

# UNION COLLEGE'S RAPAPORT EVERYDAY ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

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## INTRODUCTION

As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, Union College, a small private Northeastern liberal arts college, has a thriving “everyday” ethics across the curriculum program. In less than three years, the program was responsible for the introduction of 45 ethics segments by 43 faculty members in 21 subjects across the four divisions of the college (engineering, humanities, science, and social science). It had also sponsored or co-sponsored 10 lectures, symposia, 31 college ethics workshops and a national undergraduate conference. In this paper the program’s former director and chair describe its origins, the strategy and factors underlying its design and implementation, the elements conducive to its success, and the challenges it has yet to overcome.

## ORIGINS

Provoked to action by ENRON and other ethics scandals parading across the newspaper headlines on an almost-daily basis, in 2003 a Union College alumnus, Michael S. Rapaport Esquire, ‘59, wondered, “Why didn’t a little bell go off in their heads warning these very clever people that they were crossing a line, that there were ethical issues involved?” Puzzled and chagrined, he wanted to make sure that future executives graduating from his alma mater would hear such a bell. His initial approach had been to work with Professor Harold Fried of Union’s Economics department to develop a program introducing ethics into economics courses. (See companion articles in this issue by Michael Rapaport and Professor Fried for details.) As this program proved successful, some three years later Rapaport and Fried approached Robert Baker, a Union Philosophy professor, to explore the possibility of teach-

ing ethics to Union students who would not ordinarily take ethics courses. Characterizing the Philosophy Department's "ethics" courses as preaching to the choir, they sought to move education in "everyday ethics, out of the Philosophy ghetto" (to mix metaphors). Stirred by Rapaport's vision and impressed with Fried's success, Baker agreed to explore the possibilities of what he later discovered was "an ethics across the curriculum initiative." What followed were complex negotiations between Rapaport, seeking to implement an educational vision, Baker, who had agreed to operationalize Rapaport's vision, and a Union administration that was sympathetic but which, like the Philosophy Department, needed funding to hire replacements for Baker, who would be released from some of his teaching responsibilities. These negotiations ended successfully in 2006, and the Rapaport Everyday Ethics Across the Curriculum Initiative was launched.

#### THE ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF UNION'S ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

Baker had directed several innovative educational programs previously: CHUC, a 1980s initiative to introduce computers into the humanities education; a successful 2001 initiative to establish an on-line bioethics graduate program,<sup>1</sup> and a 2004 initiative to use on-line e-education to train research ethicists in Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on this experience and on elements of Fried's successful ethics in Economics project, Baker negotiated a three-and-one-half-year grant that contained the following elements.

- **A clear statement of the project's goals:** which were to demonstrate that with a comparatively "modest allocation of resources, colleges can stimulate student understanding and appreciation of everyday ethics—not ethical theory, but ethics as it affects people in their jobs, professions and daily activities—so that when students encounter ethical issues, ... they will recognize them as ethical (as if a little bell rang inside their head)" and can respond to them appropriately.
- **A clear statement of specific measurable objectives:**
  - **Integrating ethics segments (10% to 20% of a course) into the curriculum of 50 disciplinary courses** (i.e. courses not

designated as “ethics courses”) in all four divisions of Union College.

- **Offering a program of workshops and symposia** to support Union faculty who are integrating ethics segments into disciplinary courses.
- **Supporting a campus-wide extracurricular program** of student- and faculty-initiated speakers and events (symposia, debates, films etc.) related to ethics.
- **Documenting activities** supported by the Everyday Ethics Across the Curriculum initiative.
- **Disseminating information** about the initiative nationwide through a website, presentations at meetings, publications in scholarly and non-scholarly media, and at national conferences of the Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum (SEAC).
- **External foundation support** funding for some Ethics Across the Curriculum activities.
- **An Evaluating Process Using a Benchmark and Deliverables Time Line:** a term-by-term statement of benchmarks to be achieved that served as a basis for bi-annual evaluation of the project.
- **A Grants Program** to fund the faculty development of course segments, speakers, workshop attendance, and similar activities.
- **A Strategy of Rewarding Faculty** by providing monetary compensation for their time and public commendation for their efforts (both were key ingredients in the success of Fried’s ethics in Economics initiative).
- **A Faculty Development Workshop** model to develop faculty expertise in ethics and ethics pedagogy (another key ingredient in the success of Fried’s ethics in Economics initiative).
- **An Administrative Structure** involving an **oversight committee**, a **chair** playing a CEO-planning role, who was compensated by release time, and a **director** in charge of day-to-day operations, website, documentation, organizing events, etc. compensated by a half-time salary.
- **Space and Services** (including webspace and IT services) to be provided by Union College.

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## PLANNING THE RAPAPORT ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

After the agreement was signed, Dr. Anastasia Pease was brought on board to serve as the initiative's director of operations. Dr. Pease was enthusiastic about the cause and became instrumental in the success of the initiative. The director's role involves day-to-day organizing and supervising initiative operations, maintaining the website, keeping financial records, documenting activities and their impact, and working with Baker, the initiative's Chair, with Rapaport, the donor, and with the advisory board to plan initiative activities. The Director also works with faculty on research for new ideas and ethics segments, as well as visits individual classes to observe ethics segments in progress.

The first challenge that Baker and Pease faced involved a series of questions about how best to construct an ethics across the curriculum initiative. They consulted the Society of Ethics Across the Curriculum website,<sup>3</sup> *Teaching Ethics*, and other published sources, as well as directors of established ethics across the curriculum programs. As they reviewed the landscape of programs, it became evident to Baker and Pease that most had adopted one or the other of two different approaches to creating an ethics across the curriculum program: an applied moral philosophy (AMP) approach or a practical skills (PS) approach. Thus the first decision confronting anyone initiating an ethics across the curriculum program was: which approach should one take?

