Contemporary Ethical Issues (ETH)
Program Assessment Results
Spring 2010-Spring 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Area</th>
<th>Contemporary Ethical Issues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Project Name:</td>
<td>Program Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester/Yr Data Collected:</td>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person submitting report:</td>
<td>Monica Stitt-Bergh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date submitted:</td>
<td>December 1, 2011 (first draft distributed May 3, 2011)</td>
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Executive Summary

History.
- Fall 2007: faculty groups drafted a rubric to evaluate how well student work achieves the Contemporary Ethical Issues (ETH) outcomes.
- Spring 2008: faculty who had taught ETH courses were surveyed regarding the rubric: survey results indicated that most faculty respondents believed the rubric was applicable to student work and would be useful.
- Spring 2009: faculty groups tested the ETH rubric by applying it to student coursework collected in fall 2008. The rubric was deemed useful (see spring 2009 report) and the ETH Focus Board agreed to conduct a full-scale assessment in spring 2010-fall 2010.

Current project. The current project investigated the extent to which a random sample of students had achieved the outcomes as measured by the ETH rubric. Forty-seven percent of ETH sections submitted student work from randomly-selected students. Seventeen faculty members scored 80 pieces of student work. Twenty-five percent of the student work was deemed “not scoreable” using the ETH scoring rubric. Of the remaining pieces of student work,
- 52% met or exceeded expectations for identifying ethical issues;
- 41% met or exceeded expectations for deliberating responsibly; and
- 32% met or exceeded expectations for forming a sound ethical judgment.

Faculty scorers completed an online survey after the scoring sessions. They reported that the scoring session was a positive experience and agreed that one rubric change is needed. The ETH Board agreed the results and project were useful. Board members discussed the results and created an implementation plan that includes designing and distributing signature/model assignments for faculty teaching ETH sections.
1. Assessment Question(s) and/or Goal(s) of Assessment Activity

This project was designed to answer these questions:

a) How well are students meeting the SLOs as measured by the ETH rubric?
b) Can the results help guide program improvement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Assessment Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>a) How well are students meeting the SLOs as measured by the ETH rubric?</td>
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2. Method(s) to Gather Evidence

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<th>Method</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>In spring 2010, faculty teaching ETH sections submitted coursework/exams from randomly-selected students. (Email message sent to faculty in Appendix E.)</td>
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Discussions and activities with the faculty study groups and ETH Focus Board

3. Method to Evaluate

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<th>Method</th>
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<tr>
<td>In spring 2011, faculty study groups discussed and practiced applying the rubric (“norming”). Then each faculty member independently scored student work using the ETH rubric.</td>
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Summary of discussions with the faculty study groups and the ETH Focus Board

4. Program Size & Sampling Technique

| Program size = avg. 1,700 students and 77 sections each semester |

Project:
- Randomly selected 10% of students enrolled in each spring 2010 ETH section with 7 or more students.
- Instructors of 40 sections (47% of the total number of ETH sections) submitted student work.
- Number of pieces submitted=197 (13% of the total number of ETH-enrolled students)
- Number of pieces independently scored=80 (41% of submitted pieces)

Those present at the ETH meeting discussed the results: Four (of five) ETH Board members, the GEO Faculty Administrator, and the GEC Liaison.

5. Criteria for Success

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<th>Criteria for Success</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student achievement on the ETH SLOs will be considered successful if at least 80% of the student work receives a score “3” or “4” in each area: identification, deliberation, and formation of judgment</td>
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This part of the assessment project will be deemed a success if at least 90% of the ETH Focus Board members indicate that they can use the results to guide program improvement.

6. Results

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<th>Results</th>
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<tr>
<td>See below</td>
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The ETH Board reported that the results are useful and can be used to guide program improvements/modifications.

7. Met/Not met (criteria for success)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Met/Not met</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not met. See below.</td>
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</table>

Met.

Results: Scoring

After practicing and discussing a set of sample pieces, the faculty in the study groups independently scored 80 pieces of student work using the rubric (see Appendix A). A “not scoreable” option had been added to the scoring sheet because the ETH Focus Board’s and the Assessment Office’s preliminary review of the submissions revealed that some pieces of student work could not be scored using the rubric.

