

Teaching Business Ethics Online: Perspectives on Course Design, Delivery, Student Engagement, and Assessment

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Abstract The number of online courses in business schools is growing dramatically, but little has been published about teaching business ethics courses online. This article addresses key pedagogical design, delivery, student engagement, and assessment issues that should be considered when creating a high-quality, asynchronous online business ethics course for either undergraduate or graduate business student populations. Best practices are discussed within an integrative case study approach based on the experiences of a director of online faculty development and two accomplished online business ethics instructors, one teaching at a small college and the other at a research-oriented university—their successes, learning opportunities, and recommendations.

Keywords Teaching · Online education · Business ethics courses · E-learning · Distance education · Case study · Assessment

Introduction

There has been tremendous growth in the number of courses and programs offered online in post-secondary education during the past decade, and the trend is accelerating. Over 6.7 million students took one or more online courses in the fall semester of 2011 (Allen and Seaman 2013). This was an increase of 572,000 students over the previous year, a 9.3 % growth rate, which is well above the 2 % growth rate in the post-secondary student population overall. At the University of Central Florida, which has about 60,000 students, online education accounted for 94 % of its enrollment growth in 2011 and 100 % in 2012 (Hartman 2013).

With the burgeoning trend toward online post-secondary education, there is an abundance of information available about teaching online in general and some information on how to transform traditional face-to-face (F2F) classroom business courses—particularly those in organizational behavior, strategic management, human resources, operations management, international management, and accounting—to an online delivery form (Arbaugh et al. 2010; Dunbar 2004). Yet, little experiential information has been published about teaching *business ethics* online. In their extensive review of the business and management literature, Arbaugh et al. (2010) could identify only two articles specifically about teaching business ethics *online* and both were about teaching online to an international group of students located on various continents (Painter-Morland et al. 2003; Walker and Jeurissen 2003). We have located two other articles that mention teaching business ethics online. One is about a hybrid or blended (classroom and online instruction) training course for information technology consultants (French 2006) and the other mentions including a service-learning component in online business ethics courses (Kenworthy-U'Ren 2008). This

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despite more than 200 articles about teaching business ethics published in *Journal of Business Ethics* alone since 1999.

Teaching business ethics online poses some major challenges. In general, there is a substantial learning curve for effectively teaching and developing a learning community for any online course (Berger 1999; Brower 2003), and significant faculty resistance to teaching online (Allen and Seaman 2013). Layered on top of this, business ethics courses are typically unique in many business school curriculums because they integrate liberal arts material, such as ethical decision making, in course content.

This article addresses the paucity of information about teaching business ethics online by summarizing best practices for teaching online and using an integrative case narrative approach describing experiences applying these best practices in our online business ethics courses. Collins teaches at a small college and Weber teaches at a research-oriented university. We have been teaching business ethics for more than 25 years, and online for the past several years. Zambrano has been teaching and mentoring online faculty for the past 7 years and is a Director of Online Faculty Development. Our intent is to aid our colleagues venturing into, or already teaching, online business ethics courses. Topics explored in this article, all central to teaching online, include course design templates, learning objectives, module course content, consistency, and diversity of course design, links, faculty time issues, student time issues, rolling out the course, creating a sense of community, faculty presence, group projects, managing conflict, mid-term evaluations, assessing posts, and cheating.

Arbaugh et al. (2010) note that knowledge generated by online teaching case studies is very useful to guide future empirical studies that compare and contrast control groups with experimental groups or examine moderating factors and outcome predictors. We hope that information contained in this article will help to initiate research regarding the special challenges of teaching business ethics online. We direct researchers to Arbaugh et al. (2010) for some general research opportunities that can be adapted to teaching business ethics online.

Evolution of Online Education

The growth in online education programs is attributed to technological advancements that make a college education more accessible and convenient for students unable to take courses on a brick-and-mortar campus (Allen and Seaman 2013). The first college-level distance education program was offered by the University of Chicago in 1892 as part of its extension outreach. Distance education courses met the needs of home-based women, laborers, managers, and migratory military personnel unable to access traditional

colleges due to geography, time, job, and family constraints (Moore 2003). The technology used to convey this information has evolved from the mail system, to radio, television, and now computers (Matthews 1999).

Beginning in 1989, the for-profit University of Phoenix began offering online degree programs that met the needs of many working professionals. This new revenue stream became very appealing to traditional nonprofit universities, particularly those with oversubscribed classroom courses and classroom space shortages. By the mid-1990s, Course Management System providers, such as Lotus Learning Space and Web CT, greatly enhanced online teaching technology. Courses could now be provided via computers either in a *synchronous* mode, where everyone is available *at the same time* to receive and react to the educational information, or through an *asynchronous* mode, where everyone acquires and addresses the material *at different times*. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are now offered by elite universities (Lewin 2012). Coursera began offering MOOC courses in Spring 2012, and by October 2013 more than 5 million students had enrolled in its 452 courses—with a 2 million enrollment increase between April and October 2013 alone—some of which count for college credit (Coursera 2013; Fain 2012).

Faculty Reactions and Student Learning Outcomes

Faculty reactions to teaching online courses have been mixed (Allen and Seaman 2013; Means et al. 2010; Redpath 2012). Based on data from administrators at 2,820 colleges and universities collected during Fall 2012, only 38.4 % of chief academic officers at institutions with online programs believed their faculty accepted the value and legitimacy of online courses (Allen and Seaman 2013, p. 40).

What are faculty objections to teaching online? The most often cited concerns include lower student learning outcomes, more time and effort required for online teaching, need to learn new technological skills, inadequate technological support and reliability, and the need to develop new teaching competencies for engaging students in an online format (Berge 1998; Betts 1998; Dooley and Murphrey 2000; O'Quinn and Corry 2002; Varvel 2007). Scholars have also highlighted several faculty biases against online teaching, such as fear of eliminating faculty positions, the instructor no longer the center of attention in a public setting, and less personal interaction with students (Dunbar 2004; Redpath 2012).

Two concerns noted above have been dispelled. Researchers report that high quality online courses: (1) achieve comparable learning outcomes when compared to F2F courses (Arbaugh et al. 2010; Friday et al. 2006; Means et al. 2010) and (2) entail high levels of student/

faculty interactions. Redpath (2012) notes that faculty need to be educated about the abundant research already available that demonstrates online learning is as effective as F2F learning. Similar to F2F, learning outcome results are moderated by a student's motivation to learn, learning goal orientation, and perceived barriers and enablers to learning (Klein et al. 2006). Better learning outcomes are also stronger in courses with a high faculty teaching presence and social presence, and peer collaboration, as opposed to a student learning independently by watching videos or reading materials (Arbaugh and Benbunan-Fich 2006; Arbaugh et al. 2010; Daspit and D'Souza 2012). This evidence is rather consistent at both the undergraduate and graduate student levels (Daymont and Blau 2008; Watters and Robertson 2009).

