

My own assessment of the course is that it was highly successful. One of my primary objectives was to develop an interdisciplinary course that engaged students and facilitated discussions that integrated the economic and ethical dimensions of a topic. Perhaps due to the material's inherent ethical complexity, the students appeared eager to engage each other in class discussion. No less important, I believe students came to appreciate both the power and the limits of economic analysis as a tool for understanding ethically complex topics. Finally, the course was personally enjoyable to develop and teach.

The design of the course was one where I used an ethically complicated market or transaction to introduce and discuss one or more areas of economic analysis. For example, the market for kidneys was used to discuss gains from exchange and non-market allocation mechanisms; the market for cigarettes was used to discuss externalities and optimal taxation; cigarettes also served as basis for addressing rationality and the economics of addiction; and the like. Markets that included several economically and ethically complex issues, such as markets in illegal drugs, were dealt with later in the course. This proved to be a successful strategy for combining economic and ethical issues.

The course is a work in progress, and I plan to make three substantive changes in its next iteration. First, I plan to reduce the importance of discussion relative to lectures and other structured activities. Accompanying this change, I will rely less on daily reaction papers, for which the grading burden proved high, and more on homework problem sets.

Second, I plan to introduce additional economic-ethics pairings. These will be designed to address in a more formal and analytical manner a number of topics that arose during class discussions that would benefit from more explicit and formal economic analysis. I list a number of these topics below:

- The evolution of ethical norms (fairness, altruism) and non-cooperative game theory
- Pimps and madams and the economics of middlemen
- Gambling and the economics of risk and uncertainty
- Prohibition and the economics of information
- Prohibition and the economics of organized crime

Finally, I would like to find qualified outside speakers to talk about some of the issues involved (drug related crime, prostitution, organ transplants). I believe this would increase student engagement with the material.

In addition to the particular revisions noted above, I believe the overall quality of the course will improve with a second run. I now have a better feel for how long to spend on each topic, which readings work best for discussion, etc.

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