**Fall-Apart**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company), utility (to the areas outside the community, and also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negativesfor all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

A large discount store, Fal-Apart, employs a large number of part-time workers to avoid paying health benefits

and other benefits they would have to pay for full time employees. This company often works employees

overtime, especially during the end-of-year holidays. But when employees receive their paychecks, they realize

that they did not get paid the usual time-and-a-half when they worked over forty hours a week. Fal-Apart

explained that the reason they do not pay for overtime during the holidays is, after December first, at the point

the employee’s time card reaches forty hours, that employee is automatically terminated and rehired as contract

labor. For that reason, no overtime pay is incurred; therefore, none is given. Evaluate the ethics of this

company’s practice according to rights, justice, and utility and care. (The answer refers to your explanation

regarding your evaluation: is this company’s practice ethical? Keep in mind, the reason Fal-Apart can employ

so many workers AND keep its prices low is because of this policy. If they change this policy, it will affect

employees and consumers. The evaluation of rights, justice, and utility should support the final answer to the

question is this practice ethical.) The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and

care support it. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer

justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for

example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**The Fighting Indians**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the university and

the local Native American population), and utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better

solution that would minimize the negatives for all?) and care (family and friends) and reach a solution.

The University of Monroe’s mascot is Red Feather, the fighting Cherokee Indian. When UM played their rival,

the University of Port Brum, UPB hung effigies of Native Americans around campus. At a pep rally they

burned a Native American image as they sang, “Kill the Indians!” The Native Americans on campus attempted

to persuade Student Affairs that they were offended. Student Affairs dismissed the complaint as from a

“whining minority.” Evaluate the ethics–justice, rights, utility, care--of the situation. What is the ethical

solution for Student Affairs? The answer to this question should be supported by the answers to rights, justice,

utility, and care. The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care support it.

In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer justified in light

of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other

evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Joe and Uno Bank**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company), and

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends) and reach a solution.

Joe is a young accountant employed in the auditing department at Uno First National Bank. The employee

handbook, which Joe signed that he had read, states clearly that employees in auditing are not to date other

employees of the bank. After two weeks of employment at Uno, Joe falls in love with and moves in with

Cassandra from the mortgage division. He duly notifies his boss of his change of address. A few weeks later,

the mortgage division must be audited. Joe is laid off without pay during the week of the audit because of his

relationship with Cassandra. Supervisors are afraid his emotional attachment to a member of that department

may affect the audit. Upon his return to work, Joe feels he has been treated unfairly. Was it ethical for Uno to

lay off Joe without pay? Evaluate the ethics of this situation, looking at the rights, justice, and utility and care

of the situation. The evaluation of rights, justice, and utility and care should support the answer to the question,

“Was it ethical for Uno to lay off Joe without pay?” The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights,

justice, utility, and care support it. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be

explained, and the answer justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay,

just explain how, for example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Diet Joke**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company), and

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?), and care (of family and friends) and reach a solution.

A popular diet cola, “Diet Joke,” advertises that it contains merely a single calorie. Yet, in actuality, it contains

sixty calories per 12 ounce serving. Every year the Food and Drug Administration finds the company guilty of

false advertising. And for the past ten years, the cola company has paid the $3000 fine and continued to

advertise falsely. Evaluate the ethics of the cola company’s decision based on rights, justice, utility and care. Is

it ethical for Diet Joke to continue to advertise falsely? The evaluations of rights, justice, utility and care should

support the answer to the question, Is it ethical for Diet Joke to continue to advertise falsely? Keep in mind that

if Diet Joke has to say that it is sixty calories, it will not be able to compete with Diet Poopsi, which also falsely

advertises. In addition, if the company suffers, workers will suffer as well. The answer should explain HOW

the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care support it. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting

support should be explained, and the answer justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification:

conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t

agree).

**Interpersonal Communication**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the university), and

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends) and reach a solution.