Why do students who take a well-designed and well-taught online course learn just as much, if not more, than students in a F2F learning environment? As summarized in Exhibit 1, the primary reasons include benefits associated with accessing multiple student learning styles, the nature of written communications and posts, and greater faculty understanding of student knowledge (Comer and Lenaghan 2013; Means et al. 2010; Smith 2008; Vonderwell et al. 2007). Instructors report that students in an asynchronous online environment, compared to a classroom environment, do not have to compete for air time, have more time to reflect on an instructor's complex questions and classmate comments before answering, can provide multiple responses, are more revealing online, and are exposed to a greater diversity of opinions (Comer and Lenaghan 2013). These attributes are particularly beneficial to introverts and international students whose English reading and writing abilities often exceed their spoken abilities. Many of these benefits are particularly relevant to teaching business ethics, where sensitive issues are often raised. The static nature of displaying course content in an online format also enhances faculty opportunities to continuously improve both course design and instruction (Smith 2008).

Achieving excellent learning outcomes for online education entail applying the best methods for teaching F2F to the online class (Chickering and Ehrmann 1996) and benchmarking to 24 factors highlighted by the Institute for Higher Education Policy in the areas of institutional support, course development, course structure, teaching, student support, faculty support, and assessment (Phipps and Merisotis 2000).

Best Practices Teaching Business Ethics F2F

Our adoption of best practices for online education is predicated on best practices for teaching business ethics in general. A review of articles appearing in the *Journal of*

Exhibit 1 Reasons for beneficial online learning outcomes

Factor	Explanations for enhanced online learning outcomes
Multiple student learning styles	Can learn through reading, listening to audio, and watching video
	Can review and revisit learning materials at own pace
	More reflection time is available for discussion responses which benefits introverted learners
Written communications and posts	Links are provided to a variety of resources that may interest them
	Can more thoughtfully edit comments and insert in-depth analysis with links than speaking extemporaneously in class
	Less pressure to respond instantaneously to complex and personal questions
	Posting anonymity is less threatening than speaking out in class
	More difficult to hide during discussions
	More personally revealing comments in online communications than in classroom
	Some physical diversity factors that may be an obstacle in classroom interactions (race, ethnicity, physique) are invisible online
	Greater diversity of knowledge, experiences, and perspectives due to classmates from more diverse geographical locations and backgrounds
	Greater opportunity to learn from peers by reading and responding to their posts
	Can revisit comments posted by other students
Faculty understanding and feedback	Don't have to compete for classroom airtime
	Greater awareness of what all students think
	More reliable data for assessing student understanding and progress
	Easier to create more individualized instruction
	Can maintain stored video explanations of complex issues that students can replay and review at their own pace
	Easier to directly provide students with additional Internet resources
Faculty understanding and feedback	Can more thoroughly develop student feedback comments for future course iterations

Business Ethics from 1999 to 2013 reveals more than 200 publications that address issues associated with teaching business ethics. The information and suggestions presented in these articles provide an excellent window into the wide range of approaches, techniques, and materials for teaching business ethics.

There are a plethora of approaches advocated by scholars on how to best teach business ethics. The course can have a broad macro-systems focus (Furman 1990), micro-focus (Sims and Felton 2006), or a blending of a business's economic incentives and objectives with ethical motivations (Kulshrestha 2005). Course content can be derived from philosophy, sociology, political science, psychology, and organization behavior (Brady and Hart 2007). Some instructors emphasize laws and regulations, while others emphasize ethical theories (Brady 1999; Bruton 2004), Catholic social justice (Costa and Ramus 2012), religion and spirituality (Epstein 2002; Pava 2007) and moral awareness, reasoning, and judgment skills (Awasthi 2008; Ritter 2006). Course design can be influenced by educational psychology and learning theory (Weber 2007), and integrate coping-modeling and problem-solving techniques (Simola 2010).

One of the most common encouragements in the literature underscores the importance of the case method (Bridgman 2010; Maclagan 2003) for accentuating moral conflicts (Brinkmann and Ims 2004), including live cases (McWilliams and Nahavandi 2006) and cases developed by the students themselves (Laditka and Houck 2006). Others believe that integrating the business ethics class experience with students' work and personal experiences results in a more meaningful educational experience (Hartog and Frame 2004). Jurkiewicz et al. (2004) instruct their students to draft a fact-filled ethical complaint letter to an organization that has behaved in an unethical manner toward them as a pedagogical approach to better understand real world ethical problems.

Alternatively, some scholars have turned to the popular media and classic literature for instructional materials. Gerde and Foster (2008) use comic books and Shaw (2004) uses Hollywood films. Brinkmann (2009) introduces his students to Ibsen's *A Doll House*, which has a scene that is remarkably similar to the classic Kohlbergian Heinz moral dilemma. Michaelson (2005) adopts classic plays and novels into the classroom.

Students can critically address issues by engaging in the classic Prisoner's Dilemma (Gibson 2003; James and Cohen 2004), crafting honor codes (Kidwell 2001), using the Socratic dialog method to challenge student assumptions (Morrell 2004), and relying on moral imagination (Gold 2010).

These multiple classroom approaches and techniques can be incorporated into teaching business ethics online. The remainder of this article uses an integrative case study narrative approach to discuss the delivery of teaching business ethics online for an asynchronous business ethics course. Each subsequent section integrates the authors' approaches and experiences at their respective college and university.

Course Design Templates

Many colleges and universities use a course design template for online courses because it provides students a standardized web navigation experience. This enables students to focus on learning rather than figuring out how to navigate each new course site, making it easier to transition from one course to another. Course design templates should be based on best instructional practices and supported by high quality faculty development (Merrill 2002).

Students should be required to complete an orientation to online learning as a prerequisite for enrolling in an online course, followed by a course navigation skills quiz (Griffin and Lockwood 2010). Such an orientation teaches students how to utilize the course technology, navigate the course website, and meet course expectations. The latter is particularly important because many students who enroll in an online course for the first time mistakenly believe they will be engaging in a self-directed correspondence course where interaction occurs only between instructor and student. Collaborative, community-oriented online courses require fast-paced and frequent engagement on the part of students, which means understanding how to efficiently access discussion threads and chat rooms.

Our institutions both use Blackboard for their online courses and an instructional design template developed in house. The course website opens with an announcement page and a series of tabs on the left side of the page that include links to the syllabus, course content, assignments, modules, discussions, email, grade center, and answers to frequently asked technology questions. Each "module" typically contains additional links to learning objectives, reading assignments, post responses, homework assignments, and other relevant resources. The "discussions" tab provides a series of weekly forums for students to post responses to the questions and exercises assigned by the instructor.

