

JUS 455 Final Project: Case Study Ethical Analysis

Overview

If you are going to work at any position in the criminal justice system, you will be faced with ethical dilemmas. This is a fact that you cannot change or control. What you can control is how you react to those situations. One wrong reaction could cost you your career. In today's society, our actions are constantly being monitored. Now more than ever, justice workers' actions are being called into question. While you are expected to do the right thing when others are watching, the true test of character is what you do when no one is watching.

In the final assessment, you will play the role of criminal justice worker depicted in one of the three scenarios below. You will use the skills gained in this course to properly identify the legal dilemma(s), identify the facts relevant to each dilemma, and describe the course of action you would take and why. Additionally, you will identify what personal values you may call upon in making a decision, what duties you have based on the situation, and whether or not those values and duties are in conflict.

This assessment addresses the following course outcomes:

- Analyze changes in society for determining their impact on ethics in law enforcement
- Analyze moral foundations for their impact on ethics in the United States
- Assess the role of society for its impact on creating or changing laws
- Assess ethical boundaries of a criminal justice employee for determining an effective course of action when confronted with ethical dilemmas

The project is supported by three formative milestones, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules One, Two, and Five. The final paper will be submitted in Module Seven.**

Scenario #1

Joe is a corrections officer in a juvenile detention center and works on a unit housing 15 offenders, many of whom suffer from mental health problems. Joe has worked there for about two months. He feels comfortable with his job and has been accepted by the other staff members. He has not had any significant problems with the juveniles and is generally enjoying his work.

It is lunchtime on Monday, and Joe is in the dining room supervising the juveniles as they eat. At one table sit six juveniles, one of whom is a 17-year-old named Brian, whom Joe thinks has a mental disability. Brian is displaying offensive behavior that is so bad that Joe cannot eat his own meal. Brian keeps adding ketchup in vast quantities to every dish, then slurping it from the plate. Brian uses his hands instead of a fork. Brian talks with his mouth full, causing him to spit his food across the table in front of the other juveniles. Joe can see that the other juveniles are repulsed by Brian's behavior and are getting upset by his actions.

Joe is surprised to see his coworker and mentor Darren suddenly get up from where he is seated, go over to Brian, grab him by his shirt, and move him away from the table. Darren takes Brian off to the kitchen and returns with a large mixing bowl. In front of everyone, Darren tells Brian to scrape out what is left of his meal into the large bowl. Darren then takes Brian to the center of the dining room floor, puts the bowl of food on the floor, and tells him to eat. Darren tells Brian that he has disgusting manners, and if he is going to act like an animal while eating, he may as well get down on the floor like a dog and eat from his bowl. Darren tells Brian to stay on the floor and lick his bowl clean, like the animal that he is. The other juveniles are visibly upset at what Darren has done.

Joe does not do or say anything to Darren while this is going on, though he is taken aback by his coworker's actions. Later, Darren explains to Joe and other staff who were present that the reason he acted this way was to shock Brian into understanding that his table manners were inappropriate. Darren thought if he used "tough love" on Brian that he would be less likely to act that way in the future.

Scenario #2

You are working the midnight shift as a police officer. You receive a call to respond to a one-car accident where the car left the roadway and impacted with a tree. Upon your arrival, you see the badly damaged car up against the tree. There are no skid marks apparent and no witnesses around. You approach the car and find the apparent driver behind the wheel. You immediately recognize the driver to be the mayor of your town. You immediately notice signs that the mayor is impaired by alcohol, including the smell of an alcoholic beverage coming from his breath, the slurring of his speech, and the lethargy he is exhibiting. The mayor tells you that he swerved to avoid a dog, lost control and hit the tree. The mayor is not injured. When you ask the mayor if he has consumed alcohol, he tells you that he was at retirement dinner and only had one glass of wine. The mayor asks you to just complete an accident report and give him a ride home. You question him further, telling him you are concerned that he was driving while impaired. The mayor tells you that he is not impaired and not to worry about anything because you never actually saw him driving. The mayor goes on to tell you that he will not say anything to anyone, and he lets you know that he has a lot of influence with what goes on at the police station, and that he has had his eye on you as an up-and-comer. You know that you could just complete an accident report identifying the cause of the accident as swerving to avoid an animal in the roadway. If you do not tell anyone that the mayor was drinking and he does not tell anyone, what is the worst that could happen?

Scenario #3

You are a new officer. An armed robbery takes place on your route where the store clerk has been stabbed and you respond with numerous other, more experienced officers. At the scene, you and another experienced officer find a car parked in an odd manner, adjacent to the store that got robbed. One officer reviews the surveillance footage and is able to broadcast a description of the suspect. You run the license plate on the car you found and learn that the owner matches the general description of the suspect. Additionally, you learn that the registered owner of the car only lives a couple of blocks away. You and the more experienced officer respond to this address to attempt to locate the car owner and see if they were involved. When you get to the apartment of the registered owner, you notice that the lights are on within the apartment and you can hear noises coming from within. No one responds to your knocks on the door. You radio this information into the shift commander, and ask permission to kick the door in based upon the circumstances. The shift commander radios back that you should not enter, and to secure the apartment until detectives arrive. Your more experienced partner becomes upset and states that he is not going to let the detectives make his arrest.

