IPRO It takes a team!
INTERPROFESSIONAL PROJECTS PROGRAM

IPRO Team Ethics Assignment
Ethics Round Table Discussion

Description of Exercise

An ethics roundtable discussion is an excellent method for helping a team get an outside perspective on the work they have been doing, while also exploring some of the deeper ethical and social questions raised by their project. To set up this discussion, a designated group of team members (called the ethics group) will invite a panel of faculty members or other professionals from different backgrounds (philosophy, psychology, anthropology, law, economics, etc.) to come and discuss a series of questions that the team has developed in advance (faculty/staff from the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions (CSEP) should be included.) These questions can explore such things as the impact a project may have on the social or economic well-being of a community, methods for increasing community acceptance and involvement in a project, or other issues that the team decides are important to discuss.

After the completion of the roundtable discussion, teams should write a summary of the main points raised, main concerns that need to be addressed by the IPRO team, and even new questions that came up during the discussion. Students may also be asked to write an individual reflection paper discussing what they learned from the event.

Student Competency Level

Intermediate. Students should have a solid knowledge of the main ethical issues they need to address and should be looking to gain a more in-depth understanding questions related to them. This strategy is likely to work well for some types of service-learning projects or projects involving community research.

Time Commitment

1 Hour for developing questions or discussion points for the roundtable. These questions may be developed over a series of discussions between groups working on different parts of the project. For example, questions from the group working on a business plan, questions from the group working on cultural issues, questions from the group working on the building design, etc.

1-1 ½ Hours for holding discussion, generally during an IPRO class period.

½ to 1 Hour writing up a summary of the main points of the discussion.

Tasks Involved

1. Hold a discussion with the entire team to decide what ethical concerns exist in the project and get a basic idea of the type of expertise needed, as well as to discuss who the team would like to invite to the roundtable.

2. The ethics group should get in touch with CSEP, IPRO Program staff, or other contacts to locate and invite a group of 2-4 faculty members or professionals from different disciplines to come and speak to their team as a whole.

3. With the ethics group acting as discussion leaders, the team will break up into groups (potentially based on the aspect of the project each group is working on) and develop a list of questions or topics to discuss during the roundtable. Any concerns a team member has should be included in this list of

questions/concerns; disagreement over what ethical issues are important should be expected. The roundtable discussion is a chance to discuss these issues with "experts" and come to a clearer consensus and understanding about the ethical issues at hand.

4. At a time when **all** team members can attend, the roundtable is held.

5. The ethics subgroup will write up a final summary of the discussion, including a copy of the roundtable agenda and list of people attending, major points discussed/concerns raised, and next steps for the IPRO for addressing these concerns. The team's faculty advisor could also require individual team members to also write a short reflection paper on their experience.

Potential Deliverables

A copy of the questions/agenda of the meeting, and a 1-2 page summary of the main points that arose during the roundtable discussion. These should include main concerns that need to be addressed by the IPRO team during this or subsequent semesters, and how the team is looking to address these concerns. This deliverable should be uploaded to share.iit.edu by the deadline set each semester by the IPRO Program.

If the IPRO faculty advisor requires team members to also submit individual reflection papers, each student will also be required to write a one-page reflection paper discussing the questions/concerns they personally brought to the roundtable discussion and the main ideas and questions that they took away from it. These reflection papers can also include how their own view of the issues that should be addressed either match or differ from the team's overall view, and what individual advice they would give to next semester's IPRO members for addressing these ethical issues in the future.