Using academic integrity to teach business ethics

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Introduction

Business schools are valiantly trying, but often struggling, to ready business students for their careers with the requisite business and technical skills, but also with the requisite ethics for engaging in ethical and socially responsible business. Business ethics courses are pivotal in arriving at such ends. These courses are integral to business education as they contribute to students' moral development and ultimately inform to ethical behaviors post-graduation (Crossan et al., 2013).

An effective course in business ethics allows students to build skills in identifying and addressing ethics problems, concerns, and dilemmas. While these courses do not *make* students ethical, they are a starting point in making ethical behavior more salient to their lives. But because these courses are often standalone courses with no other reinforcement such as embedding ethics in other business courses, there is tremendous pressure for business ethics professors to make these courses are effective as possible; thus, pressure to choose pedagogical approaches that are as effective as possible. To that end, this paper answers a call from May, Luth, and Schwoerer (2014) to develop instructional methods that allow students to link ethics to their values, and then to their careers. The pedagogy suggested herein is an axiological approach to bridging personal integrity, academic integrity (AI), and business ethics. The pedagogy suggested below addresses one of the biggest challenges to teaching business ethics which is students' emotional detachment from the ethics issues under discussion in such a class. This is achieved by using the ethics issues related to AI transgressions to create a stronger affective link between students' and the course content.

AI BASED PEDAGOGY: A PROBLEM SOLVER

Problem One--AI Transgressions Among Business Students and Graduates

There is no disputing that AI is not of concern to some who study business (though there are conflicting findings as to whether business students cheat more than others: see Klein et al., 2007; Lang, 2013; McCabe, Butterfield and Trevino, 2006). It's fair to say that there is a myriad of reasons why business students take a blasé approach to AI. Indeed, the literature abounds with details as to the whys, the hows, and the how often. Indeed, there is much in the literature to suggest why business graduates/business professionals behave unethically. What is likely to common to both the academic and professional context though, and pertinent to this paper, is an argument put forth by Tang and Chen (2008). They argue that the "win at all costs" perspective that prevails within and beyond business schools, relegates

ethics secondary to making money. This win at all costs attitude and all of the other justifications and opportunism must not be allowed to unduly influence attitudes towards AI.

There is much to suggest that cheating during college might well predict unethical behavior in business. Lawson (2004) found that students who cheated at college saw unethical behavior in business to be less unethical. Moreover, and more importantly, Sims (1993) found that graduate business students that behaved dishonestly in college went on to behave dishonestly at work. Similarly, a link between the cheating behavior of business students in college and their ethics at work was found by Noni and Swift (2001). More alarmingly however are the findings of Teixeira (2013). She found that countries with high levels of cheating by economics and business students during college experience more corruption. So if we can diminish student cheating and not allow AI transgressions to become their norm, then perhaps we can decrease the likelihood of students behaving unethically once they graduate.

Teaching Outcomes--AI Transgressions Among Business Students

This subordination of ethics caused by the win at all costs attitude described above simultaneously challenges business ethics professors and educational institutions; the former having to convince students that sitting in a business ethics course is time well spent and the latter having to convince students that AI is also a worthy pursuit. Business ethics professors must aggressively raise the esteem business students hold for AI because students cheat in business ethics courses also! Embedding AI as a central pedagogical component of the course and not allowing it to remain tangential to the course is an imperative.

As pointed out above, students come to business ethics courses in full confidence that they are good people (which they are of course) who would never behave unethically. This course is a safe place for them to come to the realization that good people also do bad things; themselves included. The AI-professional integrity statistics referenced above are an effective way to teach this as well as concepts like the slippery slope effect, rationalizing, justifying, power dynamics and so forth. Students with little work experience are unable to foresee how they might be inclined to behave unethically as they have little to work with. But if we are to be persuaded by the AI literature as to the preponderance of AI transgressions documented among undergraduate students, we have good reason to believe that many students discussing AI transgressions in a business ethics course have themselves behaved unethically with respect to ethics in the academic domain and as such can quietly ponder on what that means for their future professional selves. If they can justify cheating at college then perhaps business ethics professors can persuade them that they might do the same in their professional careers. This is a better lesson on ethics than any abstract business example that a professor might otherwise use.