With that, he kicks the door in and you both enter the apartment and locate the car owner. Ultimately, the officer who observed the suspect on surveillance video comes to the apartment and positively identifies this person as the person who committed the armed robbery. He is taken into custody. Detectives arrive on scene. Your partner tells the detectives that the door was partially opened and that the suspect eventually came to the door where he was identified. Your partner also tells the detectives that they may want to get a search warrant as there is a bloodied knife under the mattress in the bedroom. Detectives get a search warrant and do find the knife. Your partner tells you that he will take care of the report. In the report, he documents the story outlined above, including that the suspect ultimately came to the door. He also leaves out the fact that he searched around inside the apartment, finding the knife before the detectives got to the scene. The case has proceeded to trial, and you are aware that the defendant's lawyer has filed a motion to suppress evidence, stating that the police made an illegal entry by kicking their way into the apartment. The prosecutor says there is nothing to worry about because the report clearly indicates that the door was partially open, and that the defendant willingly opened the door and came out after a short period. What do you do?

Prompt

Pick one of the scenarios to address: You should recognize a variety of ethical dilemmas as you read through this case study. Identify each ethical dilemma. Explain what the dilemma is and why it raises an ethical issue. Explain which facts are important to understanding the nature of the issue. What ethical theories would you rely upon in determining how to best handle each situation? Identify what personal values you may call upon in making a decision as to how to handle the situation. What duties are involved in the situation, and to who or what is the duty owed? Do the duties conflict at all, and if so, how?

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

I. Ethics and Society Overview

- a. Describe the impact society has on **ethical behavior** in law enforcement. Use specific examples to support your claim.
- b. Determine why it is important that society has a say on **ethical expectations** within law enforcement. Why is it important for law enforcement to listen?
- c. Explain the relationship between society and the **development of law**. Defend your response with specific examples.
- d. Assess the importance of **society's role** in the development of law. Why is it important for lawmakers to listen?
- e. Analyze the relationship between **morality and ethics** within American law enforcement.
- f. Explain how society's **changing views** may impact ethical guidelines within American law enforcement. Defend your response.

Select one (1) of the scenarios and answer the following questions.

II. Scenario

Select one (1) of the scenarios and answer the following questions.

- a. Identify the **ethical dilemma** raised by the facts and explain what the ethical dilemma is.
- b. What makes this dilemma **ethical**? What ethics does this dilemma challenge?
- c. Describe the **factors** that led to the dilemma. How can these factors inform your course of action?
- d. What **implications** should be considered when determining your course of action? Why?

III. Ethical Theories and Personal Values

- a. Identify the **ethical theory** you would rely upon to address this dilemma, and describe why it would be effective.
- b. How do you separate **personal morals** from ethics, and why is this important?
- c. When is it appropriate to let your morals guide your **actions**? Why?

IV. Duties

- a. Describe your **course of action** if you were faced with this dilemma. Why would this reaction be appropriate and effective?
- b. What is your **responsibility** as a professional in this scenario? Defend your response.
- c. Does your ethical responsibility take **precedence** over your personal views? What do you do if the two are conflicting?
- d. Identify the impact of society's **changing views** of acceptable behavior as it applies to a criminal justice practitioner's duties.

Milestones

Milestone One: Scenario Selection

In **Module One**, you will review the Final Project Rubric and, in a paragraph, state which scenario you will use for your final project. Explain your reasons for choosing this scenario and identify what you think will be most difficult for you with this project. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Scenario Overview Short Paper

In **Module Two**, you will describe the ethical dilemma chosen to support your final project in a 1–2 page short paper. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Theories, Values, and Duties Short Paper

In **Module Five**, you will describe the theories, personal values, and personal responsibilities as it relates to your selected scenario in a 2–3 page short paper. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Case Study Ethical Analysis

In **Module Seven**, you will submit your final case study ethical analysis. In this final submission, you will identify the issue and explain the proper action that should be taken utilizing the tools gained through this course. Also, you will recommend agency policies to put in place to prevent these ethical dilemmas from arising in the first place. **This submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric (below).**

