

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ETHICS MODEL

How to More Effectively Teach Ethics at the Undergraduate Level

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: We are launching a longitudinal study to evaluate students as they learn about ethics across the four-year curriculum. Why? Because ending ethics training early has the unintended consequence of limiting students' perspective of what defines an ethical approach. When students had more courses or advanced further in their academic careers, early results indicate repeated exposure has a positive and statistically significant impact on ethical maturity.

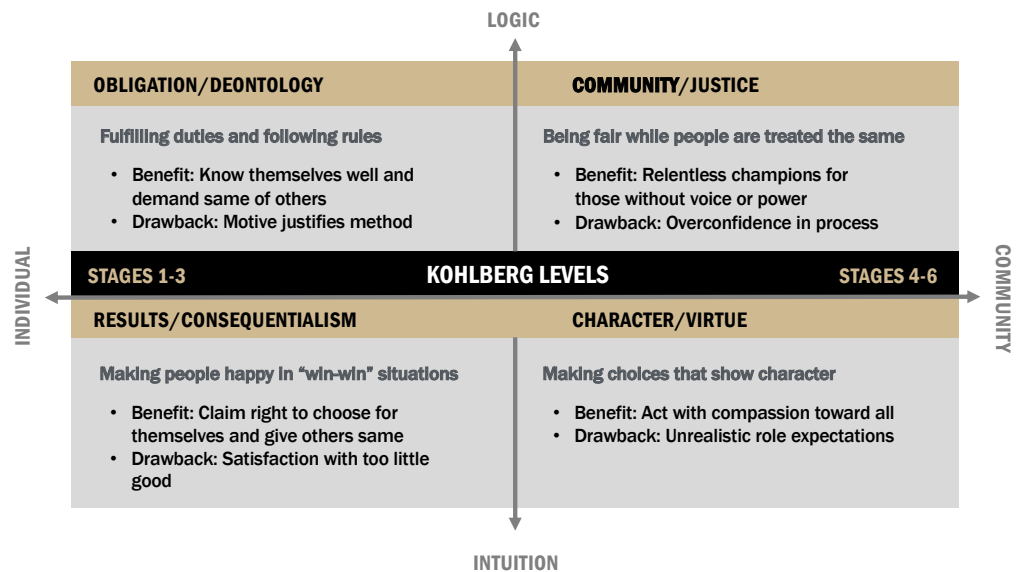
PROPOSED ETHICS MODEL

OUR GOAL IS TWOFOLD:

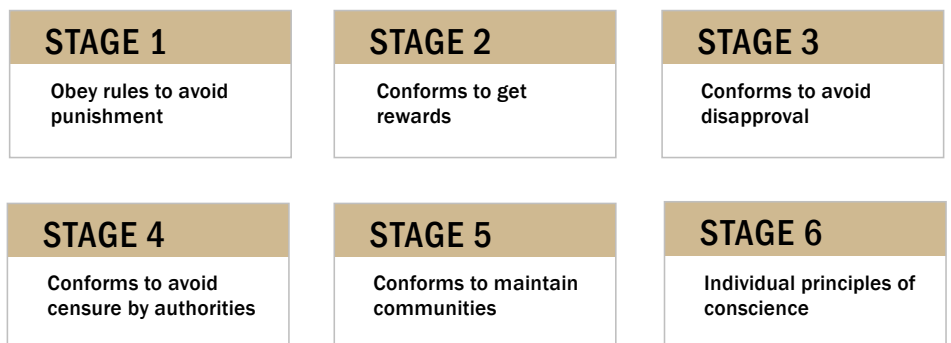
1. help students identify which quadrant they default to
2. guide them up the Kohlberg levels.

Our model contains layers that follow the Kohlberg Stages of Moral Development where students work across the stages of ethical growth. First, the foundation builds student awareness of ethics in general and their specific default framework. Because this framework introduces students to multiple ethical perspectives, previous researchers have found this initial exposure can cause some backward movement, as our data analysis confirmed.

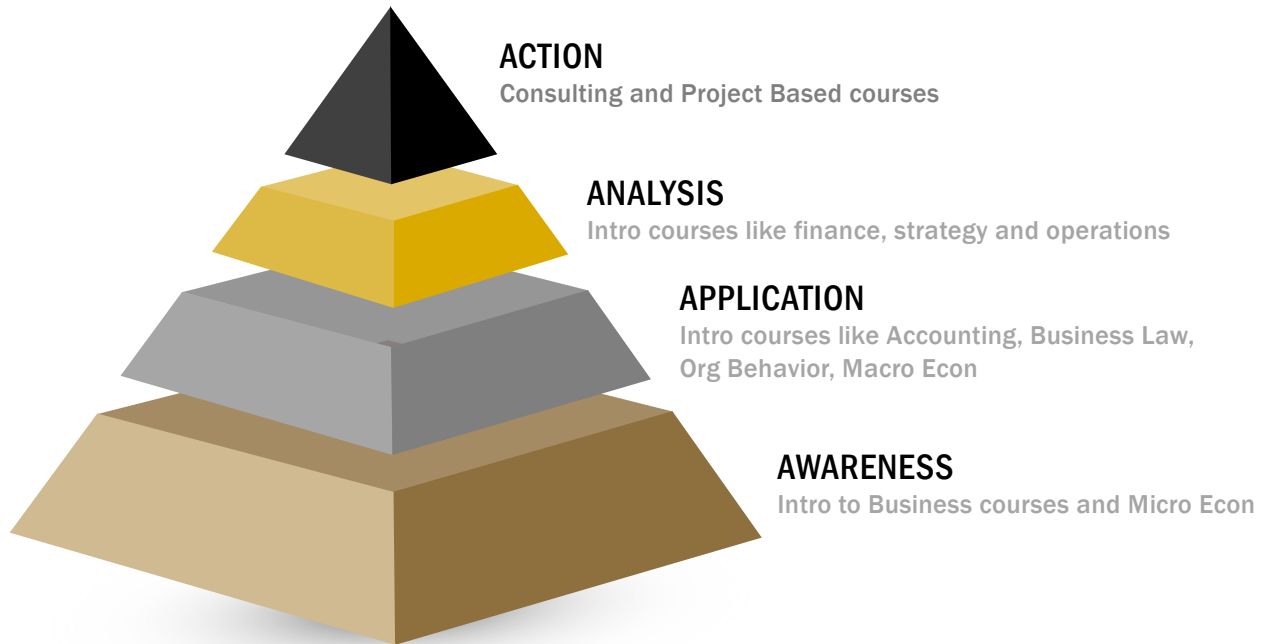
It is critical to build a foundation for ethical thought and decision-making. To assist students, we focus on the primary ethical bent each student naturally has to give them a structure for developing beyond awareness to ethical leadership.



6 STAGES OF KOHLBERG MORAL DEVELOPMENT



UNDERGRADUATE MODEL FOR PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICS



This progression also mirrors the Kohlberg Stages of Moral Development. It is a climb up the side of a pyramid where the focus is the student's primary ethical perspective. As the student climbs, they gain understanding of other perspectives they can utilize to reach Action. As they progress in ethical maturity, students also expand their perspective from a focus on the individual to impact on the wider community.

Our early results demonstrate students moving from level to level through initial interventions in courses. The greatest number of students start at the lowest level of Kohlberg's preconventional stage, while those who are closer to graduation are likely to be at higher stages. Regardless of starting point, repeated experience with ethics moves students to higher levels of moral development.

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