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NORD Grant Proposal

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This grant would enable me to create a new outcome learning assessment measure for acting with integrity, addressing individual character development, within a new SAGES capstone course I will teach for the first time (Mgmt 395), Spring 2013 on Religion, Business, and Integrity. The class would involve approximately 45 students in three sections of 15 students each. The tasks required doing this and providing outcome assessment learning feedback to each student is more than I could do in a semester. The grant would enable the hiring of qualified research assistant(s) for the necessary tasks enumerated in the budget.

In an effort to develop a deeper understanding of student's own ethical standards of behavior, they will articulate, create, and utilize their own individualized Ten Commandments of Character as a personalized code to guide decisions at work and in life. This will be drawn from their deeply held values from religious or spiritual teachings, upbringing, and/or culture. A process will be used throughout the course enabling the development of this personal ethical code that each student can genuinely commit to and which can be applied to ethical decision-making choices in daily life morally, transparently, and sincerely, using it for principled behavior.

Class activities will draw on world religions as one source of ethical guidance. Narratives of biblical heroes and heroines who demonstrate independent thought and action and moral courage will be used. For many students, a combination of stories and ethical principles from their religion/spiritual heritage are starting points for behaving with integrity throughout all aspects of their lives. They will each develop his or her own ethical code by listening to their inner voices that lead to taking responsibility for their own behavior. Through successive exercises, reflection, dialogue, and completion of their code, students will have clarity about which elements they call their own that answer the question, "What does 'right' behavior require?" The Ten Commandments of Character become a self-help guide to assist the avoidance of everyday compromises through a renewed consciousness and awareness (a kind of moral mindfulness) of how to behave with integrity.

Desired outcome of the course is for each student to be better equipped as decisive and ethical leaders who can quickly, confidently, and consistently make good decisions in today's ethically challenged workplace. This will occur through reflection,

documentation, and refinement of their most deeply held ethical behavioral standards for acting with character, leading to the development of a behavioral code.

There are three learning objectives for students:

- Understand the role that one's religious and spiritual teaching, upbringing, and culture place upon one's value system;
- Identify the abstract teachings, concrete, real-life moral principles derived, consciously or unconsciously, from religious upbringing and culture, becoming mindful of their inner voice; and
- Commit in advance to ethical principles for making choices and as ethical guidelines through the development of the Ten Commandments of Character.

These developed, usable ethical codes reflect the NORD Grant goals of "direct benefits to student learning."

In the process of code development of their Ten Commandments of Character, students will apply the code to a variety of ethical scenarios they have experienced as well as vignettes drawn from the workplace and society where they are asked, "Using your Ten Commandments of Character, what would you do and say if you found yourself in this situation?" Alternatives are evaluated against each person's own individual code. They will test their usefulness in guiding their actions around difficult dilemmas. Over the course they will be refined as they are tested.

The NORD grant will enable the development of a series of current ethically questionable workplace vignettes as well as the collection of situations where students still feel their own remorse about previous ethical lapses. The combination of codes created early in the course and their subsequent refinement, the application of the codes to these scenarios, reflective writing assignments, and dialogue will be components of a newly developed outcome assessment of student learning around integrity and character development. An individual department or school does not normally fund this level of student assessment.

See attached budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan S. Case".

Susan S. Case, Ph. D.
Professor of Organizational Behavior

BUDGET for NORD Grant Proposal

Research assistant (s)

\$4000 USD

Tasks will be divided based on skill level needed for their completion.

Research Assistant(s) will be paid 10 USD per hour for 400 hours (total, \$4000) between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013 to do the following:

1. Help with development of current questionable workplace practices vignettes from countries and companies throughout the world.
2. Create a booklet of edited scenarios from 45 collected student ethical dilemmas they have experienced where they have remorse, compiling and formatting for undergraduate student use.
3. Create reflective dialogue questions for scenario use and reflective writing activities.
4. Record, transcribe, and analyze one small group ethical decision-making session where code is being applied for each student.
5. Assist in development of a learning assessment measure for integrity in behavior using thematic analysis of course codes and assignments.
6. Test the measure against student work products including their ethical codes and their application to decision-making vignettes and get inter rater reliability of the measure.
7. Compare initial Ten Commandments of Character with final developed Commandments for changes that reflect development of enhanced integrity.
8. Compile data driven student feedback for reports on individual student ethical decision-making with integrity skill development.

Total Budget

\$4000 USD