



## Ethical Dilemma Competition

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### Overview

The Ethical Dilemma competition challenges chapters to engage in an ethical debate centered around an educational dilemma. Participants will delve into an ethical issue, applying critical-thinking skills and persuasive communication to collaboratively explore and debate their stance.

Each chapter member begins by thoroughly examining the ethical issue and forming an individual position. Subsequently, members engage in a structured debate, actively listening to diverse viewpoints within the chapter. The goal is to collectively reach a consensus on the topic, culminating in a 10-minute presentation that articulates the chapter's unified perspective.

Teams must collaborate closely to develop the presentation, selecting between four and eight students to present their stance and the process behind it to a panel of judges.

### Participation Details

- This is a chapter competition.
- Only one (1) entry per chapter will be accepted.
- A maximum of four (4) entries total will be accepted, on a first-come, first-served basis.

*The guidelines for the FIU Ethical Dilemma Competition are adapted from the national Educators Rising competition guidelines and are used for educational purposes. All credit for the original competition structure, objectives, and evaluation criteria goes to Educators Rising. FIU's adaptations are intended to align with our institutional context and support student success within our programs*



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### Competition Guidelines

- A. During a chapter meeting, present the ethical dilemma narrative included at the end of this PDF.
- B. Spend adequate time discussing the dilemma. This deliberation may take several chapter meetings. As a group, answer the ethical dilemma questions listed with the ethical dilemma narrative included at the end of this PDF.
- C. When the discussions have concluded and a consensus has been reached, prepare a 10-minute live presentation stating the chapter's view on the dilemma.
- D. No fewer than four and no more than eight student representatives from competing chapters will participate in a 15-minute interactive session with a panel of judges. During the interactive session, the chapter representatives will deliver their live, 10-minute presentation to a panel of judges. The presentation should be a professional, clear, and decisive response to the dilemma. The process by which the decision was reached, and the factors considered should be included in the presentation.
- E. Use of AV materials (ex., an original PowerPoint or Prezi presentation, short video, etc.) is permitted but entirely optional for the 10-minute presentation. The presentation file must be stored on a USB flash drive. There will not be an internet connection available in the meeting room.
- F. After the live presentation and for the remainder of the 15-minute interactive session, the judges will ask the students questions about their deliberation process, the factors considered when making decisions, how they reached a consensus, and other relevant questions related to the deliberation process.
- G. One judge will also serve as a timekeeper during the presentation. Chapter representatives will receive an indication that there is one minute remaining when they reach the nine-minute mark of their presentation.

### Judging and Scoring

- A. Competitors must be present at the scheduled time; otherwise, they will be disqualified.
- B. The judges' decision is final.
- C. Competitors agree to be bound by the FEA General Competition Rules.
- D. The entry will be scored using the Ethical Dilemma Competition rubric.

### How to Enter

- A. This is a chapter competition. Only one (1) entry per chapter will be accepted.
- B. All entries for individual and/or chapter competitions must be submitted by the chapter's sponsoring teacher via the [Online Competition Entry Form](#) by **5:00 pm on Friday, October 31, 2025**.
- C. Four (4) entries total will be accepted for this competition. Entries will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- D. Entries submitted by email will not be accepted.



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### Ethical Dilemma Scenario

Mr. McIntosh is grateful to have been teaching for fifteen years in the small, tight-knit community of Willowbrook. The town consistently supports its schools, with community members actively engaging in various capacities to ensure their success. Many educators, including Mr. McIntosh, are active in the community, serving as leaders in youth organizations, city recreation coaches, and fulfilling other vital volunteer roles.

Mr. McIntosh began his teaching career in Willowbrook immediately after college. His passionate teaching and caring demeanor quickly made him a favorite among the students. Recently, he was named the school's Teacher of the Year, largely due to the investment he makes in the lives of his students.

Stella, one of Mr. McIntosh's students, struggled academically and socially throughout her school experience. According to the school counselor, Mr. McIntosh was a primary factor in Stella's growth during her junior and senior years of high school. The same qualities that made him Teacher of the Year, paved the way for Stella's success – spending countless hours after school working with her on physics equations, occasionally checking on her progress at home via text, giving her confidence by urging her to enter the science fair, as well as taking a personal interest in her and her family.

Mr. McIntosh recognized her academic abilities and encouraged her to consider college, even though no one in her family had ever attended. He and the school counselor worked closely together to ensure that her college application fees were waived, so there would be no barriers to her success.

