

### ***LET'S DISCUSS ETHICS***

This exercise examines a multitude of ethical concerns with which both the classroom and the public speaker faces. The activity allows students to understand that a number of ethical concerns may arise during a speaking situation, and that the speaker must accept the decisions made have consequences. This exercise is geared to helping student make their ethical decisions in a more robust manner.

At the beginning of class, students are asked to complete the ethics survey (see Attachment A). This is done at the beginning of class so that students quickly complete the survey. Once completed the instructor should identify the ethical concern and allow students to discuss their views. Ask students to include specific reasons or examples for their viewpoint. If students are reticent to speak up, the instructor should provide examples of situations that exemplify the ethical concern. When the discussion ends, the instructor will then cover specifics of ethics in order to debrief the discussion.

Placing yourself in each of these three situations: D = discussion with your peers;  
SC = a speech delivered in class and PS = a public speech, use the following  
scale to the action in terms of how ethical you perceive each to be.

- 5 = very ethical
- 4 = ethical
- 3 = neutral
- 2 = unethical
- 1 = very unethical
- NA = not applicable

1. Paraphrasing a source without giving credit to the source.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
2. Using a direct quote without giving credit to the source of the quote.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
3. Changing the name of a source of a quote to a source more acceptable to the audience.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
4. Using only a portion of a quote that justifies a claim while disregarding the rest of the quote that negates the claim of the source.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
5. Using a speech totally written by a speech-writer.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
6. Using a hypothetical example but portraying it as a real example.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
7. Basing an argument strictly on emotional appeals.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_
8. Using profanity to highlight a point.  
D \_\_\_ SC \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_

9. Using a speech to promote conflict and tensions that may lead to public unrest.  
D \_\_\_\_ SC \_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_
10. Labeling a person or idea with terms having negative or evil meaning.  
D \_\_\_\_ SC \_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_
11. Deliberately lying about a condition in order to calm a person or an audience.  
D \_\_\_\_ SC \_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_
12. Failing to inform the audience that he or she represents another person or group.  
D \_\_\_\_ SC \_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

1. Do not use false, fabricated, misrepresented, distorted, or irrelevant evidence to support arguments or claims.
2. Do not intentionally use specious, unsupported, or illogical reasoning.
3. Do not represent yourself as informed or as an expert on a subject when you are not.
4. Do not use irrelevant appeals to divert attention or scrutiny from the issue at hand.
5. Do not ask your audience to link your idea or proposal to emotion-laden values, motives, or goals to which it actually is not related.
6. Do not deceive your audience by concealing your real purpose, by concealing self-interest, by concealing the group you represent, or by concealing your position as an advocate of a viewpoint.
7. Do not distort, hide, or misrepresent the number, scope, intensity, or undesirable features or consequences or effects.
8. Do not use “emotional appeals” that lack a supporting basis of evidence and reason, or that would not be accepted if the audience had time and opportunity to examine the subject themselves.
9. Do not oversimplify complex, gradation-laden situations into simplistic two-values, either-or, plural choices.
10. Do not pretend certainty where tentativeness and degrees of probability would be more accurate.
11. Do not advocate something I which you do not believe yourself.

## WORKS CITED

Charles U. Larson. "Persuasion: Reception and Responsibility", 11<sup>th</sup>, Thomson-Wadsworth, 2007.

Richard L. Johannesen, Kathleen S. Valde, Karen E. Whedbee. "Ethics in Human Communication" 6<sup>th</sup>, Waveland Press, 2008

Richard L. Johannesen, R.R. Allen, Wil A. Linkugel, Ferald J. Bryan "Contemporary American Speeches, 9<sup>th</sup> , Kendall Hunt Publisher. 2000