid or not.

  Application

  We ask ourselves: "Is this prohibition (or prescription) *necessary* for some social activity or long-term endeavor to take place?" If the answer is yes, as in the case of the general prohibition on lying, the rule is valid. If the answer is no, then it is an unwarranted sacrifice of freedom and, as such, is invalid. For example, a rule that requires parents to teach their children a specific set of religious, political, or aesthetic beliefs would be invalid because we have learned how to get along, and sometimes even thrive, in a pluralistic society.

- **The Principle of Reciprocity:** Following a set of rules as determined

by the Social Contract Theory will only be reasonable if the majority of other people follow the rules as well.

Application

Imagine a game of Monopoly in which you were the only one who paid for the property you landed on, you were the only one who paid rent owed to others, and you were the only one who waited for a turn to roll the dice. Not only would it quickly turn into a very silly game, but there would be no good reason for you to follow the rules if no one else was following them. There will always be a few people in society, appropriately called "free riders," who do not follow the rules (engaging in tax evasion, for instance), but so long as the majority *does* follow the rules, the activity or institution in question is not entirely in danger of collapsing into chaos.

▪ **The Principle of Motivation**: Moral and legal rules should be followed because it is in all of our interests to do so; the sacrifice of some freedom, in exchange for the possibility of communal endeavors (the incentive), is always justified.

Application

If we want to maintain the complex institutions and activities which make up contemporary life, whether they be in a small town or a large city, we are going to have to coordinate our efforts, and that will require the sacrifice of some freedom. Public libraries would

> not be in business for long if no one ever returned books; children would never get educated if citizens were not willing to allocate some of their taxes to fund schools; sports, like soccer or football, would be untenable if everyone refused to follow the rules.

In the end, the Social Contract Theory begins with the insight that the vast majority of activities which take place in the public realm depend on the agreement of the participants to follow a set of rules. Needless to say, the social requirement for rules stems from the fact that we generally do not run into problems until we start intermingling with one another.

Part 5

Collaboration and Final Paper Review

Cooperative and Collaborative Learning

Peer Evaluation Form

Checklist for Moral Issues in Society

Capstone Project Notebook

Capstone Paper: Headings and Subheadings

Reflective Summary

Self-evaluation

Grading Form: Final Capstone Paper

Part 5:
Collaboration and the Final Paper

Collaboration is listed as the first of SEU's eight, key operating principles, and, time permitting, capstone instructors will attempt to provide students with opportunities to participate in structured, cooperative learning. Genuine cooperative learning fosters critical thinking and creative processes.

The following highlights of cooperative and collaborative learning are excerpted from *Active Learning: Cooperation in the Classroom* by David W. Johnson, et al., *Engaging Ideas: The professor's guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning* by John C. Bean, and *Collaborative Learning: A Sourcebook for Higher Education* by Stephanie Kadel and Julia Keehner.

Through the composition of your paper, please keep these suggestions in mind: Collaboration is not simply:

- sitting side-by-side at the same table, talking with each other as you do your individual assignments.
- doing a task individually with instructions, with one student finishing first, trying to help the others.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

In order for learning to be cooperative and collaborative, five basic elements are essential. The first element of a cooperative and collaborative learning experience is **positive interdependence**. You must believe that you are linked

with your classmates in a way so that one cannot optimally succeed unless other members of the group succeed as well. The most important thing to consider is goal interdependence; all cooperative and collaborative learning starts with a mutually shared group goal.

The second element of a cooperative and collaborative environment is **face-to-face promotional interaction**. Cooperative and collaborative learning exists when you help, assist, encourage, and support each other's efforts to optimize a learning opportunity. You can promote each other's learning by elaborating, collectively as a group, on how to solve problems, discussing with each other the nature of the concepts and successful strategies utilized, teaching your own knowledge to others, and explaining the connection between past and present learning.

The third element is **individual accountability**, which exists when the performance of each student is assessed and the results shared with others. It is important that the group knows who needs the most assistance in completing the assignment and what specific and proximal goals must be addressed.

The fourth element is **social skills**. Groups cannot function effectively if members do not have and use skills needed for strong leadership, sound decision-making, genuine trust-building, unambiguous communication, and effective conflict-management. The group process must ensure an achievement of goals and maintain effective working relationships among group members.

