Impact of Ethics-Case-Competition Participation on Ethics Perspective

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Tell me and I'll forget; Show me and I'll remember; Involve me and I'll understand (Carter et.al., 1986). Dewey (1915) introduced experiential learning (EL) to higher education (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). EL focuses on hands-on, problem-solving learning fostering active inquiry in student-centered settings (Gentry, 1990). EL dominates today's pedagogical discussion. EL increases student motivation, performance, and overall learning outcomes including critical thinking, communication, diversity, team-work and changes perception of importance (Jacksonville University, 2015; Burguillo, 2010). Competitive-case-based learning is part of EL (Burguillo, 2010).

In UCCS's ethics-case-competition, faculty-mentored student pairs present their solutions to an ethical dilemma. Will participation in this ethics-case-competition change participants' perspective of ethics?

Pilot study employs qualitative data. Population includes students and faculty-mentors competing in 2016 (n=7). Participants answered two open-ended questions:
1. *How did your perspective on ethics change as a result of participation in the Daniel's Fund Ethics Competition?*
2. *If your perspective on ethics changed, how has your teaching or learning been impacted as a result of such participation?*
Generalizations are not intended, but study is seen as a start for future research of ethics-case-competitions' impacts.

Question 1 answers do not support that ethics-case-competition participation changed fundamental value systems, but changed perceptions and awareness of ethical decision making (e.g. '…how I make decisions did not change.' P5). Participants reported insights into (Ps 3, 4, & 6) and respect for implementation of ethics (Ps 2, 3, 5, & 6) and that team solutions require significant compromise ('…saw just how much compromise a justifiable answer takes,' P7).

Question 2 answers suggest that participants focus more on ethical decision making in business and in general (Ps 1 3, 5, & 7). Applying ethics is considered difficult and helps businesses (e.g. '…actually enhances a business over their peers.' P7).

Participation in the UCCS ethics-case-competition did not change participants' value systems, but it helped create more awareness and urgency of principle-based management. Ethical behavior is seen as difficult to implement and requires compromise.

Future research should track changes in participants' perceptions.

Reference List upon request