Thoughtful and persuasive characterizations of the AMP approach can be found in Dr. Lisa Newton's *Manual for Courses in Practical and Professional Ethics*, which is accessible on the Society of Ethics Across the Curriculum website,<sup>4</sup> and in the Marymount University program described by Michael Boylan and James Donahue in *Ethics Across the Curriculum*.<sup>5</sup> On both characterizations the AMP model faces the challenge of increasing the non-philosophy faculty's expertise in moral philosophy to the point where they can apply it competently in the classroom. Some AMP programs prepare non-philosophy faculty by paying them to participate in summer seminars in moral philosophy (e.g., Utah Valley University; formerly Utah Valley State College).<sup>6</sup>

The University of San Diego Ethics Across the Curriculum program also holds moral philosophy workshops for non-philosophy faculty. In addition, it provides an excellent website<sup>7</sup> for non-philosophy faculty that instantiates the AMP model and its underlying pedagogical tenet that one cannot "apply ethics without a grounding in basic theory, principles or

concepts.”<sup>8</sup> As the eye scans the program’s homepage, it first encounters an “Ethical Theory” column with its list of theories, from “Aristotle and Virtue Ethics” sitting atop, to “Utilitarianism” at the bottom. The next major column, “Resources,” offers on-line access to classical texts from Plato to Kant and Nietzsche. The last column, “Applied Ethics,” contains material illustrating applications of ethical theory to issues arranged alphabetically from A (abortion), to S (sexual orientation), to W (world hunger). The website clearly illustrates that to “apply moral philosophy” or to “apply ethics” involves using the moral theories of philosophers, like Plato or Kant, to address practical moral problems like abortion and world hunger.

Another approach to ethics across the curriculum is also pervasive in the literature but, curiously, it lacks a standard name and is often presented as if it also lacks a rationale. In a presentation designed for a meeting of the Central Division of the American Philosophical Association, for example, Lawrence Hinman offers a comprehensive overview of ethics across the curriculum programs. In addition to sage advice, Hinman’s overview contains a helpful grid detailing possible program configurations.<sup>9</sup> The section of the grid devoted to the practical skills (PS) approach to ethics across the curriculum is labeled “decentralized programs”—a characterization that suggests that such programs lack a distinct rationale or *raison d’être*, being merely “decentralized” rather than offering an alternative approach to the subject. More surprisingly still, on the SEAC website itself, although ample space is devoted to the PS approach, no name or standard label is affixed to this approach. For example, the SEAC website cites a casebook of engineering ethics by Professor Geza Kardos that urges engineering faculty to “hav[e] students wrestle with the issues . . . to learn . . . to detect useful information, to recognize false arguments, to construct a coherent problem definition, to see more than one side of a situation, to decide which is best, and on this basis formulate and defend a course of action.”<sup>10</sup> Although this is an apt characterization of the PS model, Kardos never dignifies his approach with an appellation—nor, to reiterate, does any other material prominently cited on the website.

As the philosopher Wittgenstein famously observed, “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”<sup>11</sup> Unnamed and nameless, the PS approach gets only limited recognition in discussions of ethics across the curriculum. Its very namelessness seems to undermine its legitimacy, making it appear deficient—especially to the theory-oriented AMP protagonist. For how, an AMP protagonist might ask, can engineers, or management professors, or science faculty teach ethics without first attaining

some mastery of the basic theories, principles, and concepts of moral philosophy?

Writing in defense of the PS approach taken at the Air Force Academy—in an article in which the PS approach is again left unnamed—philosopher Bill Rhodes<sup>12</sup> cites the work of a fellow philosopher Samuel Scheffler<sup>13</sup> who offers a theory of the pervasiveness of morality. Since morality pervades all fields, it seems reasonable to believe that successful practitioners of any field are likely to have mastered the skills requisite to cope with the moral issues that characteristically arise in that field. Thus the AMP presumption that engineers, management professors and science faculty have insufficient knowledge to teach ethics in the classroom is belied by the quotidian nature of morality itself. Faculty members in any field are likely to be exemplars and experts in the practical skills of the everyday ethics of their own field. Rhodes also observes that Scheffler's is not the only theory that accepts the pervasiveness of morality. Other theories that imply pervasiveness are: common morality theory,<sup>14</sup> convergence theory,<sup>15</sup> human rights theory,<sup>16</sup> moral realism,<sup>17</sup> and all forms of pragmatism.<sup>18</sup> Even such lofty names as “Aristotle” and “Kant” could valorize a PS approach to teaching ethics.

It is not our purpose to explore in any depth the debate between AMP and PS protagonists. Our point is that in order to design an ethics across the curriculum initiative, one needs to decide how to educate non-philosophy faculty and the nature of one's program will depend upon whether one adopts an AMP or a PS model. On an AMP model, educating non-philosophy faculty involves teaching them about the basics of moral philosophy in order to prepare them to introduce discussions of morality into their courses. On the PS model, faculty education is designed to empower and to encourage faculty to recognize their own ethical expertise. A PS ethics across the curriculum initiative thus begins by teaching faculty how to use case studies and other pedagogical techniques to enable them to share their ethical expertise in their fields with their students in an effective and professionally acceptable way. Which ever approach one chooses, AMP or PS, one deploys resources differently.

