# Critical Core Signature Assignment: Moral Relativism

Personal Growth & Cultural Literacy

Key Indicator 2: Demonstrates Ethical Self-Awareness

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| **COMPETENCY: PERSONAL GROWTH AND CULTURAL LITERACY KEY INDICATOR 2: STUDENT DEMONSTRATES ETHICAL SELF-AWARENESS.** | | |
| **Level** | **Score** | **Requirements** |
|  | **Blank** | Indicates an assignment was not submitted. |
| **0** | Indicates submission of an assignment that does not allow for sufficient or appropriate scoring of skill, for example, an assignment that plagiarized. |
| **Beginning** | **1** | Student states either their core beliefs or articulates the origins of the core beliefs, but not both. |
| **Emerging** | **2** | Student states both core beliefs and the origins of the core beliefs. |
| **3** | Student discusses in detail/analyzes both core beliefs and the origins of the core beliefs. |
| **Proficient** | **4** | Student discusses in detail/analyzes both core beliefs and the origins of the core beliefs and discussion has greater depth and clarity. |

## **Essay 1** (5% of final grade): **Due by midnight Sunday May 25**

Define “Moral Relativism” and explain how you view ethics, i.e. questions of right and wrong, good and bad, obligation, etc..

Answer the following questions:

* Are there any such things as moral absolutes that remain constant across cultures and are applicable to all individuals? Or are all core moral beliefs true merely relative to one’s culture?
* Are all values purely subjective?
* **Clearly state your current beliefs,**
* **Discuss the origins of those beliefs (what influenced those beliefs and where did you get those beliefs?), and**
* **Explain why you think your perspective is correct.**

My moral compass has been profoundly shaped by the values instilled in me by my family and the culture I was raised in. From a young age, I was taught that the foundation of ethical behavior lies in treating others with kindness and respect. The guiding principle I carry with me is simple yet powerful: do right by others, and in turn, they will do right by you. This mutual respect and consideration form the core of my understanding of what is right and wrong. These values did not develop in isolation; instead, they are deeply intertwined with the teachings from my family, which emphasized honesty, empathy, responsibility, and fairness. Growing up in a culture that values community and reciprocal kindness further reinforced these lessons. Moral values are not abstract concepts but living principles that guide daily interactions and decisions.

Regarding moral relativism, the philosophical idea that morality is relative to one’s culture or perspective, I see it as a compelling framework to understand the diversity in human ethics. Moral relativism raises essential questions: Are moral principles absolute and universally binding, or do they vary depending on cultural context? Are all values merely subjective preferences, or do some transcend cultural boundaries? From my perspective, I believe that while there are specific universal values, such as fairness, kindness, and respect, the way these values are expressed often depends on cultural norms. For example, respect may manifest differently across societies, but the underlying concept of valuing others remains consistent. Thus, I align with a moderate view that acknowledges moral relativism’s insight into cultural influence without rejecting the existence of some core moral absolutes.

My ethical position feels correct because it balances respect for cultural differences with a commitment to fundamental moral principles. In my personal experience, growing up in a family-oriented culture, I witnessed how shared values create trust and harmony within communities. At the same time, encounters with people from different backgrounds have shown me that ethical perspectives can vary widely yet still hold validity within their cultural context. This realization has helped me appreciate moral pluralism without descending into moral chaos or nihilism. This stance encourages open-mindedness and tolerance while maintaining a stable ethical foundation. It is not merely an intellectual position but a lived experience that has enriched my relationships and decision-making.

In conclusion, my moral compass is rooted in family and cultural teachings, prioritizing treating others well. Moral relativism offers valuable insight into how ethics can adapt across cultures, but I also believe in some universal values that anchor moral judgments. This blend allows me to navigate complex ethical questions with sensitivity and conviction, reflecting personal growth and cultural literacy.