Problem Two--The Saliency of Business Ethics Issues to Business Students

There tends to be a common approach taken to teaching business ethics. First, professors teach theories such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics so that students can develop their moral reasoning skills and thereafter students are taught to build upon this through using ethical dilemmas and/or case studies. While this pedagogical approach is widespread, it is not without its critics. Orms (2016) suggested that the pedagogical tools currently in use in business ethics courses may be helpful but they are insufficient in creating ethical decision makers: they are better than nothing, but nonetheless, inadequate. Moreover, Neesham and Gu (2015) argue that teaching students ethical decision-making through ethical theories and frameworks such as deontology or utilitarianism is insufficient because rules-based pedagogy does not activate the students'—the moral agents—affective character. They also make an argument against the use of case studies as a pedagogical approach to teaching business ethics because students are not personally involved with the cases under analysis and consequently they are not emotionally involved; thus students don't get much from them because there is little to tie a case to a student's life or future. In summary, reasoning business ethics issues in the classroom using principles, rights, consequences or virtues simply does not tie students' strongly enough, emotionally speaking, to ethics. More importantly though prioritizing reasoning in teaching ethics hides the notion that ethics requires people to be more than reasoned decision makers. Moreover, business courses that focus only on reasoned decision making run the risk that students will leave the course with nothing more than an improved ability to make decisions; skills they can pick up in other courses just as readily. So business ethics professors must find an intervention to raise students' affective connection to the course.

Learning Outcome--The Saliency of Business Ethics Issues to Business Students

Using AI in a business ethics course as the ethics issue with which students practice, addresses the missing affect link described above; that is to say, analyzing AI transgressions makes ethics pertinent to students' lives [5]. This counters the problem faced by professors who are unable to make the course sufficiently salient to students' lives and who come to the learning experience wondering why they need to learn how to be ethical when they are already good people. Ethics by feeling may be more influential in influencing ethical behavior than ethics by reasoning (Cushman, Young, & Hauser, 2006) and thus increasing the emotional attachment students have with the material makes the course more effective.

The assignment

The learning outcomes discussed above can be addressed in one large teaching module and related project. To recapitulate, the goal is to make business ethics teaching more effective and AI more salient to the lives of business students by employing the emotional component of AI to support ethics teaching and to employ business ethics pedagogy to raise awareness of AI issues. This assignment is embedded in the component of the course where students learn about values theory, their own values, and how values are created and used in their personal careers. As such, this is very multidimensional assignment and requires an in-depth

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[5] Of course it goes without saying that some students don't care about AI either. But this not respecting AI can be useful too, as these students will have to rationalize and justify why it is an non-issue. This is useful as a form of practice too.

understanding of the values theory [6]. Because I want to anchor the learning outcomes to theory, I use Schwartz's personal values theory to help students articulate how their values stance overlaps with or undermines AI. They can use the same approach to determine how their values might support or undermine business and professional ethics.

Hartman (2016) suggests that our role as business ethics educators is to help students answer the question as to 'what shall I do.' In this case it would be what I should do if presented with the opportunity or temptation to cheat. Hartman argues that what is helpful in this regard is that students know what they value; ergo, the use of personal values in teaching business ethics. In this specific case the question would be what values would lead a student to have a favorable attitude towards cheating (in its many forms) and more importantly what values would be enrolled in the decision to actually cheat. I have been using axiology, the study of values, for nine years to teach business ethics though not necessarily using AI as the ethical issue all of this more. The elements of the assignment are:

  a. A discussion of the link between values, attitudes and behavior.
  b. Calculation of students values using the Schwartz theory on human values.
  c. Collection of information on students' perspectives on AI.
  d. Teaching students how to interpret their values data and apply their findings to their attitudes and behavior regarding AI.
  e. Linking students' views on AI to future professional behavior.

This values-based pedagogy furnishes students with appropriate language to reflect upon and articulate their motivations with respect to AI. Values according to Schwartz and Bilsky (1987, p. 551) are "concepts or beliefs, pertaining to desirable end states, which transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and are ordered by relative importance." Drob (2016) rightly states that values are in many ways separate from morals, ethics, and virtues. Values are tools that allow us to understand our attitudes and behaviors and to appraise the attitudes and behaviors of others as we compare them to our own.

Values include what we determine is right and wrong, or good and bad. Because of their evaluative nature, values can be the basis upon which we challenge the attitudes and behaviors of ourselves and others; thus, their applicability to evaluating business behavior and behavior that supports or undermines AI. My goal with the assignment is to afford students the opportunity to think in a very meaningful way about their values. They then use this information in the context or their attitudes towards AI and their predictions about when they might be able to justify cheating behavior or buying a paper from a paper mill for example.

Assignment Element A

It is common to equate attitudes to values, but whereas values have broad use due to their abstract and enduring nature, attitudes are more dynamic. Attitudes might be positive or

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[6] Even though there is a very specialized values aspect to this assignment it is very much possible to simplify this assignment to remove the values learning outcome.

negative, or weak versus strong, values cannot. Attitudes' relationship to values is that they link values to behavior, through what is known as the value-attitude-behavior (VAB) hierarchy. The assignment starts with a lesson on this hierarchy.