Results summary (detailed results presented in Appendix B):

- **Twenty pieces (25%) of student work were deemed “not scoreable”** because they had no ethical elements (7 pieces), the assignment/task did not align with the rubric (9 pieces), or other reason (4 pieces). See Appendix C for the reasons given by the scorers.
• Out of the 60 pieces of student work that received scores:
  o 52% met or exceeded expectations for identifying ethical issues
  o 41% met or exceeded expectations for deliberating responsibly
  o 32% met or exceeded expectations for forming a sound ethical judgment

The dimension regarding use of a professional code of ethics was rarely present in the student work and faculty scorers typically lacked the knowledge necessary to score on that dimension. Hence 90% of the items were not scored on professional code of ethics.

Results: Faculty Study Group survey
The Assessment Office conducted an online survey of faculty who participated in the study group sessions. All 17 study group participants received the survey and 12 completed it (71% response rate).

Nearly all faculty members who participated in a study group session reported that the study group was a positive, learning experience:
• 92% reported that the study group was worthwhile
• 83% would recommend a similar study group to faculty colleagues
• 83% reported that the study group caused changes in their views of assessment, how they will teach in ETH course, and/or in their view of the ETH program/requirement

Detailed survey results are in Appendix D.

Results: ETH Focus Board discussion on usefulness of results
The ETH Board reported that the results are useful and can be used to help make decisions about the ETH program and Board activities.

8. Conclusions and Discoveries
Alignment of assignment and rubric. The email soliciting assignment instructions and student work from faculty teaching a course with the ETH designation asked for student work that demonstrates student skill in ethical identification, deliberation, and judgment.

Because faculty scorers could not score 25% of the submitted student work using the criteria specified on the rubric, there appears to be an alignment issue that the ETH Focus Board can address.

Too many students “not meeting” and “approaching”: A plan to increase the number of students in the “meeting” and “exceeding” categories is needed. Because some faculty scorers noted their confusion about how to teach ethics and how to evaluate ethical reasoning, the ETH Focus Board and General Education Office can consider increasing faculty development materials and opportunities.

9. Distribution and Discussion of Results
Results were distributed to the ETH Focus Board and a final report was posted on the Assessment Office website. The ETH Focus Board discussed the results in 2011-12 and formed an action plan that will be implemented in fall 2012.
10. Use of Results/Program Modifications
The ETH Board discussed the results in November 2011 and Monica Stitt-Bergh facilitated a session in which Board members generated a preliminary list of possible actions:
1. Distribute the rubric; make the rubric more visible to faculty teaching ETH sections
2. Inform the faculty about the results
3. Remove the outcome “Undergraduates can form sound ethical judgments”
4. Distribute best practices for assignment design
5. Pay more attention to assignments during the course review process (note: frameworks were emphasized in the past)
a. Attend to assignment and course design more in the individual consultations with course proposers
6. Use focus groups to get more information about a) what happens in an ETH course and b) what level of student achievement should be expected
7. Modify the renewal process
8. Make workshop attendance part of the designation process
9. Ask faculty to participate in a session during which faculty apply the rubric to student work

The Board members later prioritized the action list and agreed they would first “distribute best practices for assignment design.” Monica Stitt-Bergh, with Board member assistance, will form a faculty study group to create signature/model assignments in fall 2012.

11. Assessment Modifications
Rubric. The words "the inherent" will be removed from the first bullet in score "3" and in score "4" of "Student identifies ethical issues."
Scoring sessions. The faculty scorers did not always agree on the minimum standard for meeting expectations (i.e., a “3” score). In the next scoring session, anchor examples and explanatory notes are needed for each dimension and score.
Collection of student work. During the collection phase, more attention should be paid to increasing the number of faculty who submit their students’ work. In addition, the Assessment Office should tally the number of faculty who do not have any written student work to submit (e.g., tally how many sections use oral discussions or presentations that cannot be easily submitted for evaluation).
Professional code of ethics. Because faculty scorers typically do not have the knowledge necessary to score this dimension, the Assessment Office will consider recommending that this dimension not be considered during program-level assessment. Because professional codes of ethics are important and appropriate for individual course instructors and certain programs, it should remain on the rubric.

