



Greater Cincinnati Leadership and Ethics Seminar

Student Vignettes

Vignette #1

When Cheating is So Easy

Kai studied for a calculus exam for several days – a subject that’s been a big challenge for him. The night prior to the exam, a friend (Joe) texted in a group chat that included Kai, some pictures of what Kai believed was an old exam. This wasn’t completely out of the ordinary – students and teachers understood this to be a helpful study aid. When Kai took the exam the next day, he discovered that his exam matched exactly the “old exam” he used to study with the night before. Later that day, Kai mentioned to Joe how surprised he was to see the old exam matched exactly today’s exam. Joe replied, “Let’s just say it’s good to know some quidditch players when the coach is also the teacher.”

Joe immediately became concerned about whether he saw an old exam that was considered a fair study aid or someone shared the actual exam giving some an unfair advantage. What should Joe do?

Vignette #2

Senior Prank

It’s spring and Reid is in his senior year of high school. In years past, he was considered less popular. Now, his friendships and popularity are growing.

Two of his long-tenured friends, Brian and Kurt, have come up with a senior prank idea involving damaging teachers’ property as a joke. When his friends went to the administration to confirm this prank would abide by the rules, they lied, saying it would be completely harmless during their explanation. Reid, worried the senior class and his friends may get in trouble, tried to convince them not to follow through with the prank and change their minds, but they would not listen.

What should Reid do? Should he tell the administration? Should he not participate and make sure he has a solid alibi?

Vignette #3

Privacy and Loyalty

You have two mutual friends who are dating each other. They are both very close to you, and you knew them separately before they even knew each other. You find out that he cheated on her. It was a one-night stand, and he has not talked to the girl since it happened. He has been faithful excluding that one time.

Also, it's been a few months since it happened. You know that your friend is the type of girl that would stay with him; she would forgive him if it was only once.

Do you support his decision not to tell her, because it won't happen again, and it will only cause her unnecessary hurt? Do you stay quiet because it is none of your business and you want to stay out of it? Do you want him to tell her what happened because she deserves to know the truth? Or do you take it upon yourself to tell her, even though that may mean the end of the relationship or the end of your friendship with him?

Vignette #4

Hazards of the Group Chat

You see a group of your classmates, including one of your good friends, sharing memes in a private group chat that target a new student's appearance and interests. Some of the memes are subtle and might not seem hurtful to everyone, but you know they're about the new student. When you confront your friend privately, they brush it off, saying it's "just a joke" and that the new student doesn't even know about the group chat. However, the jokes start to spread outside the group chat, and you notice the new student becoming withdrawn.

Meanwhile, your school is planning to host an anti-bullying awareness event, and your teacher asks you to speak on the importance of kindness and respect. You're unsure if you can do so without being a hypocrite, knowing you've stayed silent about the group chat.

Should you call out the group's behavior publicly or address it privately with your friend again? What are the potential consequences of each action?

How might you balance loyalty to your friends with your responsibility to stand up for others?

What does integrity look like in this situation, and how can you demonstrate leadership effectively?