At Metropolitan Community College, Interpersonal Communication 1100 is a requirement for all majors. Sarah

has the class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4pm until 6pm with a five minute break in the middle. The

instructor, Dr. Allaway, is very strict about the five minute break. She is ready for class to begin exactly five

minutes after the break is announced. The class is held on the fourth floor, and Sarah must travel down to the

ground to smoke quickly to arrive back in class exactly five minutes later. Dr. Allaway has warned Sarah

several times about coming into class late. Last time she told her she was NEVER to be late again. During her

break, she checks her watch and sees she has thirty seconds to make it back to class. When she arrives in class,

Dr. Allaway is waiting for her. She lectures her once again on being late. Sarah looks at her watch and sees she

is five seconds late. She informs Dr. Allaway in a nasty tone that she is only five seconds late. Dr. Allaway

hits her in the face. Evaluate the ethics of the situation for Sarah, Dr. Allaway, and the rest of the class based on

justice, rights, utility, and care. Was it ethical for Dr. Allaway to hit Sarah, and what would have been a more

ethical course of action for Dr. Allaway? The evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care should support the

answer to this question of was it ethical for Dr. Allaway to hit Sarah, and what would have been a more ethical

course of action for Dr. Allaway. The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and

care support it. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer

justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for

example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Just a Little Harmless Fun?**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the university), and

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends) and reach a solution.

At the University of Eastern Michigan, the Lambda Gamma Alpha fraternity has recently added a ceramic lawn

boy to its front yard. One night at a party, they decide to paint it black and hang it by its neck in a tree. The

following day of classes, an African American law professor passes by and sees it. He decides to inform the

fraternity of the legal ramifications of the spectacle. As he approaches the doorway, a fraternity brother appears

on the upper level balcony and throws a chair at him. The professor leaves and informs the administration of

the behavior. The school administration holds a hearing where the head of the fraternity apologizes to the

professor but says, “I don’t think it’s a really big deal, and we won’t get in any trouble for it anyway.” A week

later, the fraternity’s charter is removed, and they are thrown off campus. Evaluate the ethics of the situation

for the fraternity at the University of Eastern Michigan. Was the school administration's action ethical?

What should the school administration do with the fraternity? The answer to the question “What was the ethical

response of the University?” should be supported by the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care. The

answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care support it. In the case of

conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer justified in light of the

conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other

evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Fun in Physics 101**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company),

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

At Owens Community College, during the first day of Physics 101, a college instructor arrives to find one of his

students is severely mentally and emotionally disabled. It is apparent the student cannot read the syllabus. He

also cannot sit still. He sits on the front row and stays busy by continually cramming chocolate snack cakes into

his teeth and turning to show the other students his “trick.” After the instructor reads the relevant parts of the

syllabus to the class, he pauses to ask for questions. The student angrily yells, “I didn’t understand anything

you said!” with snack cake blowing out of his teeth. The instructor is unnerved, and the other students are

distracted by the student's behavior. After going over the syllabus three times with the student, while the other

students listen, the confused student still cannot understand it. He admits that he cannot read or

write. However, due to an Ohio state law, students cannot be removed from class just because they might not

be able to perform in it. Nor can they be removed from class because they are not qualified to be in it. The

instructor speaks to the dean, who says he must teach the student. He then speaks to the student, who insists that

he will take the class. The student also says it is necessary that he eat snack cakes in class exactly like he wants

to. There are no school rules to the contrary. The instructor then decides he will deliberately fail the student as

quickly as possible in order to improve the environment for the other students. Evaluate the ethics of his action

according to rights, justice, utility, and care. Is it ethical for the professor to fail the student as soon as

possible? Your evaluation should support your answer. The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of

rights, justice, utility, and care support the answer. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support

should be explained, and the answer justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting

support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Irony in the Workplace**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company),

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

Anthony is hired to a prestigious architecture firm in Houston, Texas. After being there for two weeks, he is told

that he must take a sexual harassment training seminar, along with all the other new hires. He enters the room

and sits down, along with ten or so other employees, about half male and half female. Roger, the trainer, enters

the room and begins talking about the legal ramifications of unwelcome behavior in the workplace. Roger then

begins to present examples of unwelcome behavior in the workplace. He approaches Anthony, and he taps him

on the shoulder and says, “For example, it would be inappropriate for me to say, ‘Hello Anthony. You are

looking lovely today. Those pants fit you so well.’” Roger then returns to the training, and then offers to provide

an example. Again, he returns to Anthony and makes a suggestive comment. Anthony is increasingly

uncomfortable because while he is homosexual, and his company does not discriminate on the basis of sexual

orientation, he doesn’t know how to respond. He believes that if he were heterosexual, perhaps Roger’s desire

to provide an example might be appropriate. However, given the reality of the situation, he finds himself in the

strange position of being publicly sexually harassed in a sexual harassment training seminar. The fifth time

Roger approaches Anthony to make a sexually explicit comment to him, Anthony responds, “Um, Roger, these

examples are making me uncomfortable. Perhaps you could simply present some hypothetical interactions?”