By the second semester of her senior year, everyone began to recognize a change within Stella. She was achieving academic success and, more importantly, gaining confidence in herself.

By the time she graduated from high school, Stella had been accepted into a prestigious community college. Her parents were incredibly proud of her academic, social, and personal transformation. They planned a special event to celebrate Stella's bright future, as well as Mr. McIntosh's unwavering contributions to her success.

"You have to be there, Mr. McIntosh. I owe so much to you," Stella pleaded. "You've taught me so much more than just science. You've inspired me to pursue my dreams, and I can't imagine my high school years without your guidance. My parents practically planned this party to celebrate you, too, since you helped me so much. They even purchased a gift to show their appreciation and want to give it to you at the party. It will be lots of fun. Even though they can sometimes get kind of wild, my parents throw great parties and have invited all the neighbors. It would mean so much to them and me if you came." Her words seemed simple enough, but their weight bore the full extent of her gratitude and admiration for Mr. McIntosh.

What is the appropriate course of action for Mr. McIntosh to take?



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### RECOMMENDED READING

- The Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE): 2nd edition, available at  
[https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE\\_Doc](https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE_Doc)
- Blog: Hutchings, T. (2019). Ethics and Educators, "Please, Just Tell Me What to Do!"  
<https://www.nasdtec.net/blogpost/1757877/Ethics-and-Educators?tag=&DGPCrSrt=&DGPCrPg=4>
- A Precarious Balance by Troy Hutchings, Tuesday, November 5, 2019; Updated: Wednesday, July 15, 2020  
[https://prod.mpxfiles.com/Uploads/Files/live\\_2/pdk/a5b7d87f-4a24-4b2b-af2a-7a6073e6bacf.pdf?v=638588029303670000](https://prod.mpxfiles.com/Uploads/Files/live_2/pdk/a5b7d87f-4a24-4b2b-af2a-7a6073e6bacf.pdf?v=638588029303670000)

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER DURING YOUR DEBATE OF THE DILEMMA

- What factors should Mr. McIntosh weigh in determining an appropriate course of action?
- Describe potential risks a teacher might encounter when attending a parent-sponsored party to celebrate the success of a student. What could possibly go wrong?
- How can teachers best prepare for the myriad unexpected situations that occur when working with students and their families?
- The education profession often presents situations in which dual relationships arise with students, family members, and community members. How does the educator-student relationship differ between classroom instruction and school activities that are outside the classroom?
- Describe the differences in relationships that educators may have within the confines of the school and activities that are outside the school.
- While considering the invitation, Mr. McIntosh runs into Stella and her mother at the grocery store, and Stella's mother exclaims, "We are so excited about the party. We can't wait!" How should Mr. McIntosh respond?
- How does an educator balance professional risk and professional fulfillment?

## Ethical Dilemma Competition

### Presentation and Q&A

Points Available	Accomplished 16 – 13	Commendable 12 – 9	Developing 8 – 5	Needs Improvement 4 – 1
Depth	The presentation demonstrates a profound and comprehensive understanding of the multiple factors and perspectives involved in the issue. It succeeds in uncovering root issues and proposing compelling, well-founded paths forward.	The presentation demonstrates an understanding of the issue and proposes well-founded solutions for some, but not all, of the issues at play in the scenario.	The presentation is on topic. Responses offer multiple good points but would benefit from more exploration, detail, or research. The solution may only partially address the scenario.	The presentation reflects a limited or flawed understanding of the issue in the scenario. The solutions offered are not plausible, appropriate, or justified.
Insight	The content of the highly focused presentation reflects a keen understanding and striking insight into all sides of the issue at play in the scenario.	The presentation offers helpful, well-detailed ideas that warrant further exploration beyond this session. The presentation may explore most, but not all, sides of the issues at play in the scenario.	The presentation offers basic, intuitive ideas that would have benefited from further unpacking in this session. This presentation may not fully explore all the issues or perspectives at play in the scenario.	The presentation may offer ideas that are flawed, illogical, or only partially developed, leaving the audience with a feeling of incompleteness. Few perspectives or issues are explored in the scenario.
Creativity	The presentation conveys its message in creative, inventive ways that expertly maximize engagement and impact for the audience.  The creative risks taken pay off impressively.	The presentation employs creative ideas to convey its message, although the stylistic or thematic choices do not entirely maximize impact for the audience.  Creative choices at 1 or 2 points in the presentation may distract from or limit the impact on the audience.	The presentation would benefit from more inventive or distinctive choices. Clichés may be present.	The presentation requires significant improvement to effectively engage the audience and deliver a meaningful impact related to its intended message.