The fifth element is making sure that the **group process** encourages and ensures individual success, all the while achieving the goals and maintaining

effective relationships among group members. Some keys to successful group processing are developed over time so that steady group involvement is encouraged, and that criteria are established for the tasks at hand. Group members must also remind each other to be specific whenever offering feedback, comments, or suggestions for improvement.

Peer Evaluation and Collaboration

Cooperative and collaborative learning groups can enhance the quality of writing assignments. For example, attempt to submit your final paper revised on the basis of at least two peer reviews by members of your learning group, a friend, a spouse, or a Writing Center tutor. In other words, the writing process requires both a cooperative and collaborative learning experience. There is much virtue in the feedback and learning from others.

The criteria for immediate and/or long term success are variable. Given the rigor of the capstone paper, as well as the long-range instructional objectives, all compositions and drafts will be evaluated for grammar, punctuation, organization, content, and other criteria as set by the instructor. General, overall revisions may be needed and should be addressed before attending to any sentence-level errors.

Some general principles for conducting peer reviews include: engaging each other at the global level of organization, coherence, structure, and flow; expecting peers to give you good advice about sentence structure or style; and, striving for precision by backing up comments, suggestions, and feedback with

specific examples from the draft.

Peer Evaluation Form

Name of evaluator_____

Name of author_____

Paper topic_____

Research topic is clearly defined as a morally controversial social issue

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

Background to, and context of, the issue is described well

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

Parties to the controversy, and their positions and values, are clearly defined and fairly examined

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

Rationale and consequences of the proposed solution, and policy implications of those consequences, are analyzed well

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

Conclusion is clear and well-supported

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

Summary and Works Cited indicate a well-written, well-organized, scholarly effort

Excellent ____Very Good ____Good ____Fair ____Poor/Missing ____

GRADING FORM: FINAL CAPSTONE PAPER

STUDENT: _____

Point Value	Scoring Categories and Explanations	Points Earned
5 points	**TITLE AND INTRODUCTION** ▪ Does the introductory paragraph capture the reader's attention? And does it clearly state the research question? ▪ Is there a clear and engaging indication of the topic and general perspective and approach of the paper?	
10 points	**HISTORY/BACKGROUND/PRELIMINARY INFORMATION** ▪ Is the necessary background information provided? ▪ Is the significance of the issue sufficiently explained so that readers understand why they should be concerned with this issue? ▪ Are any key/specialized terms clearly defined for the reader? ▪ Are all assumptions/biases sufficiently identified? ▪ Are relevant secondary issues sufficiently identified and explained?	
20 points	**PARTIES, POSITIONS, AND ARGUMENT ANALYSIS** ▪ Are the opponents and proponents identified, and are their positions clearly, completely, and objectively delineated? ▪ Are the parties' arguments and evidence thoroughly analyzed? ▪ Are the arguments analyzed for logical coherence and absence of logical fallacies? ▪ Is the primary dilemma clearly described? ▪ Have you identified the values and obligations in conflict?	
25 points	**ARGUMENTATION, CRITICAL REASONING, AND POSITION JUSTIFICATION** ▪ Is your position well-reasoned and logically supported? ▪ Does it flow from the research and refer to it? ▪ Does your position advance the most important values and obligations? ▪ Are the consequences and implications for future policies and practices adequately addressed? ▪ Is your position defended in detail by a single theory? ▪ Are potential objections, ethical or otherwise, effectively addressed and countered?	
5 points	**CONCLUSION** ▪ Does the ending present an emphatic closing statement that is well-supported by the content of the paper? ▪ Does it present a clear answer to the research question? ▪ Does the conclusion close the paper in a way that satisfies the reader that the topic has been fully treated?	