Roger then asks Anthony to remove himself from the seminar and tells Anthony that he will let his boss know

that he refused to participate in the training. Evaluate the ethics of Roger’s action according to rights, justice,

utility, and care. Is it ethical for Roger to continually use Anthony for demonstration purposes? Is it ethical for

Roger to force Anthony out of the workshop if he won’t participate on Roger’s terms? Your evaluation should

support your answer. The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care

support the answer. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the

answer justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how,

for example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Flying High**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company),

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

Big University recently ordered all employees to begin using Al’s Travel Website to book all their business

travel, promising that Al’s Travel Website will provide large discounts to state employees, thereby saving the

university and the state money. Barbara logs on to Al’s Travel Website and enters the information for her

research trip to Ireland. Al’s Travel Website tells her that it will cost her at least $4,000 to fly to Ireland.

Furthermore, the only seats she can select are in first class. Barbara knows that as a state employee, she cannot

fly first class. She then looks at the popular travel website and finds that she can book the same flight to Ireland

herself for $800, minus the first class. Barbara calls the office of her department’s business manager and

explains the problem, but the business manager can only say, “You must follow Big University’s policy. You

must book through Al’s Travel Website.” Barbara books the first class ticket. Evaluate the ethics of Barbara’s

action according to rights, justice, utility, and care. Is it ethical for Barbara to follow Big University’s new

policy even though she knows it violates other policies? Your evaluation should support your answer. The

answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care support the answer. In the case of

conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer justified in light of the

conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other

evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Time to Share**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company),

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

Long Canyon Elementary is a public elementary school. George and Carla Thorpe, whose son attends the

school, approach the principal and ask if it would be okay for them to lead a short singing program for the

children one day. The principal agrees, glad to have some musical programming for the day. However, the

principal is surprised when the music is religious in nature and interspersed with messages about the Thorpes’

spiritual beliefs. The next day, Mandy and Jim Riley approach the principal. Their daughter attends Long

Canyon Elementary. They ask if they can lead a short singing program for the students. The principal knows

that he must be fair, now that he has let the Thorpes lead a program. He agrees, and the Rileys lead a short

program with religious music and messages about their spiritual beliefs. The next day, the Thorpes meet with

the principal. They are horrified that their child was exposed to different religious beliefs, and they demand the

principal only allow “certain” kinds of musical programming, namely, theirs. The principal agrees and states

that from now on, only one type of music and spiritual messages will be allowed at the elementary school.

Evaluate the ethics of the principal’s decision according to rights, justice, utility, and care. Is it ethical for the

principal to limit what kinds of music and spiritual messages can be shared at the school? Your evaluation

should support your answer. The answer should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care

support the answer. In the case of conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the

answer justified in light of the conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how,

for example, two other evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

**Too Enticing to Work**

Evaluate the situation regarding rights (of individuals), justice (to the community, including the company),

utility (to the areas outside the community, also, is there a better solution that would minimize the negatives for

all?) and care (of family and friends); and reach a solution.

Attorney Don Riggs has an assistant named Lacy Wilson. She is an excellent assistant. She is extremely

attractive. She also has a habit of sometimes wearing very tight clothing. Others in the office have mentioned to

Don that his assistant “could look more professional.” Don really appreciates the great work that Lacy does, but

lately he has found himself noticing more of her “physical assets.” He decides to fire her because she is too

attractive. Evaluate the ethics of Don’s decision according to rights, justice, utility, and care. Is it ethical for a

boss to fire an employee for being too attractive? Your evaluation should support your answer. The answer

should explain HOW the evaluations of rights, justice, utility, and care support the answer. In the case of

conflicting support, that conflicting support should be explained, and the answer justified in light of the

conflicting support (clarification: conflicting support is okay, just explain how, for example, two other

evaluations overrode the one that didn’t agree).

Samples created by Dr. Tamara Powell, Kennesaw State University, January 2016