#### THE UNION COLLEGE RESOURCE INVENTORY

To design an ethics across the curriculum initiative effectively one should take an inventory of the resources available in one's institution

and the opportunities and challenges offered by its institutional history. Our home institution, Union College, is an entirely undergraduate institution of about 2,200 students, who are taught by more than 200 faculty members. It has a very strong departmental structure divided into four administrative divisions: Engineering, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Physical Sciences. The Philosophy department<sup>19</sup> enrolls about 40 majors or joint majors in any given year and sponsors a student philosophy club, a champion ethics bowl team, two undergraduate philosophy journals, philosophical cafes and a popular logic puzzle contest. It also sponsors a major regional colloquium series that hosts about a dozen colloquia a year, usually with nationally known speakers.<sup>20</sup> Roughly one third of the colloquia are devoted to moral philosophy. Six of the seven philosophers in the department have taught or written on moral philosophy. The Union ethics bowl team owes a lot of its success to its former coach, Michael Mathias (currently at Frostburg State University), an expert on business ethics and the history of moral philosophy, while Robert Baker edits an applied ethics reader, has published extensively in bioethics and directs an on-line bioethics graduate program.<sup>21</sup>

Sufficient resources are thus available from within Union College's Philosophy Department to launch an AMP model ethics across the curriculum initiative. In fact, the department attempted to launch such a program in 2005, when Union redesigned its general education requirements. What was proposed was an ethics across the curriculum plan, comparable to Union College's writing-across-the-curriculum, that would require all students to enroll in a number of non-philosophy courses with ethics segments. The Philosophy Department envisioned a series of AMP workshops to educate non-philosophy faculty about moral philosophy and applied ethics. However, the committee overseeing curricular reform resoundingly rejected this proposal on the grounds that ethics had no place in art, math, science or social science courses.

Although the faculty committee's rejection of an AMP style ethics across the curriculum initiative surprised the Philosophy Department, they might have expected as much. No ethics courses were required of all students or students in any major, except for Economics. In 2004-2005 Union's catalogue listed no courses that mentioned ethics in their descriptions—except for economics and philosophy courses. Not only was ethics teaching largely absent from the classroom (outside of economics and philosophy courses), in 2005, statements about students' moral development were absent from the college's literature and official documents, including the college's mission statements and strategic plan.

Union had abolished its honor code in 1925 and, despite repeated attempts, had never reinstated it.<sup>22</sup> Issues of student conduct were treated as disciplinary matters, not as questions of ethics. There was no campus-wide constituency for ethics education in 2005.

The singular exception was the Economics Department. Until 2003, Economics was as uninterested in ethics as any the other department. The Rapaport-Fried initiative changed their perspective. From 2003 to 2005, nine of the eleven members of the department introduced ethics segments into their courses and/or directed student theses or research projects directly related to ethics in economics. Faculty participating in the initiative attended workshops on teaching ethics offered by faculty from the Philosophy Department and by distinguished educators from other campuses, including Aine Donovan, Executive Director of the Institute for the Study of Applied and Professional Ethics at Dartmouth College. They also received a stipend for course development and resources to develop segments and to bring in outside speakers. Participating faculty members were required to submit a full report on their activities. (See Fried paper for further details.)

#### DESIGNING UNION COLLEGE'S RAPAPORT ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

Given the rejection of an ethics across the curriculum initiative in 2005, the dearth of departmental support for ethics outside of the Departments of Economics and Philosophy, and the absence of a commitment to ethics in the college's mission statement and planning documents, extending the model developed in the Economics Department to other departments would be challenging. However, elements integral to the success in the Economics Department suggested that an ethics initiative could be extended across Union's curriculum through an incentive-driven approach in which faculty are given stipends and resources to introduce ethics segments (or "modules") and related activities into their courses. Faculty would be further supported by a series of supplemental workshops on ethics pedagogy, case studies, and ethics-related subjects. For accountability, faculty would be required to report on their ethics activities and accomplishments.

Since we were extending a program from an eleven-member department to a two-hundred-plus faculty-wide program, we decided to coordinate the initiative through a Rapaport Ethics Across the Curriculum website.<sup>23</sup> We also developed a system of supplementary non-financial

incentives by using the website and the intranet to publicize the activities of the Ethics Across the Curriculum grant recipients and, more privately, by sending copies of grant notices and commendation letters to grant recipients and their department chairs.

If the successful Economics Department pilot program over-determined the operational outlines of the college-wide initiative, it nonetheless left open the question of whether to adopt an AMP or PS model, or some hybrid version. Some economics faculty had introduced sophisticated models into their courses, drawing on the work of moral philosophers like John Rawls, a philosopher who had looked to economic models to flesh out his theory of justice. Others had taken a practical skills approach. Almost all the faculty members felt a need for a deeper education in moral philosophy and ethics pedagogy.

Uncertain about the nature of the workshops/training that we would provide, we left the question open and invited Professor Aine Donovan to campus on April 27, 2006, to present a luncheon workshop for about 30 members of the Union faculty and to seek her advice and recommendations. The workshop centered on the use of case studies to teach ethics. Donovan focused her demonstration on a case study that had special relevance for Union College: the Philip Spencer affair. Philip Spencer, a Union student who in 1841 co-founded the Alpha chapter of the Chi Psi fraternity, left Union without graduating in order to seek adventure at sea. He eventually became a midshipman on the naval brig, *Somers*—where he was hanged in 1842 on the grounds that he was inciting a mutiny. The *Somers* affair, as it came to be called, received national publicity and was hotly debated at the time.<sup>24</sup> It led to reforms in military justice, the creation of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and is believed to have formed the basis for Herman Melville's novella, *Billy Budd*. It also led to calls for colleges, like Union, to take responsibility for the moral education of their students—initiating what some consider the first wave of ethics education initiatives in U.S. higher education.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to offering a brilliant demonstration of the use of case studies—dividing classes into discussion groups, using a skeletal case to tease out basic issues and principles, comparing hypothetical responses to actual events—Donovan described Dartmouth's ethics across the curriculum program. As she described it, the program involved intensive in-depth semester-long faculty seminars for faculty engaged in ethics across the curriculum projects. The primary focus of each seminar was moral philosophy and its application. Those attending Donovan's workshop had thus witnessed an exemplary PS demonstration of the use of case

studies to teach ethics and had been told about a strong AMP model ethics across the curriculum program. Subsequent discussions and an informal poll of attendees indicated that they were so impressed with Donovan's case study demonstration that they wanted more PS-style sessions on the use of case studies—at least for the next year or so.