Learning Objectives

Course design should flow from course learning objectives. Benjamin Bloom provides a hierarchical taxonomy of learning objectives from knowledge accumulation to application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom et al. 1956). A main goal of the taxonomy is to help educators develop more holistic practices that consciously lead students to use increasingly challenging levels of thinking as they learn to analyze and evolve the knowledge and perspectives in their field of study (Orlich et al. 2009).

Our institutions emphasize different learning objectives. Weber's institution provides nine course learning objectives specifically for the teaching of business ethics.

Several institutional course objectives focus on enhancing the cognitive skills of the student, such as recognizing ethical issues, inserting the student as the decision-maker confronted with an ethical situation, and resolving dilemmas based upon students' personal value systems and reasoning criteria. Weber, however, quickly discovered that purely conceptual decision-making was unsatisfactorily incomplete for the students and did not meet the school and instructor's objectives of providing a course that could result in real change in the students' workplace and enhance the world in which we live and work. Therefore, the focus for the ethical decision-making course was expanded to "ethical decision-making in an organizational context."

The focus for the second half of the course moves to an organizational level of analysis because the student typically operates within an organizational environment and can be limited or empowered by the organizational mechanisms absent or in place to promote ethical performance. Thus, both a micro (individual) and macro (organizational) perspective are emphasized during the business ethics course.

Collins and Zambrano's institution emphasizes grounding teaching practices in the school's core values and adopting a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, where students create meaning of the course content by reflecting on their own experiences (Jonassen et al. 1995; Rovai 2004). In a constructivist classroom, students are encouraged to integrate new business ethics knowledge and skill development into relevant real-world activities and teach others new content as they learn it, either within or beyond the classroom community (Merrill 2002), and develop confidence to become engaged citizens in a democratic society beyond their workplaces (Palmer 2011). In order for these collaborative efforts to be effective, a sense of trust and inclusion should be present in the course so students feel that their voices are meaningful to the learning of the larger group. Although learning is organized around the student's experiential reflections, the instructor still plays an active role by providing content knowledge, provoking thought, and facilitating discussions (Arbaugh and Benbunan-Fich 2006).

Collins develops assignments that are flexible enough for each learner to interpret the content "reality" somewhat differently and then engage in a collaborative search for truths that can be applied to their lives beyond the classroom. Constructivist questions to guide learning objectives include: How can students deepen the dispositions embodied in the college's core values as employees? Is my facilitation of course interactive learning helping to make business ethics relevant to students' personal and/or professional growth needs? Am I encouraging students to think about their own thinking? Based on answers to these

questions, Collins' course focuses on the following four student learning outcomes: (1) developing a deeper understanding of personal ethical beliefs and ethical dilemmas at work, (2) using a systematic ethics decision-making framework to arrive at moral conclusions, (3) implementing best practices for enhancing an organization's ethical performance, and (4) benchmarking and assessing an organization's ethical performance.

Module Course Content

Module course content also should flow from course learning objectives. Similar to designing F2F courses, substantial time is required to develop the appropriate course content. For online courses, additional time is needed to become comfortable with online technology for creating the class structure and learning the class management system. The course content also needs to be reviewed in terms of accessibility for students with sight and hearing disabilities.

Collins' course consists of eight online modules that balance student self-reflections and dialogs with the implementation of best operational practices for enhancing organizational ethics (see Exhibit 2). Self-reflections are integrated through weekly journal entries, reflective readings and videos, reaction to real-life ethical narratives presented by students, constructive criticisms of a classmate's diverse perspective, and two ethical sharing partner experiences. The specifics of these activities are discussed later in this article.

The intent of the best operational practices approach is to teach students how to design organizations to enhance ethical performance. The "how-to" topics include screening job candidates for ethics, managing ethics codes, conducting ethics and diversity training workshops, creating an ethical reporting system, integrating ethics into work goals and performance appraisals, engaging and empowering employees, developing an Environmental Management system plan, and aligning community outreach with the organization's mission and assets. The final exam project is a systematic assessment of the student's current or former employer using an operations "best practices in business ethics" benchmarking tool (available upon request). Undergraduates can assess a part-time, summer, or internship employer. Each module builds into the final exam so course material is highly integrated.

Weber integrates his philosophical training with his business management education, resulting in an applied business ethics approach that often works well for graduate online business ethics education, where most of the students are employed fulltime. When teaching undergraduates, the focus is a blending of philosophical foundation and practical application to the undergraduates' current life of coursework, extracurricular activities, and exploring the business world through internships and entry-level employment.

Exhibit 2 Collins course content

Module	Content	Engagement and assignments		
1	Human nature	Dialog: Enron case		
	Unethical behaviors at work	Dialog: Ethics of capitalism		
2	Capitalism			
	Hiring ethical people	Dialog: Enron case		
	Codes of ethics and conduct	Dialog: Illegal immigrants Dialog: Personal ethical dilemmas Best practices assessment		
3	Ethical decision-making framework	Dialog: Enron case		
	Ethics training	Dialog: Unions Dialog: Personal ethical dilemmas Dialog: Ethical dilemma sharing partners Best practices assessment		
	4	Employee diversity	Dialog: Enron case	
		Ethics reporting systems	Dialog: Affirmative action Dialog: Personal ethical dilemmas Best practices assessment	
5	Group case studies	Dialog: Case analysis Dialog: Group presentation Dialog: Other groups' analyses		
		6	Ethical leadership	Dialog: Enron case
			Work goals and appraisals	Dialog: Aaron Feuerstein at Malden Mills Dialog: Personal ethical dilemmas Best practices assessment
7	Empowerment and engagement	Dialog: Enron case		
	Environmental management	Dialog: Eco-practices Dialog: Personal ethical dilemmas Dialog: Ethical dilemma sharing partners Best practices assessment		
		8	Community outreach	Dialog: Enron case Dialog: Volunteerism and philanthropy Final—Best practices assessment <i>The Christmas List</i> essay

Weber offers three “levels of learning” to achieve the general and specific objectives relevant to the business ethics course.

1. *Basic foundation and knowledge—What do you know?* Since very few business students are well versed in the business ethics literature and ethical decision-making models, supplementary readings and a required textbook facilitate a student’s procurement of a broad-based awareness of the field and supply the student with a common language for subsequent learning in the course.

2. *Case study analysis, discussion, and active learning exercises—What do you understand?* Drawing upon the instructor’s experiences and those of his students, case studies provide a “window of opportunity” for students to apply theoretical concepts embodied in ethical decision frameworks to real world events. Beyond in-class discussions, students’ participation in active-learning exercises provides them with an understanding and application of an ethical decision-making framework that is assessed through individually written case analyses.