Assignment Element B

Once students are familiar with how values interact with behaviors, they complete the Schwartz Values Survey (SVS). The SVS is made up of two lists of values, where students must rate these values as guiding principles in their lives using a 9-point Likert scale. Using List I, students must select the least and most important values to anchor all subsequent choices on List I before completing the full list. They repeat this process with list II.   They then use an EXCEL spreadsheet to abstracts the 57 individual values into ten value types. Students are able to rank the 10 value types from least to most important.

Schwartz's (1992) identified 57 individual values present in societies across the globe (see Table 1). He determined this using the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), which has become a widely used tool to gather data on the values positions of groups around the world and in many contexts. Schwartz's work ultimately determined that these 57 individual values can be grouped together into 10 value types based on their common motivational goal (See Table 2.) These values types are: Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-direction, Benevolence, Universalism, Conformity, Tradition, and Security (see table 1). Schwartz's theory is laid out in a very effective and readily understood conceptual framework in the form of a circumplex (see Figure 1). Each wedge of the circumplex represents one of the ten value types, each value type being comprised of a subset of the 57 individual values. The location of each wedge is meaningful, as it indicates the relationship between the values each wedge represents, which in turn impacts subsequent behavior. This second aspect to Schwartz's work, the relationships between value types, speaks to the notion that a person may be motivated by multiple value types at the same time, especially when they share similar underlying motivational goals (see Table 3).

According to Schwartz (1992) behavior consistent with individuals' values stance has practical, psychological, and social implications and as such, behavior consistent with one value type may conflict with that constituent with another value type if the two values don't share a motivational goal (see Table 3).   For example, the set of individual values of which Power is comprised (social power, authority, wealth, preserving my public image, social recognition) satisfies peoples' motivation with respect to "social status and prestige, control, or dominance over people and resources" (Schwartz, 1994, p. 22).

Behavior based on Power does not conflict with Achievement (individual values successful, capable, ambitious, influential, intelligent), because it relates to the need for "personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards" (p. 22). The shared motivational goal here is "Social superiority and esteem" (p. 24), thus the congruency

in potentially related attitudes and behavior. I then teach to which values drive interest in constructs like choice of degree, social justice activities, pastimes and hobbies, consumption preferences and so forth. In general, I give them an overview of the findings from the last couple of decades on research findings linking values to behavior. It is here that I first introduce the notion that cheating is also connected to values.

Assignment Element C

Students complete a short survey comprised of questions from both the McCabe Academic Integrity Student Survey and the Ferguson Academic Integrity Student Survey. Students are not required to share the details with anyone, but rather use the survey responses later in the assignment in conjunction with their values responses.

Assignment Element D

This next stage of the assignment is where students begin to learn how to link their values numbers to specific behaviors. Having completed the SVS and working with me to interpret the numbers they begin to articulate their values stance. For example, they can describe themselves as being most motivated by Power and least motivated by Universalism.

An interesting element of the course arises at this point when students hear their peers' express motivations that are different to their own. They have an opportunity to see where how they differ and if this is something with which they are comfortable. For example, many students believe they are broadminded and support issues of justice etc. but on comparing themselves to their peers and the literature they find they might be more Power or Achievement oriented than they would have though. They can be surprised to see that they are more motivated by Tradition and Conformity when they would have previously described themselves as being motivated by Self-directed for example.

With respect to the AI findings, students must make relationships between their stance on AI and their values. While there is no one academic paper to where I can point students to look for the links there are indicators in the literature as to how the 10 categories of values discussed above might be linked to AI. Also, because I have been working in this closely with students for almost a decade now, I have much anecdotal evidence as to the links.

Assignment Element E

During this final phase of the assignment I go through evidence in the literature regarding the correlation between lack of ethics in school and subsequently at work, which we use as a jumping off point to discuss the rationalizing and justifying behavior, incrementalism, slippery slope, power dynamics, habituation and so forth

Conclusion

By the time students graduate there is a very high chance that they will have cheated at least one while at college (Drye, Lomo-David & Snyder, 2018). That said, we might take some solace from Giacalone and Promislos' (2013) proposition that while it is common to overestimate people's interest in behaving ethically, it is nonetheless still possible to encourage students to be behave ethically. I hope that learning and assignments such as those described in this paper, can help with this. Unfortunately, though, as Arlow and Ulrich (1985) point out that while attitudes toward cheating improved after an ethics course, over time it reverts back to its baseline. So it incumbent upon my peers to play their part in the fight. Even if they don't, at least students being more aware of AI issues.