12. Other Important Information
None.
Contemporary Ethical Issues Course Hallmarks & Explanatory Notes

1. Contemporary ethical issues will be presented and studied in a manner that is fully integrated into the main course content.
2. The disciplinary approach(es) used in the class will give students tools for the development of responsible deliberation and ethical judgment.
3. Students will achieve basic competency in analyzing and deliberating upon contemporary ethical issues to help them make ethically determined judgments.
4. The equivalent of one semester credit-hour or 30% of a 3-credit course will be devoted to contemporary ethical issues.
5. A minimum of 8 hours of class time will be spent in discussing contemporary ethical issues.
6. The course will be numbered at the 300- or 400-level.

Explanatory Notes

• The goal of E courses, at least in part, must be to equip students with some degree of proficiency in ethical deliberation. These courses should not be purely descriptive, merely characterizing, for example, the moral beliefs of person or peoples. Nor is it intended that the pedagogy be value-free, using approaches that maintain an “arms-length” relationship with current ethical issues.
• Course materials must be pertinent to the ethical issues under review. While well-selected philosophical and literary texts would serve, so would case studies, judicial opinions, statutes, codes of ethics (and commentaries), film, works of art, performances, as well as a broad range of other readings.
• Different academic approaches and methodologies can be used to give students tools for the development of responsible ethical judgments. Approaches might include small group discussions, formal debate, round-table discussions, Socratic questioning, etc.
• E course may be associated with particular disciplines, professions, and larger enterprises: the ethics of human and animal research, medical ethics, bioethics, biotechnology, business ethics, engineering ethics, ethics in government, and journalistic ethics, for example. Still others might look at ethical issues that emerge at cultural interfaces, such as war, evangelism, colonialism and multi-cultural societies, etc. Contemporary ethical issues must be fully integrated into the main course content and must be tied to activities that develop students’ proficiency in forming sound ethical judgments.

Student Learning Outcomes

Undergraduates can:
1. identify ethical issues in a contemporary situation/professional setting;
2. deliberate responsibly on ethical issues using tools/processes/frameworks;
3. form sound ethical judgments.
## CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL ISSUES RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Not Meeting-1</th>
<th>Approaching-2</th>
<th>Meeting-3</th>
<th>Exceeding-4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies ethical issue(s)</td>
<td>- Does not identify the ethical issue(s) or realizes something is not “right” but does not clearly identify the professional and/or contemporary ethical issues at play</td>
<td>- Identifies some of the professional and/or contemporary ethical issues or identifies what is legal/illegal or acceptable/unacceptable</td>
<td>- Identifies/names the inherent ethical choices and implications involved in the professional and/or contemporary situation</td>
<td>- Clearly identifies the inherent ethical choices and implications involved in a professional and/or contemporary situation</td>
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<td>- Sees issues mostly in “black and white” terms</td>
<td>- Recognizes relevant ethical ambiguities/ dilemmas but does not clearly describe them</td>
<td>- Clearly describes relevant ethical ambiguities/ dilemmas</td>
<td>- Understands the effects of perspective, context, personal views, codes and laws (if applicable)</td>
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<td>- Specifies the decision-makers and stakeholders</td>
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<td>- Integrates clear descriptions of relevant ethical ambiguities/ dilemmas into the overall analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliberates responsibly using ethical tools, processes, and/or frameworks</td>
<td>- Unclear about the frameworks, principles, and/or code of ethics to be applied</td>
<td>- Describes the frameworks, principles, and/or code of ethics that can be applied</td>
<td>- Draws upon frameworks, principles, and/or code of ethics to develop pertinent arguments and/or positions</td>
<td>- Draws upon frameworks, principles, and/or code of ethics to develop pertinent arguments and/or positions</td>
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<td>- Fails to acknowledge multiple viewpoints or embraces contradictory viewpoints</td>
<td>- Comfortable discussing ethical issues from own point of view, but may have difficulty seeing different points of view</td>
<td>- Debates and/or discusses ethical issues with sensitivity to others’ points of view and different perspectives</td>
<td>- Develops and presents alternate arguments/positions</td>
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<td>- May discuss ethical issues but unclear on own position and/or the effects of different perspectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Discusses and/or debates ethical issues with sensitivity to others’ perspectives and the context while also defending own position with logic and fact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forms sound ethical judgments</td>
<td>- Does not specify a resolution or judgment or decision</td>
<td>- Makes a judgment/decision but may not take into account multiple perspectives</td>
<td>- Makes a judgment that considers and is sensitive to multiple perspectives</td>
<td>- Makes a reasoned judgment that takes into account an array of arguments and perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Partial or flawed use of a systematic decision-making process</td>
<td>- Evidence of a logical, systematic decision-making process</td>
<td>- Evidence of a logical, systematic decision-making process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses professional code of ethics (IF APPLICABLE)</td>
<td>- Does not correctly reference sections of the professional code of ethics</td>
<td>- Cites applicable sections, but may not correctly use in decision-making process</td>
<td>- Correctly cites applicable sections of the professional code and explains how they guide forming a judgment</td>
<td>- Correctly cites applicable sections of the professional code and explains their meaning and/or implications on forming a judgment</td>
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For more information contact the Assessment Office, 956-6669 or 956-4283
Results Part 1
These charts summarize the scores given by faculty study group members, including the “not scoreable” pieces of student work.