3. *Personal contribution to others and your career—What can you contribute?* The final progression from a general, conceptual foundation of information (what do you know?) to an applied form of education (what can you contribute?) is achieved through a personal contribution to others (both in class and possibly at work or in other classes). This personal contribution enables students to view a workplace or societal issue with a new ethical perspective and provide a co-worker or classmate with a new ethical resolution to a knotty ethical dilemma.

This overarching structure is unfolded into the series of class sessions (or modules) outlined in Exhibit 3. Our syllabi are available upon request.

Exhibit 3 Weber Course Content

Week	Content
1	Course overview; explanation of course assignments; introduction of graduate business school’s Code of Ethics
2	Defining ethics; “State of Ethics” at work; why be ethical?
3	Ethical decision framework; awareness and recognition of ethical principles
4	Ethical decision-making framework: moral reasoning
5	Application of moral reasoning and moral intensity
6	Introduction of classic ethics theories; application of ethics theories
7	Role of government in business ethics; Case Analysis I due
8	Ethics strategies, leadership and power
9	Ethical work climates/culture; formal ethics policies
10	Ethics officers; employee training
11	Monitoring programs and rewards and punishments
12	Whistleblowing and groups
13	Global issues: laws and bribery
14	Course wrap-up and reflection; Case Analysis II due

Consistency and Diversity of Course Design

For many students, their first experiences with online learning can feel overwhelming due to the unfamiliar terrain of the online learning environment. Professors need to decide how much sameness and diversity should occur within a weekly module and between modules. Sameness takes advantage of the student's learning curve in course design, yet can lead to monotony.

Most learning management systems now include a range of different tools that can be used to assign a diversity of learning activities. Many online courses make use of private instructor–student reflection journals and blogs, live webinar technology, wikis for students to teach other students new content (Daspit and D'Souza 2012), online discussion forums (Comer and Lenaghan 2013), and other tools. The use of multiple tools can stimulate student engagement and collaboration and prevent the course from feeling like a hyperlinked correspondence course (Conrad and Donaldson 2004).

Too much diversity in a single course, however, may create a frustrating technological learning curve that interferes with content learning. A helpful guiding question when deciding whether to introduce a new learning tool is: Does this technology add value to the learning experience without imposing an overly burdensome additional learning curve? As a general rule, do not introduce more than one new collaborative tool per week. Include links to brief screencast and screenshot tutorials for an assignment requiring a new learning technology.

Weber seeks a rhythm to the business ethics course where students are not doing the same thing or using the same pedagogy in any sequential weeks. One week there may be an all-class discussion on an emerging ethical issue. The following week role-playing assignments are given to characters or groups in a case study or work may be assigned to individual students. Case studies are intermingled with current research on emerging topics week-to-week to keep the approach fresh. Students comment at the end of the semester: “We never knew what to expect” and “Each week was something different.”

In terms of assignments, Weber's course begins with the basic elements of knowing and comprehending ethics theories, stages of moral development, and elements of moral intensity. The course then moves to a level of application through analysis and culminates with students providing higher-order thinking.

We both provide a very consistent calendar for student deadlines. Weber has found that his students respond well to this type of structure. This may be due to the fact that a sizeable percentage of his students are currently serving in the military and have this sort of rhythm in their personal lives, which translates well into their academic lives as online students.

Collins generally provides diversity within a week yet sameness among most of the weekly modules. For seven of the eight modules (all but Module 5) students do self-reflections, ethical decision-making, classmate responses, and organizational assessments. This consistency among weekly modules takes advantage of the student learning curve, yet provides diversity within a weekly module where what students do at the beginning of a week differs from tasks at the end of the week.

For instance, by Tuesday evening students post responses to an Enron ethical dilemma and a current issue (such as the ethics of affirmative action) they learn about through readings, audios, viewing videos, and searching Internet links. By Thursday evening students post a discussion thread response to someone whom they disagree. By Saturday evening students submit homework, which includes an assessment of how well their organization performs according to the best operational business ethics benchmark items learned that week. Module 5, explained in greater detail in the group project section of this article, offers a sudden format change, where students work individually and then on teams to analyze a case study and present the case on a wiki for other students to assess. This provides students an opportunity to learn how to conduct a virtual meeting and work on a group project in cyberspace.

Links

One of the benefits of online education is that students can apply different learning styles for understanding course material. Course content can be learned by reading material out of a book or through links to websites, audios, and videos. Collins offers audio and video links for each module, along with links to textbook PowerPoints and other materials. Most modules contain the following five links:

- A podcast chapter summary that can be downloaded to an MP3 player, with the chapter broken down into several 7–10 min lecturettes.
- A 10–20-min video describing the best operational practice benchmarks in a chapter.
- A video related to the week's Enron case study assignment.
- A video related to the week's topic assignment.
- A word document that provides additional links to other relevant websites and videos, such as Best Places to Work exemplars and TEDTalks.

Weber provides a combination of PowerPoint slides with assigned provocative questions or exercises to introduce basic information and assigned course readings. The answer to the provocative question is typically “it depends,” and the educational challenge for the students is to explain: “depends on what?”

As the students taking the business ethics online course have increasingly grown up using social media and other forms of technology, Weber uses YouTube videos and other forms of media more often. These links have proven to be as effective as older, pre-Internet video techniques. Yet, there are some “classic” business ethics materials that continue to retain a strong educational value for students, such as the “old” Business Enterprise Trust exemplar organizations videos and the Arthur Andersen ethical dilemma videos (but avoid emphasizing Andersen as the source given the company’s demise during the Enron scandal). Weber has also learned that providing information for student learning is not completely his responsibility. He challenges students to locate information—often in the form of videos, blogs, or other forms of modern communication—and share these with other students in the class.

Faculty Time Issues

Time, for both the professor and student, is a major factor to consider in designing an online course. A prominent complaint among online teachers is the inordinate amount of time it can take to teach online because some students expect 24/7 availability. In addition, it takes longer to write and read posts on a computer than it does to speak and listen in a classroom. Rather than listening to a few students in a F2F class, faculty may read several posts submitted by all students and write responses as needed. Whereas, instructors typically do not go back to edit spoken words in a classroom, written comments about class topics and written responses to students are permanent documents requiring clear and thoughtful thinking, and grammatically correct sentence structures. This takes much more time than one can imagine. Apply time management strategies that tap into the time saving potentials of the online learning environment, such as stored feedback.

