



October 2021 Newsletter from ERiA

Fall Greetings, friends and colleagues of Ethical Reasoning in Action!

Below are updates and stories from ERiA that you may find encouraging in the midst of these challenging times. The newsletter is intended to bring attention to the good teaching, scholarship, and work being done at JMU and elsewhere. Exceptionally difficult ethical situations are being navigated all over the world. How can the 8KQ help us perceive the ethical issues at stake more clearly and make the important decisions that we face more ethically?

In what follows read about:

Five Thousand New JMU Students Grapple with "It's Complicated"

The International Day of Peace – a Campus Legacy

Ethical Reasoning on the Quad

Can Ethical Reasoning Be Learned and Measured?

8KQ Handle Class Midterm Problem and Gives Voice to Students – Johnathan Walker, PhD

Welcome Kacey Damaty to ERiA

Be on The Lookout

Five Thousand New JMU Students Grapple with It's Complicated

On August 23, in partnership with Orientation and as part of 1787 Weeks of Welcome, 112 volunteer facilitators introduced nearly 5000 incoming JMU students to ethical reasoning using the "Overdose" scenario. A **BIG THANK YOU** goes out to all who made this possible. Thank you also to the many facilitators who took the time to give feedback on how things went and how *It's Complicated* can improve. Based on your feedback, it was very successful event.



Facilitators generally reported that students enjoyed learning about the 8KQ, particularly as they reflected on JMU specific scenarios that come up in the lives of students, which was a new feature for this year.

This was the last year for the "Overdose" scenario, which asks students to reflect on the ethical considerations of a university accepting a donation of Narcan, currently the only effective antidote to an opioid overdose. The scenario saw tremendous engagement from the JMU community. It should be noted that during the pandemic, while Covid-19 and other events have dominated the news feed, the opioid epidemic has only gotten worse and is now a leading cause of injury related death [according to the CDC](#).

ERiA will send out a call for proposals for a new scenario in November – start your creative ethical thinking now!

The International Day of Peace: A Campus Legacy



September 21st is significant for many reasons. It is the last day of summer before the Fall Equinox, thus marking the change in seasons; but more significantly, it is also the International Day of Peace. The day is signaled by the ringing of the Peace Bell at the United Nations, which has taken as its theme for 2021, "Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world." Here at JMU, we remember this as the time that Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (2007) and former President Jimmy Carter (2009) visited campus. Tutu underscored [the bold claim that](#) our world is a moral world although it is sometimes not obvious. President [Carter reflected](#) on the important efforts of working for and living towards peace in the Middle East.

Archbishop Tutu and President Carter both received the Mahatma Gandhi Global Nonviolence Award conferred by JMU's Gandhi Center.

Ethical Reasoning on the Quad

When students use the Eight Key Questions frequently, they become skilled at making more ethical decisions when faced with difficult situations. Every two weeks, Ethical Reasoning will set up a table on the Quad (right in front of Wilson Hall) where students can stop by and discuss how they use the 8KQ and walk away with a free t-shirt. The first event held on September 23rd was a success. Seniors, who had "Contagion" as their "It's Complicated" scenario in 2018, shared how that experience influenced their perceptions of the issues around the COVID-19 pandemic. Students from this year's incoming class of freshmen and transfer students were eager to share how they use the 8KQ as they encounter numerous ethical dilemmas only one month into the semester. Follow ERiA on social media to see their videos:



Can Ethical Reasoning Be Learned and Measured?



In a report recently submitted to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) on behalf of JMU, ERiA asked and answered the question, "How is Ethical Reasoning Learned and Measured?" If you are curious about how such a (seemingly impossible) task might be accomplished, read the executive summary to find out!

[Read the executive summary](#) [See the video](#)

Welcome Kacey Damaty to ERiA

ERiA is delighted and excited to welcome our newest member in the office: Kacey Damaty, Assistant Director of Ethical Reasoning. Kacey is a proud Double Duke ('10, '11M) beginning her career at JMU in 2011 as the part-time Communications and Marketing Coordinator for the College of Education. She began teaching EDUC 300 as an adjunct professor in 2013. Kacey has enthusiastically volunteered as an "It's Complicated" facilitator since 2015 and was part of the early group of professors to integrate the Eight Key Questions into their course work.



Kacey joins ERiA after having served as Assistant Director of Advancement Marketing at JMU since 2018. She works with JMU faculty, staff and administrators to coordinate "It's Complicated" and other student-centered activities that inspire use of the 8KQ.

8KQ Tackles Midterm Problem and Gives Voice to Students — Johnathan Walker, PhD



In my class of nearly 180 students, I prepare three different exams: same questions, different order. When a page inadvertently went missing on one version, I faced the question: how should I grade the midterm? Two-thirds of the class took the complete exam, one-third missed nearly twenty questions. I used the Eight Key Question (8KQ) strategy in the following class period to tackle the ethically complicated problem. Using 8KQ provided students voice, an opportunity to weigh in on an issue that affected them. Students spoke about FAIRNESS (of course) as we resolved the problem of OUTCOMES. They called me out on RESPONSIBILITY, which was refreshing to me. Students were empowered without assailing my CHARACTER. However, fascinating were the advocates for EMPATHY. Interestingly, the ones raising empathy questions did not benefit directly from considering it. After listening and deliberating together, we reached a satisfactory resolution. A student later emailed me saying, "I would so like to thank you for the way you handled this situation, I felt that having us discuss ways to work out this situation really helped."

BE ON THE LOOKOUT

Ethics in Action - October 5th, October 19th

A bi-monthly email series: JMU students, faculty and staff can practice using the 8KQ!

Ethical Reasoning on the Quad - October 7, November 4, and November 18

In-person opportunities for students to process everyday ethical dilemmas.

Global Ethics Day - Wednesday October 20

A day created by the [Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs](#) to help raise awareness for ethics and ensure that ethics matter. This year's theme is "Ethics Empowered."

Ethical Reasoning Workshops - Wednesday October 20 1pm, Thursday October 21 9am

A deep-dive into the Eight Key Questions. [Reserve your spot](#)

Contact Ethical Reasoning in Action

How are **you** using the 8KQ in your classes, programs, work, research, professional and daily life? Hearing your stories and, with your permission, reading them in an upcoming ERIa newsletter helps to nurture the JMU academic community into a culture where ethical reasoning flourishes! Send your experiences, ideas, and insights to ethicalreasoning@jmu.edu.

Ethical Reasoning in Action
James Madison University



ASK FORCLEAR
jmu.edu/ethicalreasoning

 The Eight Key Questions What key questions should I (we) use to evaluate the ethical dimensions of a situation?	
Fairness	How can I (we) act justly, equitably, balancing interests?
Outcomes	What possible actions achieve the best short- and long-term outcomes?
Responsibilities	What duties and/or obligations apply?
Character	What actions help me (us) become my (our) ideal?
Liberty	How do I (we) show respect for personal freedom, autonomy, consent?
Empathy	How would I (we) act if I (we) cared about all involved?
Authority	What do legitimate authorities (e.g. experts, laws, god/s) expect?
Rights	What rights, if any (e.g., innate, legal, social) apply?

Use the "FORCLEAR" acronym to help you remember all 8KQ.

Learn more at jmu.edu/ethicalreasoning
This biodegradable card was printed using recycled PVC.