**Student Identifies Ethical Issues**

- Not Meeting: 19%
- Approaching: 18%
- Meeting: 28%
- Exceeding: 11%
- Not Scoreable: 25%

N=80

**Student Deliberates Responsibly**

- Not Meeting: 20%
- Approaching: 24%
- Meeting: 20%
- Exceeding: 10%
- Not Scoreable: 26%

N=80

**Student Forms Sound Ethical Judgment**

- Not Meeting: 18%
- Approaching: 33%
- Meeting: 18%
- Exceeding: 6%
- Not Scoreable: 26%

N=80
Results Part 2

These charts summarize the scores given by faculty study group members, excluding the “not scoreable” pieces of student work.

**Student Uses Professional Code of Ethics**

- Not Meeting: 1%
- Approaching: 1%
- Meeting: 5%
- Exceeding: 3%
- Not Scoreable: 90%

N=80

**Student Identifies Ethical Issues**

- Not Meeting: 25%
- Approaching: 23%
- Meeting: 37%
- Exceeding: 15%

N=60

**Student Deliberates Responsibly**

- Not Meeting: 27%
- Approaching: 32%
- Meeting: 27%
- Exceeding: 14%

N=59
Student Forms Sound Ethical Judgment

- Not Meeting: 24%
- Approaching: 44%
- Meeting: 24%
- Exceeding: 8%

N=59
Student Work Not Scoreable: Reasons Given by Faculty

STUDENT WORK DOES NOT INCLUDE ETHICAL ELEMENTS
- “Can't clearly find what the Eth aspect is”
- “Does not deal with ethics at all”
- “No ethical issues identified, or discussed, no resolutions or judgment.”
- “No ethical issues were addressed in the student work.”
- “I guess I am missing the ethical piece of this; it seems like a progress report with little introspection.”
- “No assignment sheet. Essay does not seem to have anything to do with CEI.”
- “No [illegible handwriting] in terms of ethical issues - too much of a stretch. No instructor assignment given (but not necessary)”

ASSIGNMENT/TASK NOT ALIGNED WITH RUBRIC
- “Do not see any ethical basis for the exercise”
- “Assignment not framed with an ethical component. ”
- “Exam asks factual questions only, none that involve even identifying ethical issues”
- “Examination (question 3) not framed as an ethical issue”
- “The assignment seems vague and outside the parameters of ethics. The student paper likewise does not articulate ethical approaches or issues. ”
- “Question is local only: no metacognitive (framework) aspect asked for”
- “Question is too broad/general”
- “This exam format does not give the student much of an opportunity to identify ethical issues, deliberate, or form judgments to any significant degree. ”
- “Not an assignment which incorporates ethical deliberation (or even ethical issues)”

OTHER
- “No assignment task/sheet submitted”
- “Poor quality printing/contrast made it too difficult to read”
- “Section seems incomplete”
- “Hard to evaluate without having read the chapter. The student did not follow instructions, did not 'select one example’”
Faculty Study Group Survey Results
12 (71%) faculty members completed the online survey

1. What prompted you to participate in the study group?
   - Wanted to learn about the teaching/assessing of ethics from other faculty members: 33%
   - Interest in the teaching of ethics: 25%
   - Interest in assessment: 25%
   - Service to campus: 17%
   - Opportunity to interact with other faculty members: 8%
   - Interest [not specified]: 8%
   *N=12. Will not sum to 100% because some faculty stated multiple reasons*