Weber’s online course requires more time to teach than his F2F course. Rather than blocking out 2–3 h each week at the same time on the same day as done for his F2F class, he spreads out his online course demands over shorter, irregular, time periods during the week. Weber generally logs on to read student online postings two or three times a day, but when and how long is left up to him. He often logs on the first thing in the morning before other work obligations demand his attention and then at various times throughout the day or evening. While there may be more time spent at the computer reading, evaluating, and responding to email postings, Weber believes that it is more convenient to teach an online course because the time demanded to be attentive to the class is at his discretion and works around his schedule.

Collins designed the course so that his weekly online time involvement is similar to the 9 h weekly he puts in for

his F2F course (3.5 h of class time, 1 h driving to and from campus, 1.5 h of preparation, 2 h of grading, and 1 h of other class management activities). Collins’ weekly online course modules begin early Sunday morning and end Saturday midnight. As noted earlier, a typical week has assignments due on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings. Collins allocates his 9 h, with limited work performed on weekends, as follows:

- 3 h Monday morning to grade and provide feedback on assignments due Saturday midnight,
- 1 h Wednesday morning to sort and distribute student post responses to the week’s Enron and current topic due Tuesday midnight,
- 2 h Friday morning to grade and provide feedback on assignments due Thursday midnight, and
- 3 h spread out over the week to: (1) email daily pre-developed one page summaries of course concepts and personal experiences with the concepts, (2) provide editing feedback on ethical narratives, (3) advise how he would address the week’s three student-created ethical narratives, (4) offer his opinion on the week’s two “pick the professor’s brain” questions supplied by students, and (5) respond to other issues and questions that arise.

Student Time Issues

Students express similar concerns about course time requirements because they too must read and write responses rather than listen and talk. Prior to taking an online course, many students seem to believe the course will be easier than a F2F course, but find out that it is often more rigorous and time consuming. Faculty can easily overwhelm students with online assignments to ensure that it is as rigorous, if not more rigorous, than a F2F course, and add more course content and Internet links every time the online course is taught. Like a F2F class, the content should be reasonable and consistent throughout the semester (Dykman and Davis 2008). Excessive demands threaten the teacher’s legitimacy and may result in students doing less work, not more.

Collins’ online class has the same weekly assignments and activities as his F2F class—read one or two chapters, analyze an Enron dilemma, analyze two or three real-life ethical dilemmas presented by classmates, respond to a current topic, and conduct a best practices assessment. It does take online students more time to read and write posts, but, then again, they are not spending 3.5 h a week sitting in a F2F class. Students are not required to explore all of the many links to related websites and videos, though many do. Some students have informed Collins that they save interesting links to videos and watch them after the semester ends.

Experience has taught Weber to guard against adding more work, which adds to student class time. A few years ago Weber noticed that more and more students were providing links to Internet material that supported their postings and were requesting that other students read this material. When the other students began to comment on this extra demand of their time, Weber realized that in addition to the assigned readings that he provided for the students, the total amount of time spent on reading had increased four- to fivefold. When Weber cut back on the assigned readings, it allowed for a shift from teacher–student interaction to more student–student interaction, where students became the teacher of other students, and the value of the time students spent on the course increased.

In the program where Weber’s business ethics course is offered, the academic week begins on Saturday and ends on Friday. The online week is broken up into two halves: Saturday through Tuesday and Wednesday through Friday. This requires students to post responses to questions, engage in exercises, or provide other contributions to the class by logging on multiple times during the week. Weber believes that the online format of short but repeated interaction provides students with better learning opportunities, although it makes greater demands on students who may find it hard to locate multiple periods of time for class attention throughout the week.

Rolling Out the Course

Typically, students can access the entire online course website prior to the start of the semester and become familiar with the format, flow of the material, and expectations of the online course. Check all the hyperlinks, videos, and audio presentations to ensure they function appropriately. Otherwise, students will experience immediate frustration that can carry over into online interactions.

We both offer students access to the course prior to the beginning of the semester and activities to initially engage them. Weber poses questions on preliminary topics the week prior to the beginning of course which lead students into week 1 content. He encourages students to identify and discuss a comfortable or familiar situation—perhaps an ethical situation common at work or in their personal lives or something that happened in a previous course—which has been on their minds since that time. Students seem more willing to talk about things familiar to them.

Weber also provides students with a “How to Think About this Course” memo. This memo focuses on several topics: “Life is filled with dilemmas,” which discusses student responsibility to keep up with the work even though there is no specific day and time for class to convene; “Learning is best accomplished through interaction,” which emphasizes the value of student-to-student interaction

throughout the discussion week and how the students’ participation grade will be heavily weighted by this interaction; and “It takes time to think well,” which focuses on the benefits of reflection after reading both the assigned course material and some of the early students’ postings.

Collins sends students enrolled in the course a welcoming email, which includes a direct email link to a technology staff member so that he does not acquire the responsibility of becoming all-knowing about the technology, and a link to a daily newspaper blog he maintains to reinforce subject matter relevancy (<http://deniscollins.tumblr.com>). A welcoming video explains key aspects of the syllabus, class expectations, and his personal biography. Students are encouraged to explore links to “Tips for Student Success in an Online Course” and netiquette advice, such as avoid sarcasm and warn classmates if a post is very long.

Faculty and online administrators must decide whether weekly course assignments will be available in totality at the beginning of the course or rolled out as the course progresses. In either case, similar to a F2F class, faculty should establish clear expectations at the very beginning.

At Collins’ institution, each module is available for viewing 2 weeks before the module is scheduled to begin. Students can start working on the module early, but assignments cannot be submitted until the day the module officially begins to prevent some students from getting too far ahead of others.

For Weber’s course, the entire semester is available to students on the first day of the term. Some students have expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to work ahead of the established schedule on the course assignments, especially reading ahead in the course. Students can have various work and personal trips or situations that might impede their regularly assigned schoolwork time commitment, or where access to the Internet is limited or prohibited.

Some cautions are warranted when providing all the course material at one time. The instructor should warn students not to work too far ahead of the established schedule because guidelines for assigned projects or papers could be forthcoming or questions could be raised by other students in the class that they would find helpful. Advise students not to read and respond to work posted earlier than scheduled so that the conversation can stay focused on the assigned topics. Another challenge is whether the instructor is able to plan that far ahead and have confidence in where the course will travel during the semester, while retaining some flexibility as needed. It is far easier to plan ahead after the course has been delivered several semesters.

Creating a Sense of Community

An initial challenge in an online course is developing a sense of community early because students are not in the

same location at the same time. With an online course, faculty and students are, to some degree, simply interacting with text on a screen rather than a physical person. Online participants need to feel as though they are interacting with real people, not screen text, to enhance their learning experience.