The prevalence of unethical behavior persisting across time reinforces the danger of ignoring student cheating (Teixeira, 2013). Students' attitudes and behavior with respect to AI can be positively impacted, but a semester long approach is requisite to do so (Shaftel & Shaftel, 2005). This assignment while not a semester-long assignment, it is a part of a semester- long project linking values to business ethics and social responsibility, so I expect it to have some impact.

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Tables

Table 1. *Schwartz's 57 Single Values*

Value Type	Single Values
Universalism	broadminded, wisdom, social justice, equality, a world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, protecting the environment
Self-direction	creativity, freedom, independent, curious, choosing own goals, self-respect
Stimulation	daring, a varied life, an exciting life
Hedonism	pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgent
Power	social power, authority, wealth, preserving my public image, social recognition
Achievement	successful, capable, ambitious, influential, intelligent
Security	family security, national security, social order, clean, reciprocation of favors, sense of belonging, healthy
Tradition	humble, accepting my portion in life, devout, respect for tradition, moderate
Conformity	politeness, obedient, self-discipline, honoring of parents and elders
Benevolence	helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible, true friendship, mature love

Schwartz (1992, Table IV, p. 28).

Table 2. *Schwartz's Value Types and Their Motivational Goals*

Value Type	Motivational Goal
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
Self-direction	Independent thought and action—choosing, creating, exploring
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection, for the welfare of all people and for nature
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact
Tradition	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture and religion provide
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self

Adapted from Schwartz (1994, p. 22)

Table 3 . *Schwartz's Value Types and Their Shared Motivational Goals*

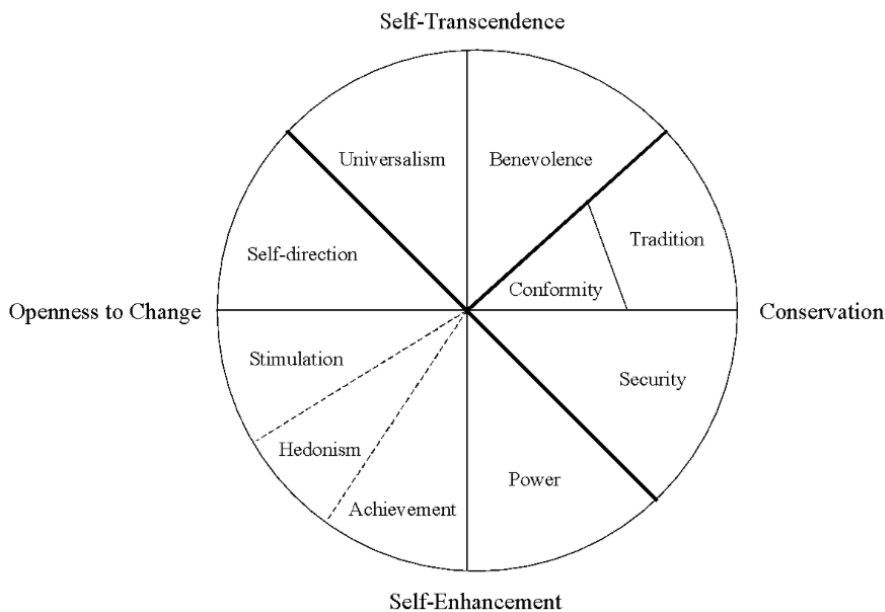| Value Types	Shared Motivational Goal
Universalism & Benevolence	Enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests
Benevolence & Tradition	Devotion to one's in-group
Benevolence & Conformity	Normative behavior that promotes close relationships
Conformity & Tradition	Subordination of self in favor of socially imposed expectations
Tradition & Security	Preserving existing social arrangements that give certainty to life
Conformity & Security	Protection of order and harmony in relations
Security & Power	Avoiding or overcoming threats by controlling relationships and resources
Power & Achievement	Social superiority and esteem
Achievement & Hedonism	Self-centered satisfaction
Hedonism & Stimulation	A desire for affectively pleasant arousal
Stimulation & Self-direction	Intrinsic interest in novelty and mastery
Self-direction & Universalism	Reliance upon one's own judgement and comfort with the diversity of existence

Adapted from Schwartz (1994, p. 24-25)

Table 4 . *Schwartz's Bi- Polar Values Dimensions*

Dimension	Value Types
Self -Transcendence	Universalism & Benevolence
Self – Enhancement	Power & Achievement & Hedonism
Conservation	Conformity & Tradition & Security
Openness to Change	Hedonism & Stimulation & Self-direction

Adapted from Schwartz (1994, p.25)

Figure

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of Schwartz value types from Schwartz (1994, p. 24)