Faculty preferences determined our approach. We decided to initiate our program on a strong PS model. As the program has matured, however, many faculty participants have become interested in moral theory, and we are currently planning a series of workshops to meet this need. Our experience is twofold: one needs to adopt an approach that is suitable to the history and needs of one's own institutional context; furthermore that the PS vs. AMP tension characterized in the literature is less a matter of either/or than which/when. For us, PS worked best as our first approach, supplemented by AMP as faculty members came to request it.

#### UNION'S RAPAPORT ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In March, 2006, the Rapaport Ethics Across the Curriculum Initiative went campus-wide. The following is a summary of the Initiative's main operational details and accomplishments through March 2009.

1. **Faculty Development: On Campus:** *31 On-Campus workshops* were held (circa 20 faculty attending per session) on subjects ranging from pedagogical demonstrations, to reports from participating faculty, to sessions on such special topics as engineering ethics, scientific integrity, and "Teaching Race and other 4-letter topics."<sup>26</sup>
2. **Faculty/Student Development: Off Campus:** *11 faculty and students attended off-campus conferences, or workshops.* Faculty and staff members teaching regularly-offered courses, including terms abroad and mini-terms, are eligible for support to attend ethics-related conferences and workshops.<sup>27</sup>
3. **Ethics Course Segments Implemented:** *45 Ethics Segments taught; 2 are being developed.* Faculty and teaching staff members are offered a one-time course development stipend to incorporate a regular ethics segment (about 10% of course time), to be taught every time the course is offered. All courses that are not specifically designated as ethics courses are eligible. Funds are also available for purchasing ethics-related curricular materials: books, journal subscriptions, videos, etc.<sup>28</sup>

4. **Extracurricular Ethics Speakers and Events:** *10 well-attended campus-wide events; plus Union's Ethics Across the Curriculum Program hosted the ASBH National Undergraduate Bioethics Conference (NUBC), April '08.* Union College faculty, departments and programs can apply to the Initiative for funding for ethics-related campus-wide events, including speakers, debates, dramatic performances, etc. Among the events hosted for '06-'07 were talks on "Business Ethics from the Perspective of a Convicted White-Collar Criminal" a talk by Walt Pavlo, MBA, former MCI business executive; and a talk on "Engineering Ethics" by Dr. Stephanie Bird, Editor of the journal *Science and Engineering Ethics*.<sup>29</sup> The program also funded the hosting of the National Undergraduate Bioethics Conference by Union student organizations in an effort to engage students planning and directing a major ethics across the curriculum activity.

#### IMPACT ON THE COLLEGE: HONOR CODE, REVISED MISSION STATEMENT, PROPOSED CENTER

A new academic administration took charge of Union College shortly after the Rapaport Ethics Across the Curriculum Initiative was launched. The new president, Stephen Ainlay, had a strong interest in interdisciplinary studies, so did Vice President Therese McCarty, an Economics professor who had participated in Fried's ethics in Economics program, as had the Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies, Douglass J. Klein.<sup>30</sup> As the new administrative team took charge of Union College's strategic planning process, they acknowledged the success of the Fried-Baker-Pease ethics initiatives by changing the opening lines of the master-planning document,<sup>31</sup> using language that would later be echoed in Union College's revised 2008 mission statement:

We develop in our students the analytic and reflective abilities needed to become engaged, innovative, **and ethical contributors** to an increasingly diverse, global, and technologically complex society.<sup>32</sup>

For the first time in at least a half a century, perhaps for the first time since the 1920s, Union College had issued a document officially embracing the ideal of educating students to be ethical. The point to appreciate is that the presence of a successful ethics across the curriculum initiative—an entity formally articulating the ideal of ethics education—enabled a series of decisions that have the potential to change the educational strategies and commitments of a college as a whole.

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## CHALLENGES OF INITIATING AND SUSTAINING AN ETHICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM

All academic programs face a common set of challenges in their first years: developing an organizational and decision-making structure, offering a program, disseminating information about this program to a wider audience, and initiating procedures of reporting and accountability. Surmounting these organizational challenges successfully, Union's ethics across the curriculum program also had to address a set of challenges confronting all ethics across the curriculum initiatives: responding to demands for professionalism, dealing with faculty "comfort zones," the "add-on" problem, and issues of continuity and enthusiasm.<sup>33</sup>

As we embarked upon a series of practical skills workshops, the humanities and social sciences faculty involved discovered that they had been incorporating discussions of ethics into their courses well before our initiative was launched—without recognizing it. Their reaction was akin to Moliere's bourgeois gentleman who remarked, "These forty years now, I've been speaking in prose without knowing it! How grateful am I to you for teaching me that!"<sup>34</sup> They were grateful to have their ethics activities recognized and validated. They were also searching for a deeper understanding of moral philosophy and for innovative pedagogical techniques that would stimulate meaningful discussion about ethical issues in a professional manner, imparting skills and methods without preaching, prescribing, or proscribing. Humanities and social science faculty who had never thought to develop a course with ethics content, or to introduce ethics content into their courses, were also encouraged to do so. (See, Professor Lewis Davis's description of his Economics of Sin course in this issue.)

Science and engineering, however, proved more challenging. Out of forty-five ethics segments funded by the ethics initiative, only ten are in sciences, and just three are in engineering/computer science. Since about half of Union's courses are in science and engineering, a proportionate science and engineering representation should have been considerably greater. Questioned about their reluctance to participate, science and engineering faculty offered a number of reasons. The common perception is that teaching ethics lies outside of their expertise, their "professional comfort zone," because they had never received ethics instruction as part of their own education.

Moreover, Union's 10-week trimester system crams science and engineering courses to capacity with knowledge and skills that students need to master to take subsequent courses. Thus to "add on" an ethics

discussion—10% of their class time, according to the initiative's guidelines—would take valuable class time away from substantive engineering/science—a sacrifice that the faculty are not prepared to make. Most science and engineering faculty prefer to deal with ethics by simply mentioning the relevant professional codes of ethics, which are viewed mostly as litigation-avoidance, rather than moral guidelines. Alternatively, they leave ethics discussions entirely to their peers on the humanities and social sciences, or they relegate the discussion of ethics to the status of interesting (but non-essential) extracurricular activities.