Class size is a key attribute of a sense of community. Similar to F2F classes, size matters in terms of students engaging with each other, and the professor's ability to engage with students. Several scholars recommend capping online classes at about 20 students (Dykman and Davis 2008; Kearsley 2002; Smith 2001). Higher enrollments make it difficult for instructors to respond to everyone and maintain a personal touch. Nonetheless, there is currently strong customer demand for MOOC courses with huge enrollments. Larger class sizes can still be interactive and communal on a small group level, though teaching assistants or peer evaluators are needed for oversight and grading purposes.

Weber's course was capped initially at 15 students. A few years later, due to an increase in the program's enrollment, the cap was raised to 18 students. While a relatively small increase, the impact on the class and student learning was noticeable. Students found managing the weekly discussions to be more difficult because the average number of postings per week rose from around 150 to over 200 emails. Weber also believes that some students were less involved in the weekly discussions due to the overwhelming number of posts. With a decline in the program's peak enrollment, some of the business ethics online sections have been smaller, closer to 12–14 students. This provides a more manageable class size and a better student learning environment. Collins' Business School caps online course enrollments at 15 students.

Online classes can achieve a deep level of intimacy rather than being an isolating or alienating student experience (Arbaugh and Hwang 2006; Garrison 2007; Garrison et al. 2004). This requires creating emotional, psychological, and social connections, which enhances the learning experience and provides many cognitive and emotional benefits (Conrad 2002, 2005). When accomplished, the depth of business case discussions can be even more rewarding online than F2F (Rollag 2010). Such intimacy needs to be established at the very beginning.

We both have students post personal bios—current geographical location, hobbies, professional interests—on Blackboard for all to observe either before the course begins or the first week of class, and provide biographical information about ourselves as a model for students to imitate. Students in Weber's course answer a pre-week question about course expectations which provides the instructor with invaluable information about how the students are approaching the business ethics course and helps

students see that their fears about online education may be shared by others. Students in Collins' course read and consent to Parker Palmer's "Circle of Trust" statement about the importance of confidentiality, respectfully learning from each other, and engaging in civil discussions (Palmer 2004).

A sense of community requires that each student not only feels "heard" and understood by the professor as a unique individual, but also that s/he is adding value to group learning. Both of us require students to comment on answers posted by classmates, which reinforces that their viewpoints are being heard. Asking students to post a brief quote by a classmate (with author's name) from the previous week's discussion on a word wall or wiki can go a long way toward helping students see the importance of their voice to the group learning experience. After such peer recognition and exchanges, some of the more invisible students post more frequently and in-depth.

Each week two to three students in Collins' course present and discuss their own real-life workplace ethical dilemmas, and to which all classmates respond, deepening the shared experience. These are two paragraph vignettes written from the decision-maker's point of view about an incident at work where the right thing to do was unclear, that challenged their conscience or the organization or profession's code of ethics, or seemed disrespectful toward a stakeholder. The narrative begins with "You are a (job position)" and end at the key decision point followed by two or three decision options. Classmates post which decision-maker option they would choose and why, grounding their choice in an ethical theory. At the end of the week, the ethical dilemma author explains what option was chosen in real life and why, and then Collins provides his advice on how to manage the situation.

In addition, twice a semester (Modules 3 and 7) students are paired with an "ethical dilemma sharing partner" for a "live" discussion about an ethical dilemma currently being experienced at work. The ethical dilemma sharing partners can discuss their current issue in chat rooms, with Skype, or on the telephone, but not by email. Sharing partners serve as sounding boards or consultants for each other.

Faculty Presence

Faculty presence is a key indicator for successful online courses (Arbaugh et al. 2010; Garrison and Cleveland-Innes 2005; Tu and McIsaac 2002). Students need to know that in the invisible world of cyberspace there is a real professor actually teaching the class and responsive to student issues and comments as they arise. Faculty presence and immediacy provide a deeper level of meaningfulness to students engaged in dialog and course content. Daily check-ins also make managing the class easier,

otherwise an overwhelming number of requests or responses may await the teacher upon logging on. Some students may become frustrated if they cannot perform an assignment without prompt teacher guidance.

Collins logs on every morning Monday through Saturday and emails a pre-developed one page content topic summary. As a result, students receive at least one email from the professor every day except Sunday and report high satisfaction with the professor's presence. In actuality, the activities mentioned above take only a few minutes to perform and allow Collins to limit his online presence to just 30 min on non-grading days.

Weber made a critical mistake one semester teaching his online business ethics course. The student-student interaction and student postings were excellent. Weber honestly felt that it would be better to stay out of the way of the student learning and not post any comments to the public forums. This was his mistake. The students perceived that the professor was simply absent from the course, which was not true but a fair assumption given his lack of involvement with the students. Don't interrupt student interaction, but do let them know you are present and available (Brower 2003). Since that lesson was learned, Weber periodically makes a "good job," "nice posting," and "excellent insight" type posting. These short and non-invasive comments let students know he is still reading their work and monitoring their learning.

When a student shows a keen interest in a particular aspect of the content, "seed" student emails with links to resources of particular interest to them. This personalizes feedback and lets students know that the professor is paying close attention to their individual development, background experiences, and interests.

Part of establishing faculty presence entails praising fully engaged students and investigating why some students are disengaged. Weber's rule-of-thumb is "praise publicly, admonish privately." Insert positive comments into public discussions, and make student reprimands privately. The latter may seem obvious, but it is easy to get locked into a public posting of thoughts and mistakenly send a quick negative email intended for one student to the entire online community.

Weber has found that a period of silence (lack of posting emails to the discussion board) is critical to investigate, particularly for adult learners. A short but privately sent "I hope all is well because I noticed you did not post anything by the Thursday evening deadline" may be enough to inspire a student to become more engaged. But just because a student is not responding to class material does not necessarily mean he or she is disengaged. Sometimes it is a minor issue, such as a technology glitch, but more often some serious personal, family, work, or other issue has surfaced. The professor may not be able to resolve the

issue, yet it is crucial to recognize its occurrence and then determine how best to accommodate the student, if possible.

To keep his class fresh, every week Collins requires that two or three students submit a "Pick the Professor's Brain" question about business ethics or any aspect of life. Common questions include "Do you believe the world is getting better or worse?" and "Do you believe what the company mentioned in today's newspaper did was ethical?" Collins shares his responses in a global email sent to all students.

Group Projects

Group projects are another method for creating interaction and a sense of community, and prepare students for virtual team meetings at the workplace. Similar to F2F group projects, online groups should clearly articulate team goals, clarify deadlines, determine how to use each other's skills and knowledge strengths, and manage conflict (Staggers et al. 2008).

