

Engaging Ethics Initiative

AY 2017–2018

GEORGETOWN
UNIVERSITY

 ethics lab





Top: Stakeholder Mapping instructions for Mapping the Moral Landscape—one of several Ethics Lab activities designed to facilitate ethics infusions in courses across campus; *Middle:* Student posters from the first Core Pathways Integrative Ethics Day; *Bottom:* Environmental Chemistry students warm up their empathy muscles during an Ethics Lab module



INTRODUCTION

Ethical issues arise in courses across the curriculum beyond simply philosophy and theology classes. But it can be challenging to integrate ethical discussions into an already crowded syllabus. The Engaging Ethics Initiative is designed to supplement traditional ethics education by infusing ethical reflection into courses in fields like government, natural and social sciences, business, and technology, that generally may not incorporate explicit discussions of ethical issues through the use of creative exercises. The initiative brings together faculty in ethics with faculty in other disciplines across the university to co-design creative exercises that draw out the ethical issues embedded in their disciplines in ways that are fully integrated within the learning goals of the existing course.

Through the generosity of Chandler and Paul Tagliabue (C'62), Ethics Lab and the Georgetown Learning Initiative partnered to launch the Engaging Ethics Initiative in 2017. This program provides incentives and support for faculty across Georgetown to develop inventive ways of highlighting ethical issues in their classes. The program supports high-impact ethics education at Georgetown by introducing curricular innovation that immediately and concretely impacts student learning.

STRUCTURE

The program is built in two parts: 1) Faculty Infusion Partners and 2) Core Pathways.

The Faculty Infusion program is designed to provide interested faculty with the opportunity to work with Ethics Lab to design a customized ethics module that integrates with the topics in their syllabus. Modules range from short, one-day exercises to more extended activities. Working with the faculty member, activities are designed to draw out the ethical issues embedded in the course and help facilitate ethical reflection about the material.

The Core Pathways segment brings ethical reflection and exercises into Georgetown's innovative Core Pathways program. This program provides interested students with a different way of satisfying core curriculum requirements: participating in a series of shorter courses, from different disciplines, all integrated on a common theme. The current Core Pathways theme is climate change.



Top: Students share their environmental ethics posters at the fall Engaging Ethics Initiative Day.
Bottom: MSFS students map the moral landscape of the conflict in South Sudan.

“I really enjoyed stepping into the shoes of different individuals & thinking about [the case study] from different perspectives than my own. I think it gave me a better depth of understanding on the issue.”

— Graduate Student, School of Public Policy

COURSES PARTICIPATING IN THE ENGAGING ETHICS INITIATIVE, AY 2017-18

Animals & the Environment
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Climate Change & Global Justice
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Climate, Water, and People — Science, Technology and International Affairs Program (School of Foreign Service)

Dark Green Religion
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Data Ethics
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Environmental Chemistry
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Ethics and Decision-Making
(Graduate School of Foreign Service)

Ethics and Values in Public Policy
(School of Public Policy)

Ethics in the Digital Era
(School of Business)

Gender, Health and Development
(Global Health interdisciplinary program)

Genres of the Anthropocene
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Global Warming: Causes, Consequences, & Controversy (College of Arts and Sciences)

Justice & Peace Studies — Senior Seminar
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Literature & Environmental Crisis
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Plants, People, & Climate
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Problems of Work and Life
(School of Business)

Sexual Politics in the Arab World
(Women’s and Gender Studies Department)

Social Action Project — Master of Arts in International Business (School of Business)

Social Media and Democracy
(College of Arts and Sciences)

The Ethics of Climate Change
(College of Arts and Sciences)

The Human Place in the Cosmos
(College of Arts and Sciences)

The Little Ice Age: Volcanoes & Crisis in the Premodern World (College of Arts and Sciences)

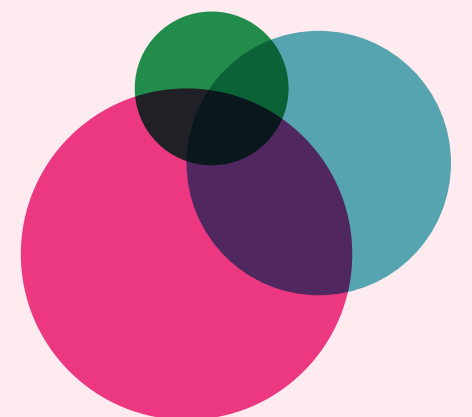
The Physics of Climate Change
(College of Arts and Sciences)

Theology of the Environment
(College of Arts and Sciences)

24 courses



344 students



Selection of Tools

EMPATHY MAPPING

We use empathy mapping to help students put themselves in someone else's shoes, to understand a situation from that person's point of view rather than simply feeling sympathy for their situation.

The maps are divided into five categories: thinking, seeing, saying, feeling, and hearing. The exercise can be used individually or in a group. We're especially interested in recognizing possible contradictions—why might someone say something out loud that differs from what they feel or think? Did the group participants pull out conflicting reactions? How might the subject describe their sense of moral motivation in their own words?



STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The stakeholder analysis worksheet takes a more analytical approach to observing a person's motivations and moral scope of concern. Often assigned as homework, this activity supports students' research and reflection with a human-centered mindset. It prompts students to discern a stakeholder's concerns and motivations from a narrative, typically drawing from a book, article, or interview. The worksheet can be tailored to specific topical areas to reinforce salient points of moral interest.

A typical worksheet might ask:

- Who do I see as my community?
- The first thing I think in the morning is, “..."
- Who has a stake in my decision making?
- My long-term goals and aspirations are...

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS: FAST FASHION - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Name: _____ Age: _____ Occupation: _____

What motivates me?

sense of duty	sense of compassion
sense of logic	sense of virtue

If a reporter asked me about the environmental impacts of fast fashion, I would say: _____

My priorities today: _____

My biggest obstacles & frustrations are: _____

My primary concerns when making decisions include:

- Self
- Family
- Community
- Country
- Global Community

SHOON - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

What motivates me?

sense of duty	sense of compassion
sense of logic	sense of virtue

If a reporter asked me about the environmental impacts of fast fashion, I would say: _____

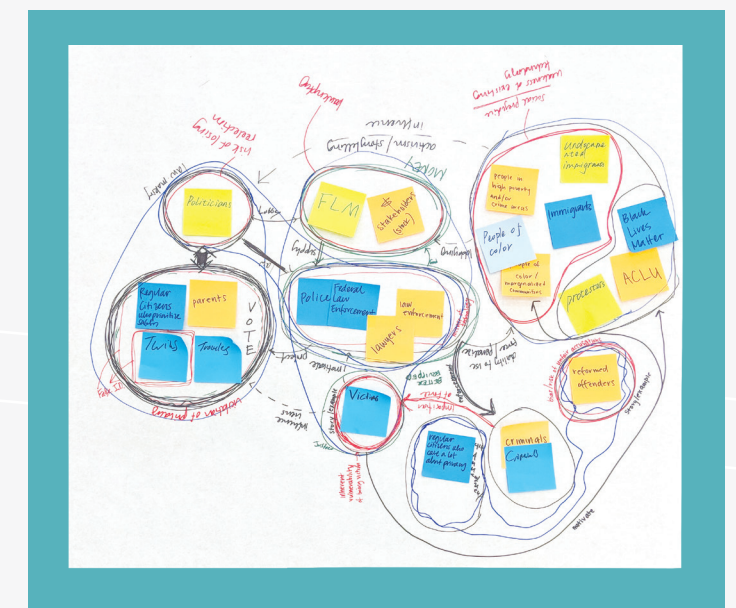
My primary concerns when making decisions include:

- Self
- Family
- Community
- Country
- Global Community

MAPPING THE MORAL LANDSCAPE

The Ethics Lab version of “stakeholder mapping” challenges students to contextualize and assess problem situations using value-based terms beyond the typical range of cost—benefit metrics.

Mapping the moral landscape helps students visualize relationships, so they can identify potential points of collaboration for effecting change.



Core Pathways

OVERVIEW

The Core Pathways Initiative is a self-selecting option for students who want to follow a thematic pathway in their navigation of Core Curriculum requirements. Students enroll in a series of four modules (7-week course units of 1.5 credits each), offered in six different disciplines, each with a different lens on wicked issues which we define as being complex enough in nature to require multiple disciplines to inform discussion around them. The focus for AY2017–2018 was climate change.

Students can take up to four distinct modules in a single year. When students have taken two modules in the same discipline they will have satisfied a core requirement. Students may combine two modules from different disciplines as a 3-credit interdisciplinary elective.

In addition to the course modules, students will be part of a larger intellectual learning community, with a set of opportunities to make connections across disciplines. This includes participating in pathway integrative days and having access to a “Virtual Commons”, a robust set of resources providing access to a range of disciplinary lenses on core concepts germane to the pathway.

The Core Pathways Initiative strives to be purposeful, interdisciplinary and self-directed.

“It helped me view climate change from many different perspectives—which is hard to do. Everyone sees the world differently and that is really important to realize.”

— UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT, COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Right: A selection of students’ environmental ethics posters from the fall Engaging Ethics Initiative Day



ETHICS LAB X CORE PATHWAYS

Over the course of the semester, students in a core pathway come together on multiple occasions to engage with simulations, workshops, and design sessions. These days bring the different perspectives students glean from the varying disciplines they are studying into dialogue around the central theme. These generative and cross cutting days are called integrative days. Over the course of our first year we ran several integrative days covering a wide variety of issues. Below are two days run by the Ethics Lab in our inaugural year:

1. AN APPEAL TO MORAL CLAIMS ON BEHALF OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Through a series of interactive design exercises, the first integrative day unpacked the moral importance of individual and aggregate contributions to climate change, and introduced an ethical vocabulary for analyzing and justifying them.

2. INTERGENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Through a series of empathy mapping exercises, the third integrative day unpacked the importance of intergenerational responsibility. The day compelled students to think about how Climate Change impacts our world, and to consider how our actions will impact the world 250 years from now.

Infusing Ethics

Ethics Lab’s Faculty Infusion program is open to all Georgetown faculty through application. Faculty partners are selected based on disciplinary diversity, institutional impact, exportability, and potential for positive impact on the course and student learning outcomes. The process for accepted applicants begins with a series of individual brainstorming meetings between faculty partners and Ethics Lab’s team of ethicists and designers. Together, they locate natural points of ethical interest within the existing curriculum, co-designing activities that delve deeper into those issues—all while building on students’ subject-specific knowledge-base). Starting with Ethics Lab’s library of learning tools (including Empathy Mapping, Stakeholder Analysis, and Mapping the Moral Landscape), the team collectively adapts the structure and content to address the ethical issues at stake. Ethics Lab then assists the faculty in facilitating the introduction of each new activity, modeling the process and discussion guidance as needed. The aim with each Faculty partner is to develop their ability to implement Ethics Lab’s resources and methods independently, empowering them to integrate creative ethics pedagogy in any of their future classes. At the conclusion of their courses, and once impact assessments are completed, participating faculty join the wider Ethics Lab community of educators for continued support, new tool offerings, and ethics pedagogy mentorship.



Left: Professor Sarah Stoll (Environmental Chemistry) and Ethics Lab Senior Ethicist Elizabeth Edenberg lead a class discussion following the first Engaging Ethics Initiative workshop, where students practiced identifying and distinguishing between ethical, legal, scientific, and personal concerns.

2017–2018 FACULTY COHORT

Mark Giordano

Director, Science, Technology, and International Affairs; Cinco Hermanos Chair in Environmental and International Affairs; Associate Professor of Environment and Energy, School of Foreign Service

Alayne Adams

Associate Professor, Department of International Health

Sarah Stoll

Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry

Fatemeh Hosseini

Adjunct Faculty, Women's and Gender Studies

Nicole Bibbins Sedaca

Professor of the Practice of International Affairs; Co-Concentration Chair, International Politics & Security, Master of Science in Foreign Service

Randall Amster

Program Director & Teaching Professor; Co-Director, Environmental Studies; Co-Director, Justice & Peace

Mark Rom

Associate Professor, School of Public Policy

FEATURED FACULTY

“I am already thinking about how I can integrate a similar exercise into my fall class.”

— PROFESSOR BIBBINS SEDACA, ETHICS & DECISION-MAKING



Professor Bibbins Sedaca leads a stakeholder mapping workshop for the MSFS Global Politics & Security students following a first run of the workshop by the Ethics Lab team.

Professor Nicole Bibbins Sedaca

Nicole Bibbins Sedaca is the Chair for the Global Politics and Security Concentration in Georgetown University’s Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) program and is a Professor in the Practice of International Affairs in MSFS. She worked with the Ethics Lab team to enhance the curriculum of Ethics & Decision-Making, a required course for all students of the MSFS Global Politics & Security concentration. Using the recent conflict in South Sudan as a living case study, we developed a workshop consisting of empathy mapping, stakeholder mapping, and rapid policy prototyping. While introducing the activities to her students, Prof. Bibbins Sedaca advocated for the importance of both creativity and empathy to the field of international relations, citing her own experience working for the U.S. Department of State. As she explained, the ability to understand the values and motivations of those with whom you disagree is invaluable to making progress on security issues.

On the Horizon

CORE PATHWAYS 2.0

For the second year of the Engaging Ethics Initiative, Ethics Lab and the Georgetown Learning Initiative are iterating its approach. Core Pathway faculty will be working in the fall semester to build new assignments and experiences to increase students' engagement with all of the disciplines contributing to the Pathway. In the spring semester, tools and exercises designed to surface ethics at those new intersectional points will be provided.

INFUSING ETHICS

Kobbi Nissim

McDevitt Chair in Computer Science; Professor, Department of Computer Science; Affiliate Professor, Georgetown Law

The team has recruited the 2017 Godel Prize winner, Professor Kobbi Nissim, to work with the team over the next two years to develop ways of integrating ethics into his graduate level Data Privacy course. We will start with several exercises that merge ethics with computer science and work toward merging creative ethics exercises with the final project for that course.

David Lipscomb

Director, Writing Center; Assistant Teaching Professor, Department of English

Professor Lipscomb's writing class presents a unique opportunity for students to immediately apply Ethics Lab methodology to their work—the students are selected through a competitive application process and join the Writing Center's community of tutors following successful completion of the course.

Nicole Bibbins Sedaca

Professor of the Practice of International Affairs; Co-Concentration Chair, International Politics & Security, Master of Science in Foreign Service

Professor Bibbins Sedaca is looking forward to collaborating with the Lab a second time, building on our previous engagement in order to expand the impact across MSFS. This second round will be tailored for a new “gateway” course required of all MSFS students who are studying foreign policy and national security.