Despite these obstacles, ethics segments have been successfully introduced into a Civil Engineering course (see the description by Professor Ashraf Ghaly in this issue), a Computer Games programming course, Introduction to Computer Science, Organic Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry, Cell Biology, and also into the Biology Department's Introduction to Ecology and an introductory statistics course taught in the Mathematics Department (see the description by Professor Kelly Black in this issue). As Professor Black remarked in his report about his ethics segment, "It can be done!"<sup>35</sup> Three ethics segments in the physical sciences were co-taught with Social Sciences or Humanities faculty. In a course about weapons of mass destruction, a physics professor collaborated with a historian; another course paired an anthropologist and a chemist in two classes about chemical enhancements of athletic performance. Nonetheless, the initiative's first two campus-wide years fell short of reaching the tipping point of faculty enthusiasm in the sciences and engineering.

These challenges became evident after the initiative's first operational year. As the initiative entered its second year, we were determined to address them. We offered advanced "best practices" workshops, introductory sessions on moral philosophy for faculty who wanted to professionalize their methods and their understanding of ethics. To intrigue faculty from engineering and the sciences, and to bring that section of the faculty to the "tipping point," we co-sponsored a Symposium on Integrating Engineering and the Liberal Arts, several workshops and sessions with prominent figures in engineering ethics to try to draw and empower faculty to integrate discussions of "bench-side" ethics (issues of scientific integrity and intellectual property) into their lab sessions and seminars. Although the climate seems to be changing in favor of ethics education, in this area we have yet to achieve the level of penetration to which we aspired. Our plan is to build upon encouraging upward trends and to continue with our efforts to raise the initiative's profile on campus—

especially in science and engineering. As more faculty become involved, we expect that they will help us to recruit others.

The transitory nature of academic life poses a structural challenge to ethics across the curriculum initiatives. Faculty are mobile within and between institutions. Many serve as adjuncts and visitors for limited time periods, and even those with continuing contracts take leaves of absence, or sabbaticals, or assume administrative roles from time to time. Consequently, as the appended chart indicates,<sup>36</sup> even over a relatively short three-year time span, as faculty leave, or change their mix of courses, take leaves, or assume new administrative responsibilities, course offerings and course content changes significantly. Approximately 15% of the ethics segments developed to date will no longer be taught in the future. Thus to achieve our goal of having a significant impact on the Union College curriculum, in order to sustain 50 courses with ethics segments throughout the curriculum, we need to develop more than 50 course segments. We also need to retain the support of current faculty, educate new faculty, and maintain the enthusiasm and support of veteran faculty. Finally, we need to transform the Initiative from a demonstration project into an on-going activity

Anyone who Googles “ethics across the curriculum” beyond three or so web pages discovers the electronic shards of other ethics across the curriculum initiatives that appear to have been abandoned after some initial period of success. Our challenge is not only to demonstrate that an ethics across the curriculum initiative can flourish at a non-denominational institution like Union, even in an environment that was once officially indifferent, if not hostile to ethics education, but that it can thrive and become integral to the college’s on-going educational mission. We are currently working with the administration to develop a permanent institute for ethics, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement. At this writing, as American society plunges into the worst recession in over a half-century, it is an open question whether Union College can successfully fund the institute. The effort, however, is a testament to the vision of a single alumnus, Michael S. Rapaport ‘59, a trio of intrapreneurial faculty members, an administration with the foresight and gumption to support them, and with about four-dozen Union College faculty members willing to boldly experiment with bringing ethics into their classes and across the college’s curriculum.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The Union Graduate College-Mount Sinai School of Medicine Bioethics Program <http://www.bioethics.union.edu/>

<sup>2</sup> Advanced Certificate in Research Ethics in Central and Eastern Europe <http://researchethicseurope.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum <http://www.rit.edu/cla/ethics/seac/>.

<sup>4</sup> Newton, Lisa. *Manual for Courses in Practical and Professional Ethics* [http://ethics.iit.edu/eac/other\\_resources.html](http://ethics.iit.edu/eac/other_resources.html).

<sup>5</sup> Boylan, Michael and James Donahue. *Ethics Across the Curriculum: A Practice-Based Approach*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003. p. 138.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.uvu.edu/ethics/about/eacfacs.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Hinman, Lawrence. "Ethics Updates." University of San Diego. <http://ethics.sandiego.edu/>.

<sup>8</sup> Foy, Sandra [http://ethics.sandiego.edu/eac/Presentations/Foy/1/Foy1\\_files/v3\\_document.htm](http://ethics.sandiego.edu/eac/Presentations/Foy/1/Foy1_files/v3_document.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Hinman, Lawrence. "Ethics Across the Curriculum." 1999. [http://ethics.sandiego.edu/eac/Presentations/CentralAPA/EAC2\\_files/frame.htm](http://ethics.sandiego.edu/eac/Presentations/CentralAPA/EAC2_files/frame.htm). Accessed November 6, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Kardos, Geza. "Engineering Cases in the Classroom." 1979. <http://www.civeng.carleton.ca/ECL/cclas.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Wittgenstein, Ludwig. "Proposition 5.6." *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, new translation by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness. London: Allen and Unwin, [1922] 1961. p. 115.

<sup>12</sup> Rhodes, Bill. "Ethics Across the Curriculum and the Nature of Morality: Some Fundamental Propositions." *Teaching Ethics*, 2003, Vol. 3 (2) p. 60.

<sup>13</sup> Scheffler, Samuel. *Human Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Gert, Bernard. *Common Morality: Deciding What to Do*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Brody, Baruch. *The Ethics of Biomedical Research: An International Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> Baker, Robert. "Bioethics and Human Rights: A Historical Perspective." *Cambridge Healthcare Quarterly*. 1992. Volume 10. p.p. 241-252.