A sense of positive interdependence—"we are all in this together and vital to final product success"—is essential to high quality learning outcomes for group projects. It may take the form of goal interdependence (shared group learning and product goals), resource interdependence (each group member provides portions of the learning resources necessary to the group learning outcomes), or role interdependence (each group member performs an assigned role to achieve the learning outcome or product) (Ginsberg and Wlodkowski 2009; Wlodkowski 2008). Carefully set the stage for group collaboration with clear instructions, roles assigned to each participant, group process modeling, and self/group assessments to foster accountability (Palloff and Pratt 2005). Students can video their group project and make it available for classmate viewing and assessment (Ross and Rosenbloom 2011).

Weber often organizes multi-stage, group learning assignments through various assigned tasks. During the first week the project or exercise is introduced, a group of students discuss preliminary questions available in the textbook, supplemental readings, or based on their work experience. Blackboard provides an excellent system for creating group discussion boards, where only students in the assigned group can participate but the instructor can observe as needed (Comer and Lenaghan 2013). During the second week of the exercise, multiple groups merge together to tackle more complex questions that require greater levels of analysis or additional research. The assembly of a larger group creates a richer discussion, again through the available Blackboard system. Finally, when there is a full class discussion of the assigned task, all students return to the course discussion board. As the exercise evolves from a

single group to a larger group to the full class, the complexity of the assigned task can also increase.

Collins has one group project. For Module 5, which is the beginning of the second half of the course, student teams analyze and present case studies. Teams of three students are assigned to one of the five cases. By Tuesday midnight, team members individually read the case, apply ethical theories to the primary case question, post their responses on wiki, and determine a time when team members can meet in a chat room, Skype, or some other method to discuss the case. By Thursday midnight, the team creates and posts a seven-point case summary and an action recommendation grounded in ethical theory. Team members must reach a consensus on these matters to parallel what often happens at work. Then by Saturday midnight, students read the case summaries developed by the other teams and post to each team's site why they agree or disagree with that team's action recommendation.

Managing Conflict

Student engagement requires respectful engagement, but that may not always happen. The class community can be damaged through unhealthy conflicts among students or between the student and professor. Many business ethics topics revolve around the issue of fairness, which can elicit emotional responses based on a student's personal experiences unknown to others. Conflict also can happen because students are taking more risks online in expressing themselves, making themselves more vulnerable by exposing inner beliefs to unseen classmates in cyberspace, and thus easier to hurt emotionally. The online professor does not have the advantage of seeing the facial expressions of a student who is becoming angry as in a F2F class. Instead, an online student's anger can build until it explodes in a fiery email (Walker 2004). Interdependent group learning situations, such as group projects, can also be a source of conflict due to disagreements or poor accountability (Johnson et al. 2006).

Conflicts need to be resolved, otherwise the "victims" may withdraw from participation or course efficiency and effectiveness may be damaged (Palloff and Pratt 2007). Sometimes, the conflict can be resolved simply by reminding a student about the course civility guidelines and netiquette. If the conflict is between student and professor, do not respond immediately to the event. Instead, allow time for reflection, remain professional, and ask for clarification. Keep your written response short and focused on the specific event that generated the conflict.

If one student begins to cyber bully another student, contact the student immediately by email or telephone to understand the source of this behavior and review how to respond civilly. Recommend that before posting, the cyber

bully should type out responses in a Word document and read them from another student's perspective, or first send the response to the teacher for feedback. Use conflicts as teachable moments about how to resolve conflicts (Macduff 1994). If guided well by online faculty, students can learn the importance of civil disagreement in a democratic society.

In the first module, Collins requires students to discuss a highly contentious issue—the ethics of capitalism—to teach students best practices for civil disagreement, and he carefully monitors whether students apply them when responding to a classmate holding an opposing viewpoint. Students rate the ethics of capitalism on a 1–6 scale with evidence supporting their sentiments. Students quickly learn that they do not all think alike. This is a cognitive shock which they often engage throughout the course. When responding to someone with whom they disagree, students are instructed to: (1) state the person's name to create some intimacy, (2) paraphrase the other person's point to demonstrate understanding the post, and then (3) provide an alternative perspective or constructive criticism. To reinforce the rules of civil discussion, students are graded based on how well they apply the rules of civil disagreement when responding to someone who reaches an opposite conclusion.

Weber tends to focus on issues that have two emotional sides but no real obvious resolution. For instance, "fracking" is a high profile local issue that has emerged as a viable energy alternative to the nation's oil dependency and a boom to Weber's region in terms of new jobs and a boost to the economy. Yet, it also possesses some serious concerns regarding environmental damage and the health and safety of community residents dependent on ground water that could be tainted by the underground drilling. A number of times, students have expressed strong right- or left-wing political perspectives in class emails about this and similar issues. Generally, students demonstrate exceptional tolerance for other people's opinions, but sometimes negative reactions occur and safeguards against conflict cannot fully prevent emotions from spilling over into the online class. Other students are often the best mediators of controversy in the class. Yet, their intervention does not replace the instructor's responsibility to act as a peacemaker at times.

Mid-Term Evaluations

Mid-term evaluations should provide professors with student feedback on whether the online course has evolved into a learning community and suggestions for improvement (Palloff and Pratt 2001). Student feedback should be anonymous, which can be done easily in Blackboard. Sometimes students want their names attached to their

feedback and this too can be arranged through the Blackboard system.

Both of us conduct mid-term surveys consisting of Likert scale measure for the traditional—“What do you like about the course and why?” and “What do you not like about the course and how can the course be changed?” Students need to know that their feedback was received, assessed, and used to enhance the course, and informed why a recommended change was not made. We summarize student survey feedback in a post that highlights what students report is working well, their suggestions for improvement, and our responses to issues raised and their change recommendations. Data from the mid-term survey is an excellent ally for the professor in responding to the “stray opinion” student.

Assessing Posts

Students are more likely to pay attention to graded assignments. Clarify in advance exactly how students are being graded. Grading rubrics provide students with guidance for how they will be evaluated and provide faculty with objective methods to avoid personal biases or arbitrary judgments. Many rubrics are available online for grading posts, team projects, wikis, ethical dilemmas, and journals (University of Wisconsin-Stout 2013).

Weber communicates with online students the expectation that quantity of information or posts is not a criterion when assigning weekly discussion grades. Rather, students are encouraged to answer the assigned question or exercise and engage with other students in the assigned topic discussion. Weber provides students feedback every 2 or 3 weeks, including both a grade for the discussion as well as qualitative feedback to reinforce the exemplary student performance or better guide the student toward a stronger discussion contribution.

Collins grades both the quantity and quality of student posts. Besides posting answers to topic-related questions, students are instructed to engage in five timely interactions with classmates each week. Blackboard reports the day and time posts are submitted and the number of interactions the student has had with classmates. To maximize the submission of high quality posts, yet minimize instructor time required for grading posts, only 1 weekly post is graded for quality and students do not know in advance which weekly post assignment that will be. Reduce grading time by maintaining a file for common feedback comments that can then be copied, with necessary modifications.