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Points Available	Accomplished 16 – 13	Commendable 12 – 9	Developing 8 – 5	Needs Improvement 4 – 1
Presence	<p>The competitors' sustained eye contact, effective posture, and professional demeanor expertly complement the substance of the presentation, delivering the maximum possible impact to the listener.</p> <p>All team members, whether speaking or not, constantly reinforce the intended impact of the presentation.</p>	<p>The competitors mostly maintained eye contact, displayed positive posture, and maintained a pleasant demeanor, complementing the content of the presentation quite well.</p> <p>One or more of the presenters may appear to slip in and out of professional character at moments during the session.</p>	<p>The competitors' inconsistent eye contact, posture, and demeanor reflect a straightforward recital of the material.</p> <p>The speakers could do more to fully capitalize on the added impact possible with a focused, sustained presence.</p>	<p>The competitors display effort but eye contact, posture, and demeanor from multiple team members could benefit from more practice and coaching so that the speakers' presence consistently complements the content.</p>
Teamwork & Professionalism	<p>All aspects of the team's performance — including demeanor, dress, speech, attention to detail, and quality of materials — reflect an equitable effort among all the members and a consistently high level of professionalism.</p>	<p>Most aspects of the team's performance — including demeanor, attire, speech, attention to detail, and quality of materials — reflect an essentially equitable effort among all members and a commendable level of professionalism.</p>	<p>Aspects of the team's performance — including demeanor, attire, speech, attention to detail, and quality of materials — reflect a mixed level of professionalism. The responsibility load may appear imbalanced among team members.</p>	<p>The responsibility load appears highly imbalanced among team members. Multiple aspects of the competitors' performance — including demeanor, dress, speech, attention to detail, and quality of materials— need significant improvement to be considered professional caliber.</p>
Q&A Responses	<p>The competitors' responses in the Q&amp;A session demonstrate consistent thoughtfulness and professional-caliber insight, rooted in the deep experience of the material.</p> <p>The competitors display impressive, professional-level depth of knowledge and understanding, given their experience and research.</p>	<p>The competitors' responses in the Q&amp;A session demonstrate thoughtfulness and reflect successful attempts to address most of the material posed to them.</p> <p>The competitors demonstrate a substantial knowledge and understanding of the selected topic, based on their experience and research.</p>	<p>The competitors' responses in the Q&amp;A session reflect a broad spectrum of quality levels from answer to answer.</p>	<p>The competitors' responses in the Q&amp;A session may reflect evident effort and passion, but are inconsistent in terms of depth, accuracy, understanding, and insight offered in their responses.</p>

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### Presentation and Q&A Cont.

Points Available	Accomplished 16 – 13	Commendable 12 – 9	Developing 8 – 5	Needs Improvement 4 – 1
Persuasiveness	The presenters are entirely persuasive with clear and well-founded rationales for their position.	The presenters make a commendable case, but by leaving some areas unexplored or unexplained, the presentation is not entirely persuasive.	The presenters should look for deeper, more precise, and well-founded rationales for considering all aspects of the scenario and responding persuasively.	The presenters do not make a persuasive case for handling the situation professionally.
Overall Impact	<p>The presentation's professional-caliber and highly persuasive exploration of the issues, along with its clear explanation of decision points, delivers maximum impact and understanding to the audience.</p> <p>The presentation content &amp; delivery effectively complement each other to craft a highly impactful, professional-caliber experience.</p>	<p>The content and delivery work together to offer a commendable and persuasive presentation.</p> <p>With minor revisions and delivery tweaks, the project could be considered of professional caliber.</p>	The minimally persuasive presentation demonstrates effort. At multiple points, the content and delivery may not effectively complement each other or may reflect a partial lack of understanding or professional judgment. This may limit the presentation's impact.	<p>The unpersuasive presentation demonstrates inconsistent, unprofessional, or superficial aspects in content or delivery.</p> <p>The audience is frequently distracted from the intended impact by aspects of the content or delivery.</p>

### Length

Points Available	4	2	0
Length	The presentation is between 8 and 10 minutes.	The presentation is between 5 and 7 minutes or 11 and 12 minutes.	The presentation is shorter than 5 minutes or had to be stopped at 12 minutes.