**The Case Study Paper: Ethical Dilemma**

Ethics PHIL 233 (Fall 2018)

Lisa Cassidy

The point of the case study paper is to (first) do research and (then) craft formal writing in philosophy that takes a stand on a particular ethical crisis.

You will research write a case study of an ethical dilemma related to this class, including a description of the context, the individuals involved, the controversies observed, and the arguments made.  This case study will address all of the General Education Student Learning Outcomes for our Values & Ethics distribution.

To begin, pick a topic that meets the following conditions:

* there is an ethical conflict that has no obvious solution;
* this conflict involves an inequality in the distribution of power and resources at the local, national, and international levels;
* there are forces that shape the individual or group identities of the people involved in this case.

Examples of broad areas of topics that could work:

* Issues in education (access, income, ethnicity, gender, or disability, etc.) in place xyz
* Issues in identity (geography, ethnicity, gender, prisoners, disability, or nationality, etc.) in place xyz
* Cases of human trafficking, or weapons trafficking, or drug trafficking in place xyz
* A particular proposed or enacted border security measure of the Trump administration (wall, travel ban, etc.)
* A particular enacted health care reform included in the ACA/Obamacare
* International food, or clothing, or electronics, or medicine production/sale/trade issues in place xyz
* Controversial sorts of tourism (big game, euthanasia, surrogacy, medical, etc.) in place xyz

Next, narrow down your topic to a specific case (could be as small as involving just two people!) or a very narrow set of cases.  Make sure you aren't doing a paper on, for example, the ethics of capitalism itself, but instead on just the ethics involved in making Nike shoes.

Now, do research on your specific case.  This will include:

* one philosopher we have read in class (in the text book)
* attend a library research session
* include 3-5 newspaper articles on your case, be sure to keep track so you can cite properly!
* you must also include 2 philosophy pieces (journal articles OR philosophy books OR articles from philosophy books) on your topic.  Be sure to keep track so you can cite properly!
* Acceptable journals include:*Journal of Applied Philosophy, International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics, Environmental Values, Journal of Business Ethics, Hastings Center Reports, Philosophy and Public Affairs,* or *Ethics.*Other journals for article sources need my approval!

Finally, write a case study that is in the form of a persuasive essay that answers the questions below.  You must also include one philosopher we have read.

This case study will be about 5 double spaced pages, plus references.  You must use *Chicago author-date*for all ideas not your own, aside from common knowledge.

In the course of your case study, be sure to address all of the following questions:

* Overall, what is your ethical argument regarding this case study?
* Specifically...How do you summarize the ethical perspectives in understanding inequities in the distribution of power and resources in this case?
* Specifically...How do you analyze the distribution of power and resources and their implications at the local, national, and international level in this case?
* Specifically...Can you articulate and evaluate the forces that have shaped individual and group identity for the people involved in this case?
* Specifically...What would one philosopher we have read this term have to say about it?
* Imagine engaging with a real person featured in this case study.  What would you say?
* Now imagine yourself being at the center of this case study.  How might you behave?

Grading Rubric for Case Study Proposal:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NEEDS WORK | COMPETENT | EXCELLENT |
| Well written paragraphs that introduce a specific case study | Problems with   paragraphs and syntax; no formal tone; the case study is not narrowed down but remains very general and the ethical conflict could describe many   different kinds of participants and situations | Some issues with paragraphs, syntax and formal tone; it is clear that the case study is narrowed down to  a specific ethical   conflict but problems pinpointing the participants and situations involved | Paragraphs organized around one idea; perfect syntax; formal tone; it is clear that the case study is narrowed down to  a specific ethical   conflict between specific participants and situations |
| Proposed thesis in our format | Fails to use the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; | Uses the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; | Uses the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; |
| Short paragraph on which class philosopher you will include | Selects one philosopher but that’s it | Selects one philosopher; makes a good first effort about what this person would say about the case study; forgets references | Selects one philosopher; makes a good first effort about what this person would say about the case study; includes proper references |
| References in Chicago author date for 3-5 newspaper articles and for 2 pieces (philosophy books and/or journal articles   from the accepted journal list) | References not in Chicago date at all; missing required items | References in imperfect Chicago author date for all the required items | References in perfect Chicago author date for all the required items |

Grading Rubric for Case Study Draft: draft has all the required elements of the final paper, see below.

Grading Rubric for Case Study Paper:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | NEEDS WORK | COMPETENT | EXCELLENT |
| Good writing | Does not use Chicago author date; not in our format; either very long or very short of 5 pages plus references; problems with paragraphs and syntax; no formal tone | Use of references in Chicago author date; Times New Roman 12 point font, one inch margins; 5 pages plus references; some issues with paragraphs, syntax and formal tone | Perfect use of references in Chicago author date; Times New Roman 12 point font, one inch margins; 5 pages plus references; paragraphs organized around one idea; perfect syntax; formal tone |
| Forming a thesis in our formula and defending it | Fails to uses the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; no real effort at argument | Uses the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; has elements of argument, but rather jumbled together | Uses the formula "In this paper, I will argue that..."; defends this thesis with reasons (i.e., values) and/or evidence (i.e., empirical facts) throughout |
| Deep understanding of one class reading | Gives only a passing glance at the one philosopher; confused about what the philosopher would say about the case study; no real textual details or exchange | Accurate understanding of how the philosopher would understand the case study; moderate use of that philosopher's details; doesn’t really do textual exchange of ideas | Accurate understanding of how the philosopher would understand the case study; good use of that philosopher's details; good textual exchange of ideas |
| Use of news and philosophy research | Uses 1-2 newspaper articles on your case, but forgets philosophy pieces; research strays from topic | Uses 1-2 newspaper articles on your case, as well as 1 piece philosophy (journal articles but not necessarily from the accepted journal list OR philosophy books OR articles from philosophy books) on your topic | Uses 3-5 newspaper articles on your case, as well as 2 pieces philosophy (journal articles from the accepted journal list OR philosophy books OR articles from philosophy books) on your topic |
| Reflections on power & resources and identity issues | Fails to adequately address how power and resources are distributed in this case; fails to adequately address how people’s identities in this case | Has some work on how power and resources are distributed in this case; has some work on how people’s identities in this case | Gives new insight into how power and resources are distributed in this case; gives new insight into how people’s identities in this case |