<sup>17</sup> Railton, Peter. "Moral Realism". *Philosophical Review*. 1986. Vol. 95, pp. 163-20.

<sup>18</sup> McGee, Glenn. *Pragmatic Bioethics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Union Philosophy Department website. <http://www.union.edu/PUBLIC/PHLDEPT/n/>.

<sup>20</sup> Union Philosophy Colloquium. <http://www.union.edu/PUBLIC/PHLDEPT/n/?p=Activities/events.txt&activity=1>.

- <sup>21</sup> The Union Graduate College-Mount Sinai School of Medicine Bioethics Program <http://www.bioethics.union.edu/>.
- <sup>22</sup> Somers, Wayne. *Encyclopedia of Union College History*. Schenectady, NY: Union College Press, 2003. p. 398.
- <sup>23</sup> <http://ethics.union.edu/>.
- <sup>24</sup> Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Cruise of the Somers: Illustrative of the Despotism of the Quarter Deck and the Unmanly Conduct of Commander Mackenzie*. New York: J. Winchester, 1844.
- <sup>25</sup> Hayford, Harrison. *The Somers Mutiny Affair: A Book of Primary Source Materials*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1959.
- <sup>26</sup> Rapaport Ethics Across the Curriculum Faculty Development Workshops:
1. *Ethics Workshop*, Aine Donovan, Dartmouth College, April 27, 2006
  2. *Ethics Workshop*, Robert Baker and Michael Mathias, May 16, 2006
  3. *Ethics Faculty Meeting*, October 4, 2006
  4. *Ethics Workshop*, Robert Baker, October 18, 2006
  5. *Scientific Integrity Workshop*, John Kaplan, Professor, Albany Medical College, November 1, 2006
  6. *Workshop on Teaching Race and Other 4-letter topics*, Robert Baker, Michael Mathias, January 10, 2007
  7. *Ethics Workshop*, Robert Baker, January 24, 2007
  8. *Ethics Lunch with Grant Recipients*, Robert Baker, February 7, 2007.
  9. *Ethics Workshop*, Robert Baker, April 25, 2007
  10. *Engineering Ethics Workshop*: "Exploring New Curricula in Engineering and Liberal Education" Deans Cherrice Traver and Douglass Klein, June 15, 2007
  11. *Ethics Lunch Workshop* for faculty and staff, October 10, 2007.
  12. *Faculty workshop with Wade Robison*, Rochester Institute of Technology, October 24, 2007
  13. *Ethics Lunch Workshop* with faculty currently teaching ethics segments, January 31, 2008
  14. *Lecture on "Robot Minds and Human Ethics,"* with Wendell A. Wallach, author of *Moral Machines: Teaching Robots Right from Wrong*, Oxford U. Press, 2008. Organized by Prof. Anastasia Pease, English; with Prof. Claire Bracken, English, and Prof. Kristina Striegnitz, Computer Science; February 5, 2008
  15. *Prostituting the Work We Love*, a workshop on teaching research ethics, with Prof. Robert Baker, Philosophy/Bioethics; February 14, 2008
  16. *Ethics Lunch Workshop* for current and prospective grant recipients, February 28, 2008
  17. *Kitchen Ethics: Ethical Theory Made Easy*, a workshop for faculty and staff, with Bob Baker; April 16, 2008
  18. *Lecture on "A Lack of Plasticity: Embryonic Stem Cell Policy in the US"* with David Friedlander, a researcher at Scripps Institute and the California State Legislature; organized by Prof. Nicole Thedosiou, Biology; April 24, 2008
  19. "View from the Trenches," reports and discussion with faculty who have taught Ethics segments in their courses; April 30, 2008
  20. *Ethics Lunch Workshop* for faculty and staff; May 28, 2008
  21. *Research Ethics Lunch Talk* with Dr. Sean Philpott, Science and Ethics Officer at PATH, Washington, DC; October 10, 2008

22. "Dress Rehearsal Talks of the Union Panel Ready to Present at the SEAC Conference in Baltimore, MD" Lunch presentation by Drs. Black, Mathematics; Davis, Economics; Fried, Economics; Ghaly, Engineering; Pease, English; October 30, 2008

23. "Delight and Instruct with the WWW: Using the Internet to Teach Ethics across the Curriculum" Lunch Talk presented by Dr. Anastasia Pease; February 19, 2009

<sup>27</sup> Conference Attendance Supported by the Initiative:

1. Academic Integrity, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, October 19-21, 2006 attended by Ali Gardezi and Vishal Patel, student members of the AAC Subcouncil on Academic Integrity.

2. Ethics across the Curriculum, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, Nov. 17-18, 2006, attended by Dr. Anastasia Pease.

3. "Reading Human Rights" Workshop, the Institute for Writing and Thinking, Bard College, Annadale-on-Hudson, NY, December 8-10, 2006, attended by Mary Mar, Director, Writing Center.

4. American Society for Engineering Education, New England Section Conference, Rhode Island University, Kingston, RI, April 20-21, 2007, attended by Prof. Ashraf Ghaly, Engineering.

5. Biennial Conference for the Study of Literature and the Environment, Wofford College, Spartanburg, SC, June 11-16, 2007, attended by Prof. Katherine Lynes, English Department.

6. American Literature Association Conference, Boston, MA, May 25-26, 2007 "Ethics and Native American Literature," presentation by Prof. Channette Romero, English Department.

7. Society for Ethics across the Curriculum annual conference, Milltown Institute, Dublin, Ireland; November 15-17, 2007; attended by Profs. Robert Baker and Anastasia Pease. Presented a co-authored paper "Designing an Ethics across the Curriculum Program"; Prof. Baker also presented his own paper on "A Code of Ethics for Bioethicists."

8. Society for Ethics across the Curriculum annual conference, Towson University, Baltimore, MD; November 14-16, 2008; attended by Drs. Baker, Philosophy; Black, Mathematics; Davis and Fried, Economics; Ghaly, Engineering; Pease, English. The group presented a panel on teaching ethics in their classes. Prof. Ghaly also presented his own paper "The Collision between Cultural Norms and Engineering Ethics in the Age of Globalization."