2. Did participation in the study group change (check all that apply):  
   - Faculty member’s view of assessment: 58%
   - How the faculty member will teach ETH courses: 50%
   - Faculty member’s view of the ETH program/requirement: 33%
   - NO CHANGE: 17%
   *N=12. Will not sum to 100% because some faculty checked multiple response options*

3. Would you recommend similar study group sessions to your colleagues?
   - Yes: 83%
   - No: 0%
   - Unsure: 17%
   *N=12*

4. Should the rubric be modified so the scores "3" and "4" are combined? (The rubric would then have 3 levels of quality instead of 4.)
   - Yes: 33%
   - No: 50%
   - Unsure: 17%
   *N=12*

5. Should the words "the inherent" be deleted from the first bullet in score "3" and in score "4" of "Student identifies ethical issues"?
   - Yes: 67%
   - No: 8%
   - Unsure: 17%
   *N=12*

6. When participating in a scoring session to evaluate student work, the faculty scorers should
   - Have the assignment sheet/guidelines: 100%
   - No opinion: 0%
   *N=12*
7. Was the study group session worthwhile to you?

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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>N=12</td>
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8. Is there anything else you’d like us to know?

- “I hope there would be more effort exerted so other faculty can come. I know this cannot be helped because the faculty have a million and one other things to do but if they are convinced enough of the value of a work like this, I don’t see why they cannot go the extra mile to share and at the same time, learn.”

- “I thought it was an interesting exercise, but that different departments teaching of ethics is so differentiated that I see the readings as an apples and oranges issue. If the rubric was used more thoroughly as a classroom tool, I expect we could see gains. I think that a short simple list of objectives coupled with a pre and post test would better show gains in ethical understanding.”

- “I think the session was too long. Perhaps the material could be emailed to the participants in advance (pdf.files)? Since I teach literature, the samples were not so helpful to me because the ethical issues in my field are very different. It would have been more useful to me had I been a study group with more literature professors.”

- “It was interesting to discuss differences in perceptions about ethics. It made me a bit more aware of how others think, and about how I think.”

- “Multiple choice exams do not fit in with the goals as delineated in the rubric. Anyone teaching an E focus course should provide students with scenarios based on their specific discipline that challenge them to learn what it means to think ethically in various situations”

- “Since I teach Chinese literature in translation, I think there is also a need to address the "cross-cultural" aspect of teaching a CEI course. In Chinese [Confucian] culture, "ethics" is very important but defined somewhat differently from Western notions.”

- “Thanks for your time and effort to organize these meetings.”

- “Nothing at the time, but thanks for the assessment office's hard work.”
Email sent to the faculty members who were teaching an ETH section in spring 2010 requesting submission of student work

To: [FirstName] [LastName]
From: Ned Bertz, ETH Focus Board Chair, and Assistant Professor of History
RE: ETH Program Assessment and [Course]

The Contemporary Ethical Issues (ETH) Focus Board and the Assessment Office have planned a spring 2010 assessment of the ETH program. We hope you will participate in this project which is designed to provide information that can be used to improve students’ educational experiences.

PLAN FOR THE SPRING 2010 ASSESSMENT OF THE ETH PROGRAM
The Assessment Office will randomly select 10% of the students in each ETH section. You will be asked to submit an assignment or exam (along with the assignment guidelines) for each selected student. Submitted student work should demonstrate skill in ethical identification, deliberation, and judgment. An assignment or exam completed near the end of the semester would probably be the most useful.

A request for your assistance with this project, including the names of the randomly-selected students in your ETH section(s), will be emailed to you in spring 2010.

A faculty group consisting of ETH instructors will evaluate the student work using the ETH rubric (attached). All student and course identifiers will be removed from the student work before it is scored by the faculty group. The results will be reported in the aggregate to ensure that student and course information remain confidential.

The ETH Focus Board will use the results to improve the ETH program. We very much appreciate your willingness to teach a Contemporary Ethical Issues Focus course and hope you will assist us in the spring.

Thanking you on the behalf of the ETH Focus Board,

Ned Bertz, ETH Focus Board Chair, and Assistant Professor of History

ETH Focus Board:
Helen Baroni, Associate Professor of Religion
Spencer Leineweber, Professor of Architecture
Ilan Noy, Associate Professor of Economics
Jonathan Okamura, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies

You received this email because you are approved to teach the following spring 2010 ETH course(s): [Course]