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your case study ethical analysis needs to be 6–8 pages in length, using 12-point Times New Roman font and following APA guidelines.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Needs Improvement (55%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Overview: Ethical Behavior	Meets “Proficient” criteria and draws connections between societal trends and changes in law enforcement ethics	Describes the impact of society on ethical behavior in law enforcement and supports claim with specific examples	Describes the impact of society on ethical behavior in law enforcement, but does not support claims with specific examples	Does not describe the impact of society on ethical behavior in law enforcement	5.7
Overview: Ethical Expectations	Meets “Proficient” criteria and is supported with specific examples	Determines why it is important for society to have a say in ethical expectations within law enforcement, and establishes why law enforcement agencies should listen	Determines why it is important for society to have a say in ethical expectations within law enforcement, but does not establish why law enforcement agencies should listen	Does not determine why it is important for society to have a say in ethical expectations within law enforcement	5.7
Overview: Development of Law	Meets “Proficient” criteria and cites scholarly research in defense of claims	Explains the relationship between society and the development of law, and defends response with specific examples	Explains the relationship between society and the development of law, but does not defend response with specific examples	Does not explain the relationship between society and the development of law	5.7
Overview: Society’s Role	Meets “Proficient” criteria and is supported with specific examples	Assesses the importance of society’s role in the development of law, and includes why it is important for lawmakers to listen	Assesses the importance of society’s role in the development of law, but does not include why it is important for lawmakers to listen	Does not assess the importance of society’s role in the development of law	5.7
Overview: Morality and Ethics	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports claims with specific examples	Analyzes the relationship between morality and ethics within American law enforcement	Analyzes the relationship between morality and ethics, but analysis is not specific to American law enforcement	Does not analyze the relationship between morality and ethics	5.7
Overview: Changing Views	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports response with specific examples	Explains the impact of society’s changing views on ethical guidelines within American law enforcement and defends response	Explains the impact of society’s changing views on ethical guidelines within American law enforcement, but does not defend response	Does not explain the impact of society’s changing views on ethical guidelines within American law enforcement	5.7
Scenario: Ethical Dilemma	Meets “Proficient” criteria and is well qualified with concrete examples	Identifies the ethical dilemma raised by the facts, and explains what the ethical dilemma is	Identifies the ethical dilemma raised by the facts, but does not explain what the ethical dilemma is	Does not identify the ethical dilemma raised by the facts	5.7

Scenario: Ethical	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates a nuanced understanding of ethical implications	Determines what makes the dilemma ethical and what ethics it challenges	Determines what makes the dilemma ethical, but does not address what ethics it challenges	Does not determine what makes the dilemma ethical	5.7
Scenario: Factors	Meets “Proficient” criteria and describes specific instances where factors can inform the course of action	Describes factors that led to the dilemma, and how factors can inform a course of action	Describes factors that led to the dilemma, but does not address how factors can inform a course of action	Does not describe factors that led to the dilemma	5.7
Scenario: Implications	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports response with specific examples	Identifies implications that should be considered when determining a course of action, and defends response	Identifies implications that should be considered when determining a course of action, but does not defend response	Does not identify implications that should be considered when determining a course of action	5.7
Ethical Theories and Personal Values: Ethical Theory	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports claims with scholarly sources	Identifies ethical theory to address dilemma, and describes why it would be effective	Identifies ethical theory to address dilemma, but does not describe why it would be effective	Does not identify ethical theory to address dilemma	5.7
Ethical Theories and Personal Values: Personal Morals	Meets “Proficient” criteria and provides specific examples	Determines how to separate personal morals from ethics, and establishes importance of separation	Determines how to separate personal morals from ethics, but does not establish importance of separation	Does not determine how to separate personal morals from ethics	5.7
Ethical Theories and Personal Values: Actions	Meets “Proficient” criteria and provides specific relevant scenarios to support claims	Determines when it is appropriate to let morals guide actions, and defends claims	Determines when it is appropriate to let morals guide actions, but does not defend claims	Does not determine when it is appropriate to let morals guide actions	5.7
Duties: Course of Action	Meets “Proficient” criteria and claims are well qualified	Describes course of action and why reaction would be appropriate and effective	Describes course of action but does not describe why reaction would be appropriate and effective	Does not describe course of action	5.7
Duties: Responsibility	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports response with specific examples from scenario	Determines responsibility as a professional in the scenario, and defends response	Determines responsibility as a professional in the scenario, but does not defend response	Does not determine the responsibility of a professional in the scenario	5.7
Duties: Precedence	Meets “Proficient” criteria and solutions are relevant and plausible	Establishes if ethical responsibility takes precedence over personal views, and how to address them if they are conflicting	Establishes if ethical responsibility takes precedence over personal views, but does not establish how to address them if they are conflicting	Does not establish if ethical responsibility takes precedence over personal views	5.7

Duties: Changing Views	Meets “Proficient” criteria and supports claims with a real-world example	Identifies the impact of society’s changing views of acceptable behavior, and addresses how it applies to a criminal justice practitioner’s duties	Identifies the impact of society’s changing views of acceptable behavior, but does not address how it applies to a criminal justice practitioner’s duties	Does not identify the impact of society’s changing views of acceptable behavior	5.7
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	3.1
Earned Total					100%