10 points	**ORGANIZATION: COHERENCE, UNITY, AND FLOW** ▪ Is the paper well-organized so that each section flows smoothly into the next? ▪ Are choppy or lengthy paragraphs avoided? ▪ Are paragraphs developed around unified ideas that advance the topic? ▪ Are digressions avoided? ▪ Have you varied your sentence structure? ▪ Have you used subject headings or effective transitions?	
15 points	**SOURCES, INTERNAL DOCUMENTATION, AND WORKS CITED** ▪ Are the required sources (books, databases, and articles) authoritative and appropriate for the topic and research question? ▪ Are sources timely, sufficiently numerous, and of high quality? ▪ Are quotations presented effectively and correctly? ▪ Is it clear where source material ends and your own words begin? ▪ Are signal phrases appropriately used to introduce quotations? ▪ Is internal documentation properly handled according to MLA guidelines? ▪ Are all sources, including web sources, properly cited? ▪ Is the Works Cited section alphabetized and presented in proper MLA format?	
10 points	**GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, AND MECHANICS** ▪ Is your paper free of grammatical and syntactical errors? ▪ Are your sentences well-constructed? ▪ Is your spelling accurate? ▪ Is your word choice and tone appropriate for the paper?	
100 points	**FINAL POINT TOTAL**	

FINAL PAPER GRADE_____

Part 6

Final Presentation

Part 6: Final Presentation

As part of your capstone experience you will make a final, oral presentation to the class. The length of the presentation should be no more than 10 minutes. Usually the presentation includes questions and comments from your classmates and instructor. It is generally given from the podium at the front of the classroom. Instructors of online capstone sections will provide separate guidelines regarding this requirement.

Content of Final Presentation

Your instructor will provide you with specific guidelines, but presentations should, at the very least, include these components:

- Identification of your research topic
- An indication of why the problem is worth investigating
- A summary of your findings regarding each side of the issue, including party identification, party arguments, argument strengths and weaknesses, underlying values, and proposed solutions
- Your conclusion and your justification for your solution and policy, using a normative ethical theory and its principles

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Appendix

Appendix A: Writing Resources

Appendix B: Scarborough Phillips Library Information

Appendix C: Sample Documentation of Resource Logs

Appendix D: Worksheet for Paper Two

Appendix E: Final Presentation Scoring Sheet

Appendix A: Writing Resources

A Word about Writing and Tutoring Centers

Writing and tutoring centers, whether staffed by professional tutors or student peers, perform an enormous service for writers from any discipline and at any skill level. Most contemporary writing centers help students at any stage of the writing process. Writing and tutoring centers are not "fix-it" shops where students go to have their grammar and spelling checked. Going to a writing or tutoring center does not guarantee that the writer will immediately improve the paper, but it does ensure that the writer has talked about his/her ideas and had at least one careful reader respond to them.

The SEU Writing Center

The SEU Writing Center is nationally recognized. Most students who review one or more of their paper drafts with the SEU Writing Center staff improve their papers significantly. You may make an appointment online at: http://www.stedwards.edu/writing/index.html. Be sure to contact them long before your paper is due, so that you will have the time to incorporate their suggestions.

OWL: Online Writing Lab

In addition to the writing services St. Edward's University offers, students are encouraged to take advantage of OWL, the Online Writing Lab. OWL employs the talents of experienced educators who offer exceptional online writing instruction to help New College and graduate students hone their writing skills. OWL is not intended to replace face-to-face assistance through the Writing Center, but rather to complement this excellent resource and to offer a high-quality alternative to students who cannot make use of the Writing Center. Like Writing Center tutors, OWL instructors will not proofread or edit student papers, but will instead help students better understand their own writing and improve their focus, clarity, and mechanics. To submit your writing to the Online Writing Lab, simply send an e-mail to owl@stedwards.edu with two WORD documents attached: your paper and a properly completed OWL submission form. An OWL instructor will read your work and provide you with feedback, usually within 48 hours.

SEU Tutoring Services

Tutoring Services, part of Academic Planning and Support Services in Moody Hall 155, offers free or low-cost tutoring for students enrolled in capstone courses. Tutors for writing courses have extensive writing experience, familiarity with the St. Edward's curriculum, and excellent communication skills. Tutoring sessions last about an hour and are scheduled online. For more information

about these tutoring services, visit http://www.stedwards.edu/apss/tutoring.htm. To arrange tutoring, contact the Tutoring Services Coordinator at 448-8627.

A Writer's Reference

Each student should also consult his/her copy of Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007). It is now in its 6th edition. If you have an older edition, you should still use it for writing advice, but you can go to the MLA Update for the most recent changes in MLA documentation: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. For interactive exercises in grammar, syntax, and paraphrasing, go to http://www.dianahacker.com/writersref/.