Weber allows a 2-week grace period for late postings out of consideration to students with conflicts that prevent posting on time. Students can earn partial credit for a late post or if a contribution occurs to a student after a topic discussion concludes by emailing the late contribution

directly to the instructor. This policy accommodates work/life emergencies and does not detract from ongoing discussions. Collins, on the other hand, does not provide any points for late postings because other students depend on timely posting so that they can interact in a timely manner.

Weber includes a “1-week adjustment policy” for the discussion evaluation. At the end of the semester, students are entitled to have 1 week of their discussion performance adjusted. After setting aside the worst week of the student’s discussion performance, the average performance for the remaining weeks can be recalculated. This allows students to have “one bad week,” where they may not be able to participate in the class at all, or below standard, due to an unforeseen work situation, health problem, or family tragedy. Many students do not utilize this policy because their performance is consistent each week, but they appreciate knowing the policy exists if needed.

Cheating

Student cheating is a national problem in higher education (Josien and Broderick 2013; McCabe et al. 2001). Students cheat for a variety of reasons, including grade issues, ease, laziness, stress, and lack of time, knowledge, and ethics (Varvel 2005). Plagiarism is also somewhat aided by web technologies because it is easier to find relevant information to cut-and-paste without attribution, which is true for both F2F and online course assignments (Varvel 2005).

Some professors believe that student cheating is more likely to occur in an online course because the test-taker is not being observed by the instructor (Guyette et al. 2008). Nonetheless, research based on the experiences of professors who have taught F2F and online suggests that the level of student cheating is similar for both means of content delivery (McNabb and Olmstead 2009).

Student cheating during online quizzes and exams can be minimized by limiting exam time and access, randomizing the sequencing of exam questions, presenting questions only one at a time, and limiting the ability to leave an exam page (Cluskey et al. 2011). Designing personalized analytical tests also reduces cheating opportunities. Some schools contract out with testing centers that offer proctor supervision or live online proctoring services such as ProctorU, but this entails an additional cost. In terms of submitted papers, professors can use plagiarism detection tools such as Turnitin, DropBox, plagiarism.com, or EVE2 (Varvel 2005).

Cheating can also be reduced through authentic assessments, which refers to measuring a student’s ability to demonstrate knowledge and skill that is applicable to the professional environments where s/he will use these skills (Gulikers et al. 2004). The assumption underlying the use of authentic assessment is that schools should educate

students to master skills and solve problems they will encounter after they graduate. These skills refer to not only practical competency based skills, but also to the kinds of thinking that experts use to solve problems in real-world contexts. Examples of authentic assessments include problem-based case scenario solutions, portfolio assessments, simulation activities, and other complex, student-created demonstrations of ability.

Authentic assessments that are designed based on higher level thinking categories of Bloom's Taxonomy can make plagiarism much less likely. The higher levels of thinking incorporated into such assignments include such skills as evaluation, synthesis of learning, analysis, and/or the creation of relational diagrams and graphics that visually display complex relationships. All such activities tend to lead to widely varied assignment outcomes that would be difficult to replicate. Any plagiarism within the course itself becomes readily apparent because authentic assessments call for high levels of individual creativity.

Both of us have developed highly personalized assignments and corresponding authentic assessments which makes, for the most part, copying answers from Internet sources or other people irrelevant. Collins does not detect more student cheating online compared to his F2F class. Weekly posts and homework assignments are personal short answer responses to ethical dilemmas or employment issues, and the final exam is an assessment of the student's own organization developed as the course progresses. Collins does not test for memorization as done by traditional true/false, multiple choice, or some essay exams.

One method that Weber uses to minimize the opportunity for plagiarizing on a test is to have students write their own ethical dilemma for analysis. This better engages students in the course assignment and allows them an opportunity to wrestle with a "real situation," one that has confronted or troubled them at work or at school. The case analysis, rather than the written case itself, is evaluated based on the depth of understanding course concepts, ability to apply these concepts, and development of analytical skills.

Conclusion

Online courses are increasing dramatically, especially within business schools, resulting in more online business ethics courses. This article provides extensive practical advice using an integrative case study narrative approach from a director of online faculty development and two seasoned business ethics faculty who transformed their F2F classes into online classes. We shared our personal experiences in terms of course design templates, learning objectives, course content, consistency and diversity of

course design, links, faculty time issues, student time issues, rolling out the course, creating a sense of community, faculty presence, group projects, managing conflict, mid-term evaluations, assessing posts, and cheating.

There are many similarities in course preparation and delivery between F2F and online courses. Our business ethics course learning objectives are the same for both, as are our topic coverage, group projects, exams, and other assessment tools. In both mediums, we attempt to develop relationships with our students and create a sense of community because student-to-student interaction often enhances student learning.

Yet, there are key differences between teaching F2F and online that can determine the success of an online course and student learning. Technology is more central to our online courses and we have almost daily contact with students. Topic coverage may be spread out over a week, which allows more time for students to reflect on and edit their discussion comments. These differences often benefit introverted students and typically results in more student involvement in online course discussions. The more frequent online interaction with content and peers also aids student learning retention (Halpern and Hakel 2003).

Potential pitfalls inherent in teaching business ethics online need to be recognized and addressed. If not carefully managed, time commitment by students and faculty can be excessive, interactions less personal, and communications more inflammatory. Also, problems with online technology can taint the student's learning experience.

For some faculty, teaching online has become a preferred mode of course delivery. Research studies report that online business course learning outcomes are similar to, or slightly better than, F2F courses (Arbaugh et al. 2010). Similar to students seeking ways to obtain course material that fit their busy lifestyles, faculty who have a highly demanding schedule of administrative responsibilities, consulting opportunities, or other responsibilities may find teaching online a more convenient way to deliver a course. Online classes also provide faculty opportunities to interact with students who are otherwise unable to attend on-campus F2F classes, and may have very different perspectives of justice, fairness, and action consequences than traditional local students.

Lastly, there is a plethora of pedagogical resources available for the online teacher. Best practices for online education have been consolidated in publications and network organizations, including the Sloan Consortium (<http://sloanconsortium.org>), Educause (<http://www.educause.edu>), the Illinois Online Learning Network (<http://www.ion.uillinois.edu>), and Magna Commons (<http://www.magnapubs.com/magna-commons/>). Quality Matters offers a national benchmark for online course design (<https://www.qualitymatters.org/>). We hope that the perspectives shared

here add to this growing compendium to support those entrusted with teaching business ethics online.

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