<sup>28</sup> Course Ethics Segments Supported by the Initiative (listed by trimester):

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Fall '06:**

Prof. David Baum (English) Freshman Preceptorial "Freedom on Trial"

Prof. Kelly Black (Mathematics) "Introduction to Statistics"

Prof. George Gmelch (Anthropology) "Sports, Society, and Culture"

Prof. Gregory Reid (Chemistry) "Organic Chemistry I"

Prof. Channette Romero (English) "American-Indian Women Writers"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Winter '07:**

Prof. Jeffrey Corbin (Biology) "Introduction to Environmental Studies"

Prof. Ashraf Ghaly (Engineering) "GIS for Humanity"

Prof. Peter Heinegg (English) Freshman Preceptorial "Secular Humanism"

Dr. Mary Mar (Writing Center) Freshman Preceptorial "Human Rights"

Prof. Gregory Reid (Chemistry) "Organic Chemistry II"

Prof. Jordan Smith (English) "Introduction to the Study of Literature: Poetry"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Spring '07:**

Prof. Christopher Pizzino (English) "Science Fiction"  
 Prof. Kenji Tierney (Anthropology) "Food and the Self"  
 Prof. Mark Walker (History) "Science, Medicine, and Technology in Culture"  
 Prof. Tom Werner (Chemistry) "Chemistry and Athletic Performance"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Fall '07**

Prof. Martin Benjamin (Visual Arts) "Photographing Another Culture: Vietnam"  
 Prof. Brendan Burns (Computer Science) "Computer Games"  
 Prof. Daniel Burns (Psychology) "Research Methods in Psychology"  
 Prof. Katherine Lynes (English) Freshman Preceptorial "Literature and the Environment"  
 Prof. Seyfollah Maleki (Physics) and Prof. Mark Walker (History) "Physics and Politics"  
 Prof. Victoria Martinez (Modern Languages) "Human and Civil Rights: Literature and Film of the Mexican-American Border"  
 Prof. Anastasia Pease (English) Freshman Preceptorial "Constructing the Self"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Winter '08**

Prof. Martin Benjamin (Visual Arts) "Photography I" and "Photography III"  
 Prof. anupama jain (English) "Utopian Philosophies and Fictions"  
 Prof. Sharon Gmelch (Anthropology) "The Museum: Theory and Practice"  
 Prof. Bonney MacDonald (English) "Literature, Culture, and Ethics in the Rangeland West" New Mexico miniterm  
 Prof. Joyce Madancy (History) Sophomore Research Seminar "Opium: East and West"  
 Prof. Pilar Moyano (Spanish) "Contemporary Spanish Culture" term abroad  
 Prof. Anastasia Pease (English) "Introduction to the Study of Literature: Fiction"  
 Prof. Linda Relyea (Sociology) "Aging and Society"  
 Prof. Tarik Wareh (Classics) "Greek Tragedy"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Spring '08**

Prof. Suzanne Benack (Psychology) "Psychology of Sexuality"  
 Prof. Lorraine Morales Cox (Visual Arts) Sophomore Research Seminar "Art and Politics"  
 Prof. Nicole Theodosiou (Biology) "Developmental Biology"  
 Prof. Laurie Tyler (Chemistry) "Inorganic Chemistry"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Fall '08**

Prof. Suzanne Benack (Psychology) "Introduction to Psychology"  
 Prof. Claire Bracken (English) Freshman Preceptorial "Cybercultures"  
 Prof. Lewis Davis (Economics) "The Economics of Sin"  
 Prof. Katherine Lynes (English) "African American Literature in Historical Context"  
 Prof. Zoe Oxley (Political Science) "Electoral Politics"  
 Prof. Stacie Raucci (Classics) "Sex and Gender in Classical Antiquity"

**Ethics Segments Implemented, Winter '09**

Prof. Bunkong Tuon (English) Preceptorial "Good and Evil"  
 Prof. Anastasia Pease (English) Preceptorial "The Other: a Stranger among Us"  
 Prof. Linda Relyea (Sociology) "Domestic Violence"  
 Prof. Peter Heinegg (English) Preceptorial "Ethics and Ecology"

**Ethics Segments Planned, Spring/Fall '09**

Prof. Hans Mueller (Classics) "Entrepreneurship in the Ancient World"

Prof. Kristina Striegnitz (Computer Science) "Can Computers Think?"

<sup>29</sup> Ethics Events Organized and/or Supported:

1. Ethics of Public Spaces Lecture "A Century of Theme Park Utopias" (public lecture), Professor Michael Pinsky, University of South Florida, May 10, 2007.

2. "Ethics and the Face of Difference" (public lecture), Professor Bonnie TuSmith, Northeastern University, May 15, 2007

3. "Business Ethics from the Perspectives of a Convicted White-Collar Criminal" (public lecture), Walt Pavlo, MBA former MCI business executive, May 22, 2007

4. "Sports Ethics: What Everyone Should Know about the Anabolic Steroids Abuse Crisis" (public lecture), Professor Bruce Svare, University at Albany, May 24, 2007

5. "Engineering Ethics: Dr. Stephanie Bird, Editor of the journal Science and Engineering Ethics," Prof. Stephanie Bird, MIT, June 14, 2007

6. "Engineering Ethics: Engineering Principles for a Living Planet," Professor William Vitek, Clarkson University, June 14, 2007.

7. "A Brief Introduction to the History of Modern Research Ethics," Presented to Union Summer Research Scholars, Robert Baker, July 19, 2007.

8. "Faculty Grant Recipients Share Their Experiences," Presented by Ethics Grant Recipients Brendan Burns (Computer Science), Jeff Corbin (Biology); Ashraf Ghaly (Engineering), anu jain (English); Joyce Madancy (History); Mary Mar (Preceptorial); Jordan Smith (English), October 10, 2007.

9. "Ethics Education: Becoming a Pro," Presented by Dr. Wade L. Robison, Ezra A. Hale Professor of Applied Ethics at the Rochester Institute of Technology, October 24, 2007.

10. "Campaign Ethics, View from the Campaign Trail," a campus talk by Paul Herrnson, Professor of Government and Politics and Director of the Center of American Politics and Citizenship, University of Maryland, October 13, 2008.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Ainlay became the 18<sup>th</sup> president of Union College in 2006. Therese McCarty became vice president in 2005; she was formerly chair of Economics.

<sup>31</sup> "The strategies we will pursue all have the purpose of moving toward fulfillment of our vision for the College: Union College will be a leader in educating students to be engaged, innovative, and **ethical** contributors to an increasingly diverse, global, and technologically complex society." Union College Strategic Plan—emphasis in original. [http://www.union.edu/strategic/strategic\\_plan/vision\\_plan.php](http://www.union.edu/strategic/strategic_plan/vision_plan.php)

<sup>32</sup> The full statement reads:

Union College, founded in 1795, is a scholarly community dedicated to shaping the future and to understanding the past. Faculty, staff, and administrators welcome diverse and talented students into our community, work closely with them to provide a broad and deep education, and guide them in finding and cultivating their passions. We do this with a wide range of disciplines and interdisciplinary programs in the liberal arts and engineering, as well as academic, athletic, cultural, and social activities, including opportunities to study abroad and to participate in undergraduate research and community service. We develop in our students the analytic and reflective abilities needed to become

engaged, innovative, and ethical contributors to an increasingly diverse, global, and technologically complex society. Approved by the General Faculty on 5/23/08; Approved by the Board of Trustees on 5/31/08.

<sup>33</sup> This terminology is borrowed from Boylan and Donahue, Chapter Two.

<sup>34</sup> Moliere, [Poquelin, Jean-Baptiste] 1670. *The Bourgeois Gentleman*, Mooney, Timothy, trans. <http://moliere-in-english.com/bourgeois.html> accessed 2/25/2009.

<sup>35</sup> Professor Kelly Black, Mathematics. "A brief report on the first ethics segment sponsored by the Rapaport Ethics across the Curriculum Initiative." Published online at <http://ethics.union.edu/reports.html>.

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Ethics across the Curriculum Participants  
UNION COLLEGE

Name	Department	Segments	Future segments
Baum, David	History	FYP Fall 2006	no longer at Union
Benack, Suzie	Psychology	PSY 347 Spr. 08/ Intro to Psych Fall, 08	every other year/ twice a year
Benjamin, Martin	Arts	AVA 120, 320 Fall 07, Win.08, Spr. 08	Fall 08, Spring 09
Black, Kelly	Math	Intro to Statistics Fall 06, Win 08	expected yearly
Bracken, Claire	English	FYP "Cybercultures" Fall 08	expected yearly
Burns, Brendan	Comp. Sci	Computer Games Fall 07	no longer at Union
Burns, Daniel	Psychology	PSY 300 Fall 07, Win 08	one or twice per year
Corbin, Jeffrey	Biology	ENS 100 Win 07,	expected yearly
Cox, Lorraine Morales	Arts	SRS Spr. 08	expected every other year
Davis, Lewis	Economics	Econ. Of Sin Fall 08	expected every other year
Ghaly, Ashraf	Engineering	GEO 204 Fall 07, Spr 08	expected twice a year
Gmelch, George	Anthropology	ANT 245 Fall, 06	expected yearly
Gmelch, Sharon	Anthropology	ANT 265 Spr. 07 On leave 08-09	expected every other year
Heinegg, Peter	English	FYP Win 07, Fall 07, Win 08	expected yearly
jain, anupama	English	Utopias Win 07	leaving Union
Lynes, Katherine	English	FYP Win 07 / "African-American Lit"	yearly/ every other year
MacDonald, Bonney	English	Mini Term Win 08	no longer at Union
Madancy, Joyce	History	SRS Win 08	expected yearly
Maleki, Seyfollah	Physics	PHY 053 Fall 07	expected every other year
Mar, Mary	Writing Center	FYP Fall 07	expected yearly
Martinez, Victoria	Spanish	MLT 289 Fall 07	expected every other year
Moyano, Pilar	Spanish	Term Abroad: Seville Win 08	expected every other year
Mueller, Hans F.	Classics	"Entrepreneurship/Ancient World" Spr. 08	expected every other year
Pease, Anastasia	English	FYP Win 08/ English 101: Fiction Fall 07	both expected twice a year
Oxley, Zoe	Political Science	"Electoral Politics" Fall 08	?
Pizzino, Christopher	English	Sci Fi Lit. Spr. 07, Win 08, Win. 09 (Prof. Pease)	exp. yearly, taught by A. Pease
Raucci, Stacie	Classics	CLS 146	Fall 08, Winter 09
Reid, Gregory	Chemistry	Organic Fall 06, Winter 07	no longer at Union
Relyea, Linda	Sociology	Aging and Society Win 08	expected every other year
Romero, Channette	English	Native American Lit. Win 07	no longer at Union
Smith, Jordan	English	ENG 100 Win 08, Spring 08	expected twice a year
Striegnitz, Kristina	Computer Science	"Can Computers Think?" Fall 08	expected yearly
Theodosiou, Nicole	Biology	Bio 354 Spring 08	expected yearly
Tierney, Kenji	Anthropology	ANT 130 Food&Self Spr. 07, Spr 08	expected yearly
Tyler, Laurie	Chemistry	CHEM 260 Spr. 08	expected every other year
Walker, Mark	History	HIS 253 and 193 has taught twice	expected yearly
Wareh, Tarik	Classics	CLS 162 Win 08	expected every other year
Werner, Tom	Chemistry	Chem and Athletics, Spr. 07	expected to teach 1 more