Appendix B

Scarborough Phillips Library Information Page

Scarborough Phillips Library Home
http://libr.stedwards.edu/

From here you can access most, if not all, of the authoritative information you need for the capstone paper:

- **Catalog** (for titles and Library of Congress call numbers of books, ebooks, videos, audios, and other material)
- **Databases** for journal and reference articles
- **Research Guides** (for citation guides and information on research skills)
- **Research Assistance:** Information on how to contact a reference librarian for assistance

Appendix C:

Sample
Documentation of Resource Logs

Name Claudia Z. Tynes

Instructor Dr. Joanne Sanchez

A-CAPS 4360

Documentation of Resource

The document that was utilized to obtain information used in my Capstone Project was obtained from: Work Cited (Correct MLA Format):

Magill, Gerard. "The Ethics Wave in Human Genomics, Embryonic Stem Cell Research, and Therapeutic Cloning: Promoting and Protecting Society's Interests." Albany Law Review. 65.3 (2002): 701-729. Academic Search Premier. Ebschohost. Scarborough-Phillips Lib., Austin. 20 Sept. 2002 <http://search.epnet.com/.

Notes: (What information does this resource contain that is relevant to your topic? What are the author's thesis and major arguments? How/ where does this information fit into your paper?)

Importance of the article: Ethical side of Bush and Clinton's bans.

Human life is the most basic human value; therefore, the importance of this argument should be analyzed ethically. Human cloning ban is the connection between the emerging technology value-based and society.

According to Ethics professor Gerard Magill, when President Bush announced the ban for human cloning research last year, he not only "sanctioned or encouraged further destruction of human embryos, but encouraged aggressive federal funding of research on umbilical cord, placenta, adult and animal stem cells that does not involve the ethical dilemma of destroying human embryos"

(720).

Name Claudia Z. Tynes

Instructor Dr. Joanne Sanchez

A-CAPS 4360

Documentation of Resource

The document that was utilized to obtain information used in my Capstone Project was obtained from: Work Cited (Correct MLA Format)

Ruse, Michael and Aryne Sheppard. Responsible Science or Technomadness? Cloning. New York: Prometheus Books, 2001.

Notes: (What information does this resource contain that is relevant to your topic? What are the author's thesis and major arguments? How/ where does this information fit into your paper?)

The following definitions were taken from this source:

Michael Ruse and Aryne Sheppard in Responsible Science or Technomadness? Cloning, artificial insemination is described as "a process by which sperm are collected from males and deposited in the female by instruments" (317). He also defines in vitro fertilization (IVF) as, "the process during which an egg is removed from the ovary and fertilized with sperm in laboratory glassware and then re-implanted in the female" (322).

The same authors define therapeutic cloning as "the use of cloning technology for medical purposes, for example, the production of organs for transplantation" and reproductive cloning as "the use of cloning technology to produce new individuals" (Ruse and Sheppard 326).

Appendix D: Worksheet for Paper Two

A-CAPS 4360: Final Presentation Scoring Sheet

Student_____

Topic_____

Time Alloted _____

Time Used_____

CONTENT

1. Introduction

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

2. Organization/Conceptual Framework

15 + 13 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 + 1

3. Knowledge of Subject Matter: History, Positions, Parties, etc.

15 + 13 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 + 1

4. Identification & Analysis of Values in Conflict

15 + 13 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 + 1

5. Tentative Conclusion & Argumentation (Values Defense)

15 + 13 + 11 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 3 + 1

6. Responses of Audience Questions

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

Total Score_____

PRESENTATION AND STYLE

1. Vocal Quality & Rate (Variety; Volume; Control/Suitable Pace; Effective Pauses)

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

2. Body Animation & Gestures (Natural; Appropriate; Relaxed)

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

3. Eye Contact & Rapport with Audience.

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

4. Effective Language, Grammar, Diction.

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

5. Enthusiasm & Ethos (Engaging; Energetic/Positive; Confident; Committed to Topic; Preparedness)

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

6. Style (Extemporaneous; Direct; Natural; Unobtrusive Use of Notes)

5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1

TOTAL SCORE_____

FINAL GRADE_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: