



Center Review Reports

Full Review

Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility

Resource and Development Review

(Report Date: 4.21.2024)

A Resource and Development Review of the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility (CESR) was conducted on 4.21.2024 by Dr. Adam R. Thompson, voluntary director of the center. ([Link](#))

Center Mission: To highlight the significance of and encourage the exploration of personal morality, social responsibility, and critical thinking more broadly across the disciplines and various methods of inquiry. Their academic and research focus is to teach, study, and provide programming that empowers individuals and communities to more confidently navigate the moral contours of complex situations and contexts.

REVIEW CONTENTS

1: Program Suite

(a) Academic

- i. Responsible Technology and Intelligence (RTI)
 - 1) Embedded Ethics
 - 2) Broader Considerations of Technology
- ii. Outreach Academics
 - 1) Ethics Bowl
 1. National High School Ethics Bowl
 2. Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl
 - 2) Experiential Learning
 1. PHIL 299: Independent Experiential Study – Ethics Bowl
 - 3) Discourse and Broader Impacts
 1. Guest Lecture
 2. Brown Bag Luncheon Series
 3. Research Partnerships
 - Undergraduate – First Year Research Experience
 - Grants
- iii. University Service

(b) Research

- i. Grants: Developing
 - 1) NSF 24-555: Computing for All
 - 2) General CSR Grants Package
- ii. Grants: Pending
 - 1) Catalyst: Building Dynamic Climate Resilience in Peri-Urban Areas
 - 2) Catalyst: Mindverse
- iii. Awarded Funds
 - 1) Delmas Foundation (\$20,000)
 - 2) Student-Teacher Collaboration – Center for Innovative Teaching (\$1,000)
 - 3) Riedesel Fellow – Lauren and Chuck Reidesel (\$50,000)
- iv. Awards Pursued

2: Expansion Plan

(a) Current Budget

- i. Capacity: \$0 (Dr. Thompson is voluntary director)
- ii. Programmatic (\$10,000/AY up to 5 AYs; 2nd AY begins Fall 2024)

(b) General Plan

- i. Capacity
- ii. Programmatic
- iii. Departmental

(c) Action Guidelines and Funding Menus

Review Contents

3: Conclusion

- (a) Assessment
- (b) Recommendations

Note:

Date = Wage Work

Date = Voluntary Work

1: PROGRAM SUITE

This section details the current academic, research, and capacity building programs undertaken by Dr. Thompson at CESR.

Notes:

- **From 2022 – present:** Dr. Thompson develops and manages programs on a \$0 salary budget and small programmatic budget (~\$10,000 /AY for 5 years currently ending year 1).
- From 2013 – 2022: Dr. Thompson developed and managed programs on a ~\$27,000 – \$30,000 budget.

ACADEMIC

A: Responsible Technology and Intelligence (RTI)

1) Embedded Ethics ([link](#))

Embedded Ethics – Description

Embedded ethics is a non-traditional, interdisciplinary strategy for teaching morally responsible thought and action with respect to complex, practical issues in computing and information technology. The traditional pedagogical strategy for cultivating a socially responsible culture in tech ecosystems requires that students pass a single, stand-alone course in ethics, which seems inadequate. The problem is two-fold. For one, computing and information tech curricula often leave little space for nontechnical courses in a student’s schedule. Further, single departments typically lack instructors qualified to provide courses that offer meaningful engagement with the ethical issues that are likely to arise in real-work computer and information technology contexts. The interdisciplinary nature helps to overcome concerns stemming from a lack of faculty expertise, and embedding ethics instruction in established computing and information technology courses dents concerns about lack of room in students’ schedules.

Embedded Ethics – Impact

Academic:

Spring 2024

CIST: 3030(h) Human Rights and AI (Khazanchi – UNO) (10)

Spring 2023

CSCE: 474: Introduction to Data Mining (Samal) (28)

Fall 2022

CSCE 155T: Computer Science 1: Informatics Focus (Harper) (58)

CSCE 473: Computer Vision (Samal) (15)

CSCE 492: Special Topics in Computer Science: Eye-Tracking Software (Sharif) (4)

Fall 2021

CSCE 473: Computer Vision (Samal) (15)

CSCE 492: Special Topics in Computer Science: Eye-Tracking Software (Sharif) (7)

Research:

Spring 2023

Association for Professional and Practical Ethics, Portland, OR (peer review)

Human AI Project, Stanford University (invitation)

Fall 2022

Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum, Univ of Mississippi (peer review)

Embedded Ethics (continued)

Embedded Ethics – Potential Impact

The potential impact of embedded ethics programs is enormous.

First, the current programmatic focus—ethics and socially responsible technology—is expected to be integral to the development of future citizens and workers. As a result, there is an abundance of funding available for a wide variety of responsible technology programs and ventures. An increase in funding is possible and likely, which translates into the development and implementation of more ethics modules being embedded in computing and information technology courses.

Second, though we are currently focused on computing and technology, embedded ethics is multiply realizable. That is, where ever there is a need for and interest in the development and embedding of ethics modules, an embedded ethics program can answer that demand. An increase in the number of disciplines served by the program translates into an opportunity to have a broader impact.

Third, and relatedly, though we are currently focused on serving the colleges and units within the NU system, embedded ethics programming can go beyond university walls. Our plan is to use this programming as a path to wider community engagement and outreach in local schools, museums, firms, and professional organizations. Clearly, this sort of growth translates into a broader impact.

Fourth, and relatedly, though we are currently focused on increasing our budget for the program through grants and private donations, we have the opportunity to develop seminars and workshops as pay-per services to firms or professional organizations. This not only increases our direct impact, but also increases our indirect impact as we will be putting others in a position to develop and embed modules at their own institutions.

Fifth, and relatedly, though we are currently focused on informally training students to develop and embed ethics modules, there is room and demand for an experiential learning course that focuses primarily on formally teaching students how to develop and embed ethics modules in a classroom. This not only has the potential to impact more students directly, it also has the potential to impact students indirectly, since the students who take the course will be in a position to develop and embed modules beyond the university.

Embedded Ethics – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to seek expansion along each the five points discussed—namely, funding development, strengthen ethics and technology focus, pursue non-technology avenues, strengthen outreach work, and develop experiential learning course.

Responsible Technology and Intelligence (RTI) (continued)

2) Broader Considerations of Technology ([Video Link](#), [Website Link](#))

Broader Considerations of Technology (BCT) – Description

BCT was one of our registered student organization programs. Roughly, 15 students participated off and on with a core of 6 – 7 year-to-year. It was a partnership with Initialize in the School of Computing. The Covid pandemic, the fact that the students who initiated BCT graduated, and the fact that Initialize reorganized led to the dissolution of BCT, and so our program. The new model supports partnerships but BCT itself did not survive the re-organization. BCT's main focus was drawing attention to the various social, political, and moral concerns that arise in light of technology, especially the design and implementation of computer-based technologies.

Broader Considerations of Technology (BCT) – Impact

Spring 2022

Science Fiction and the Ethics of Technology Book Club

In a funded partnership with Nebraska Governance and Technology Center, Dr. Thompson and Colton Harper, Graduate Research Assistant, School of Computing met with participants (~ 3 – 6 undergraduates, ~ 2 – 4 graduate students) each month to discuss a science fiction reading as it related to responsible use and design of technology.

Fall 2021

Science Fiction and the Ethics of Technology Book Club (see Spring 2022)

Spring 2021

Online Game Jam – Ethics and Technology (~100)

Lecture Series:

Christine Weissler, Assistant Professor, California Polytechnical University (~50)

Fall 2020

Docu-Series: Allo Communications

Covid limited programming, but we spent time planning for post-Covid events with Nebraska Governance and Technology Center.

Spring 2020

Covid limited programming, but we spent time planning for post-Covid events with Nebraska Governance and Technology Center.

Fall 2019

Ethics and Technology Bazar (raised \$25,000) ([link](#)):

Professional Conference (~50):

Invited:

Alexis Elder, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Minnesota-Duluth

Ryan Jenkins, Associate Professor of Philosophy, California Polytechnic State University

Erica L. Neely, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Northern Ohio State University

Ariela Tubert, Chair and Professor of Philosophy, University of Puget Sound

Bryan Choi, Associate Professor of Law and Computer Science, The Ohio State University

Accepted on Strength of Abstract:

Marcus Schultz-Bergin, Assistant Lecturer, Philosophy, Cleveland State University

Jacob Sparks, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, California Polytechnic State University

Broader Considerations of Technology (continued)

Fall 2019 (continued)

Ethics and Technology Bazar (raised \$25,000) (continued):

Professional Conference (~50) (continued):

Undergraduate Poster Session (4 presenters)

Resource Fair:

Featured local and national for-profit and non-profit technology firms and start-ups (10 – 15 throughout the day). It presented a great opportunity for these groups to (a) showcase their expertise, services, and products as well as (b) network with each other and those in attendance.

Game Jam:

Philosophy graduate student, Zach Garrett hosted a game jam. The game jam centered on the creation of games that help to teach ethics generally or ethical issues related to the responsible design and use of technology.

Outreach Programs:

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) strives to offer educational programs to those who live and work in Nebraska. Some programs involve developing an understanding of technology and entrepreneurship for high school students. Other programs focus specifically on raising awareness about engineering technologies like those developed for transportation. These programs will showcase their work and offer opportunities for audience participation.

Teaching Seminar:

American Association of Philosophy Teachers (AAPT) seminar on how to design meaningful educational experiences in the philosophy classroom. Learn more on the AAPT website: <https://philosophyteachers.org/teaching-learning-seminars-workshops/>

Summer 2019

Graduate Research Team – ACE 8 and Computer Science and Computer Engineering

- Developed a more rigorous, online exam for CSCE's capstone course.

Spring 2018

Responsible Technology Lecture Series

Democracy and Technology

Gus Hurwitz, Fellow University of Pennsylvania Law Center for Technology, Innovations, and Competition, Visiting Professor College of Law

Mark van Roojen, Professor of Philosophy

Qiben Yan, Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Computer Technology

Fall 2017

Responsible Technology Lecture Series

Technology and Democratic Engagement

Mohammad Hasan, Assistant Professor, School of Computing

Matt Waite, Professor of Practice, College of Journalism and Mass Communication

1: PROGRAM SUITE (CONTINUED)

ACADEMIC (CONTINUED)

B: Outreach Academics

1) Ethics Bowl ([link 1](#), [link 2](#))

Ethics Bowl – Description

There are two programs falling under the Ethics Bowl heading—namely, Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) and National High School Ethics Bowl (NHSEB). IEB is the arm of the Association of Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE) responsible for organizing regional and national competitions each year. NHSEB is housed at the Parr Ethics Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Basically, ethics bowl is a competitive discussion. Teams compete to give the most accurate, comprehensive, clear, and complete answer to the ‘match question’. Each two-match round involves presenting an initial take on the question at hand, defending it against the opposing team’s critique, and responding to questions from a three-judge panel composed of academic and non-academic professionals. The questions focus on one or more aspects of a case drawn from a set of fifteen cases that teams have worked with for roughly two months prior to competition.

National High School Ethics Bowl (NHSEB) ([link](#))

Dr. Thompson established this program in 2020 when he established the Waverly High School Ethics Bowl Team with the help of Cass Didier, a teacher at Waverly High School. Dr. Thompson continues to develop this program with Cass Didier. More broadly Dr. Thompson is working with Laura Grams, Associate Professor, Philosophy to develop NHSEB in the Lincoln-Omaha area and Nebraska.

Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) ([link](#))

Due to a lack of funding, Dr. Thompson has halted the IEB program. Funding is required for attending the regional ethics bowl competition in Colorado. Funding is also required for compensating a coach or set of coaches. In 2017, CESR hosted the Mountain West Ethics Bowl (raised \$6,500, partnership with Chipotle).

Ethics Bowl – Broader Impact

The Waverly Ethics Bowl Teams consists of approximately 15 high school students year-to-year. The team spends time each week in the fall preparing for regionals. Currently, our sub-regional consists of two to three other schools. In addition to having a direct impact on the academic experience of these students, coach Didier is working to establish a curricular ethics bowl that will allow students to join the team and earn credit for doing so. Dr. Thompson is supporting this effort. Waverly has competed in each of the following seasons:

2023 Season

2022 Season

2021 Season

2020 Season

In addition, Dr. Thompson reformatted PHIL 299 as an experiential learning course in which the student who took the course worked with the Waverly Ethics Bowl Team to support their preparation for regional competition.

Ethics Bowl – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

First, growing ethics bowl programming requires funding. For instance, CESR needs funding for IEB students to travel to regional competition in Colorado and to compensate graduate students for coaching

the teams. Likewise, NHSEB requires funding to support efforts to expand NHSEB in the state of Nebraska. In addition, funding would significantly impact the PHIL 299 experiential course in ethics bowl. So, direct funds or resources that put CESR in a better position to successfully apply for funding would make expansion more likely.

Second, Dr. Thompson is already working with the Department of Philosophy at UNO to bring other high schools into competition. As more schools develop teams, the NHSEB impact is broadened significantly.

Third, the pilot experiential learning course, PHIL 299 showed that there is room and demand for an experiential learning course that focuses primarily on formally teaching students how to teach high school students critical thinking and moral reasoning in order to enrich their capacity for maturely reasoning about complex moral issues. This not only has the potential to impact more students directly, it also has the potential to impact students indirectly, since the students who take the course will be in a position to teach critical thinking and moral reasoning to others as well as engage civilly in difficult discussions about what should be done or which policies are best to adopt.

Ethics Bowl – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to seek expansion along each the four points discussed—namely, funding development, re-instate an IEB team at UNL, pursue the establishment of more high school ethics bowl teams, and develop experiential learning course.

B: Outreach Academics (continued)

2) Experiential Learning

PHIL 299: Independent Experiential Study – Ethics Bowl

PHIL 299 – Description

Dr. Thompson established PHIL 299 when the IEB program at UNL was going strong. The main reason was to offer students the opportunity to gain credit for their work in IEB, since it is as involved as a three credit course.

IEB disbanded in the fall of 2023 with the loss of funding. But a student, Ethan Clinchard had registered for the fall 2023 section of PHIL 299. Dr. Thompson presented Ethan with the opportunity to take PHIL 299 as an experiential learning course. Ethan jumped at the opportunity, and executed in fantastically. Essentially, Ethan worked to prepare the Waverly High School Ethics Bowl Team for regional competition. The rest of Ethan's grade was earned through quality work on an applied ethics term paper and a teaching journal. The term paper required Ethan to take a position on one of the cases comprising the NHSEB 2023 Regional Case Set. The teaching journal required Ethan to develop a plan for engaging in the Waverly team as an instructor and reflecting on how it went. Ethan also had to incorporate research on teaching ethics bowl into his final journal reflection.

PHIL 299 – Impact

Academic:

The course has been offered every fall since Dr. Thompson developed it in 2016. Typically, two UNL Ethics Bowl team members would take the course each semester. The Waverly Ethics Bowl Teams consists of approximately 15 high school students. The team spends time each week in the fall preparing for regionals. Currently, our sub-regional consists of two to three other schools. In addition to having a direct impact on the academic experience of these students, coach Didier is working to establish a curricular ethics bowl that will allow students to join the team and earn high school credit for doing so. Dr. Thompson is supporting this effort. Waverly has competed in each of the following seasons:

Fall 2023

1 Student
~ 15 Waverly High School Students

Fall 2022

0 Students

Fall 2021

1 Students

Fall 2020

3 Students

Fall 2019

2 Students

Fall 2018

2 Students

Fall 2017

3 Student

Fall 2016

2 Student

Experiential Learning (continued)

In addition, Dr. Thompson reformatted PHIL 299 as an experiential learning course in which the student who took the course worked with the Waverly Ethics Bowl Team to support their preparation for regional competition.

PHIL 299 – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

First, growing ethics bowl programming requires funds. For instance, CESR needs funding for IEB students to travel to regional competition in Colorado and to compensate graduate students for coaching the teams. Likewise, NHSEB requires funding to support efforts to expand NHSEB in the state of Nebraska. In addition, funding would significantly impact the PHIL 299 experiential course in ethics bowl. So, direct funds or resources that put CESR in a better position to successfully apply for funding would make expansion more likely.

Second, Dr. Thompson is already working with the Department of Philosophy at UNO to bring other high schools into competition. As more schools develop teams, the NHSEB impact is broadened significantly.

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Embedded Ethics – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to seek expansion along each the four points discussed—namely, funding development, reinstate and develop the IEB at UNL, pursue the establishment of more high school ethics bowl teams, and develop experiential learning course.

B: Outreach Academic (continued)

3) Discourse and Broader Impacts

Guest Lecture

Guest Lecture – Description

Since being employed in 2013, Dr. Thompson has guest lectured and served on panels.

Guest Lecture – Impact

AY 2023/2024

Responsible Professionals – Workers’ Compensation Association (~100)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2022/2023

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

Faculty/Staff Panel – AVID LPS College Readiness Program (~20)

AY 2021/2022

Public Trust/Right to Know – Dr. Martha Rhoades NRES 330/NUTR 330: Environmental Health (~15)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2020/2021

Public Trust/Right to Know – Dr. Martha Rhoades NRES 330/NUTR 330: Environmental Health (~15)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2019/2020

Social Justice – Dr. Christine Haney’s ENVR 189H: Environmental Justice and Public Health (~20)

Public Trust/Right to Know – Dr. Martha Rhoades NRES 330/NUTR 330: Environmental Health (~10)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2018/2019

Research Ethics – Dr. Philip Johnson’s Graduate Seminar (~30)

Public Trust/Right to Know – Dr. Martha Rhoades NRES 330/NUTR 330: Environmental Health (~10)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2017/2018

Panel Host – Arabic Day (~200)

Responsible Colleagues and Mentors – College of Arts and Sciences-Natural Resources (~30)

Public Trust/Right to Know – Dr. Martha Rhoades NRES 330/NUTR 330: Environmental Health (~10)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2016/2017

Leadership Workshop – College of Business Management (~50)

Joint Counsel Workshop: Ethics – Nebraska Kidney Institute (~100)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

AY 2015/2016

Responsible Research – Nebraska Summer Research Institute (~100)

Responsible Computing – Dr. Deepak Khazanchi’s CIST 9040: Colloquium on IT Research (~15)

Broader Impact Partnerships – Office of Research and Economic Development (~30)

Responsible TAs – Incoming Graduate Student Workshop – Office of Graduate Studies (~50)

AY 2014/2015

Responsible Research – Nebraska Summer Research Institute (~100)

Responsible Professionals – Lincoln Human Resource Management Association (~100)

Responsible TAs – Incoming Graduate Student Workshop – Office of Graduate Studies (~50)

Guest Lecture (continued)

AY 2013/2014

Responsible Research – Nebraska Summer Research Institute (~100)

Responsible TAs – Incoming Graduate Student Workshop – Office of Graduate Studies (~50)

Guest Lecture – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

First, there is clearly a demand for guest lectures on ethics and social responsibility. In addition, this a primary way to build relationships for future projects and opportunities. Dr. Thompson accepts the invitations so long the commitment is minimal.

Second, more capacity funding would allow Dr. Thompson to accept more invitations. If that capacity funding brings more personnel, CESR could contribute their staff expertise more broadly.

Embedded Ethics – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to continue to build relationships in UNL and in the community by accepting invitations to lecture or serve on a panel as much as possible.

Discourse and Broader Impacts (continued)

Brown Bag Luncheon Series ([link](#))

Brown Bag Luncheon Series – Description

These monthly lunches provide an interdisciplinary forum for university faculty, students, and staff to discuss ethical issues and projects that arise or are underway throughout the academic community. Dr. Thompson had to shutter this program once funding for the center dried up.

Brown Bag Luncheon – Impact

See archived Brown Bags. ([link](#))

Attendance generally ranged from 10 – 200 when the programming was running strong. Covid and the lack of funding worked together to require Dr. Thompson to close the program until further notice.

Brown Bag Luncheon – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

This was a primary way by which Dr. Thompson established connections across the university and community.

Discourse and Broader Impacts (continued)

Research Partnerships

Research Partnerships – Description

Basically, there are three aspects to this program – undergraduate research, graduate research, and faculty/staff research. Undergraduate research occurs through funding like the Honors College UCARE and FYRE programs. Graduate and Faculty/Staff research is primarily a grant-based partnership.

Research Partnerships - Impact

Undergraduate:

Fall 2020

Undergraduate – First Year Research Experience (FYRE – Honors College) (1)

An undergraduate designed a program for engaging senior citizen communities in Lincoln, NE. The idea was to hold discussions on philosophical topics.

Graduate and Faculty/Staff

Please see Current: Research Below

Research Partnerships – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

First, there is clearly a demand for undergraduate, graduate, and faculty/staff research partnerships at the university pertaining to ethics and social responsibility and in general. In addition, this is a primary way to build relationships for future projects and opportunities. Dr. Thompson accepts the invitations so long the commitment is minimal. Undergraduate research opportunities are scarce, however. The main issue is that many of the UNL undergraduate research opportunities require a faculty person who has at least a Professor of Practice contract with UNL.

Second, more capacity funding would allow Dr. Thompson to accept more invitations. If that capacity funding brings more personnel, CESR could contribute their staff expertise more broadly. Clearly, adding faculty to CESR's personnel would open more research opportunities.

University Service – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to continue to build relationships inside and outside of UNL and in the community as much as possible.

C: University Service

University Service

University Service – Description

This is somewhat of a catch-all. It includes the up-keep of CESR’s website as well as Dr. Thompson’s participation in formal university commissions and projects.

University Service – Impact

AY 2023/2024

Website Maintenance and Development ([link](#))

AY 2022/2023

Website Maintenance and Development

Inclusive Campus Support Network – Office of the Chancellor of Diversity and Inclusion ([link](#))

AY 2021/2022

Website Maintenance and Development

Inclusive Campus Support Network – Office of the Chancellor of Diversity and Inclusion

Chancellor’s Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience

Ethics and Technology Programming – Nebraska Governance and Technology Center (~20)

AY 2020/2021

Website Maintenance and Development

Chancellor’s Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience

[Covid]

AY 2019/2020

Website Maintenance and Development

Ethics and Technology Bazaar – Department of Computer Science and Engineering – Initialize (~500)

Chancellor’s Environment, Sustainability, and Resilience Commission

AY 2018/2019

Website Maintenance and Development

Inclusive Curriculum – Executive Vice Chancellor’s Academic Affairs ([link](#))

AY 2017/2018

Website Maintenance and Development

Academic Integrity Week – CESR and UNL Libraries ([link](#))

Our Nebraska – Office of Student Affairs ([link](#))

Course Development – Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts

AY 2016/2017

Website Maintenance and Development

Academic Integrity Week – CESR and UNL Libraries

Our Nebraska – Office of Student Affairs ([link](#))

AY 2015/2016

Website Maintenance and Development

Academic Integrity Week – College of Graduate Studies ([link](#))

Integrity and Ethical Conduct – Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Accreditation Team ([link](#))

Our Nebraska – Office of Student Affairs

University Service (continued)

University Service – Impact (continued)

AY 2014/2015

Website Maintenance and Development

Academic Integrity Week – College of Graduate Studies ([link](#))

AY 2013/2014

Website Maintenance and Development

Academic Integrity Week – College of Graduate Studies ([link](#))

University Service – Potential Impact

The potential impact is large.

First, there is clearly a demand for service at the university pertaining to ethics and social responsibility. In addition, this a primary way to build relationships for future projects and opportunities. Dr. Thompson accepts the invitations so long the commitment is minimal.

Second, more capacity funding would allow Dr. Thompson to accept more invitations. If that capacity funding brings more personnel, CESR could contribute their staff expertise more broadly.

University Service – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to continue to build relationships in UNL and in the community by accepting invitations to lecture or serve on a panel as much as possible.

1: PROGRAM SUITE (CONTINUED)

RESEARCH

Dr. Thompson works on research projects related to his philosophical interests, his interest in maintaining and growing CESR, and his interests in the study of teaching and learning in philosophy.

Dr. Thompson is .5 FTE with a 100% teaching appointment in Philosophy. Thus, his research output is minimal. However, the following offers insight into the interdisciplinary efforts Dr. Thompson has undertaken to develop CESR's contribution to research projects.

Grants: Developing

i. NSF 24-555: Computer Science for All (w/ Dr. Khazanchi, CIST, UNO)

This program aims to provide *all* U.S. students with the opportunity to participate in computer science (CS) and computational thinking (CT) education in their schools at the preK-12 levels. With this solicitation, the National Science Foundation (NSF) focuses on both research and research-practice partnerships (RPPs) that foster the research and development needed to bring CS and CT to all schools. Specifically, this solicitation aims to provide (1) high school teachers with the preparation, professional development (PD) and ongoing support they need to teach rigorous computer science courses; (2) preK-8 teachers with the instructional materials and preparation they need to integrate CS and CT into their teaching; and (3) schools and districts with the resources needed to define and evaluate multi-grade pathways in CS and CT.

ii. General CSR Grants Package

CSR Grants are Corporate Social Responsibility funds made available to the public on a competitive basis by private businesses and firms.

Grants: Pending

- 1) Catalyst: Building Dynamic Climate Resilience in Peri-Urban Areas (w/ Christine Wittich and Jennifer Lather, College of Engineering)
- 2) Catalyst: Mindverse (w/ Max Peirobon, School of Computing, College of Engineering)

Awarded Funds

- 1) Delmas Foundation (\$20,000)
- 2) Student-Teacher Collaboration – Center for Innovative Teaching (\$1,000)
- 3) Riedesel Fellow – Private

Awards Pursued

- 1) PI – Dr. Thompson
 - a. 2022 – Humanities Initiatives at Colleges and Universities – NEH (\$150,000)
 - b. 2023 – Responsible Computing – Mozilla (\$150,000)
 - c. 2023 – Special Project Grant – SIGCSE (\$5,000)
- 2) PI – Other
 - a. 2022 – Catalyst: Mindverse (Max Peirobon, School of Computing, College of Engineering)
 - b. 2022 – NSF – FARIA: Adaptive Artificial Intelligence in Distributed Networks (PI – Sasi Balasubramaniam, School of Computing, College of Engineering)
 - c. 2021 – NSF – 21-536: National Science Foundation Research (Christie Montooth, School of Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences)
 - d. 2016 – NSF 16-608: Smart and Autonomous Systems (Lisa Pytlik Zilig, Public Policy Center, UNL)

RESEARCH (CONTINUED)

Current: Research – Potential Impact

The potential impact is enormous.

First, there is clearly a demand for Dr. Thompson’s expertise as a partner on grants—especially when it comes to broader impacts projects.

Second, more capacity funding would allow Dr. Thompson to be more active in seeking grants. An increase in grant applications and funding requests translates into an increase in the likelihood that CESR will gain funding to support its valuable activities.

Current: Research – Expansion Plan

Given the potential impacts, Dr. Thompson aims to continue to partner on grants and funding initiatives that serve the interest of CESR, Philosophy, CAS, and UNL. In addition, Dr. Thompson plans to continue pursue funding opportunities.

More perspicuously, Dr. Thompson aims to pursue funding that will contribute to the effort to build capacity at CESR. One primary action plan is to seek programmatic funds that pay persons other than Dr. Thompson to implement programming. The strategy is to build quality programs first and seek capacity support (i.e., funds for Dr. Thompson’s salary) in large part on the basis of the excellence of the programming. The second primary action plan is to seek capacity funding directly. The main difficulty is that most funding is programmatic and explicitly denies funding for the salary of those overseeing the work of the program.

2: EXPANSION PLAN

Overview

Current Budget

- 1) Capacity: \$0 (Dr. Thompson is voluntary director)
- 2) Programmatic (\$10,000/AY up to 5 AYs; 2nd AY begins Fall 2024)

General Plan

Generally, there are internal resources and external resources. The internal resources at UNL consist primarily of top-notch researchers and courses. External resources consist primarily of grant opportunities, private foundation support, and the commodification of workshops/seminars/etc. developed by CESR and its partners. Dr. Thompson plans to incorporate each type of resource in his continued effort to maintain and strengthen CESR. Below, Dr. Thompson elaborates along three axes: (a) Capacity, (b) Programmatic, and (c) Departmental.

General Plan: Capacity

Dr. Thompson will continue to develop and manage programming for CESR. The main difficulty is the lack of resources to compensate Dr. Thompson's efforts. The lack of resources will make retaining Dr. Thompson difficult.

To be clear, Dr. Thompson is aware that growing CESR may require hiring an individual with the academic and research track record more appropriate for a center at an elite university like UNL. Dr. Thompson is at peace with that reality. He is simply interested in maintaining a status and influence at CESR that appropriately recognizes his past and present leadership and academic career.

General Plan: Programmatic

The academic programs most likely to attract funding are Embedded Ethics and Ethics Bowl. In addition, research partnerships are lucrative. Thus, Dr. Thompson plans to continue to develop Embedded Ethics, Ethics Bowl, and his research partnerships and initiatives.

General Plan: Departmental

CESR has the capacity to strengthen Philosophy in two primary ways. First, it is well positioned to work with the chair to bundle current courses

Action Guidelines and Funding Menus

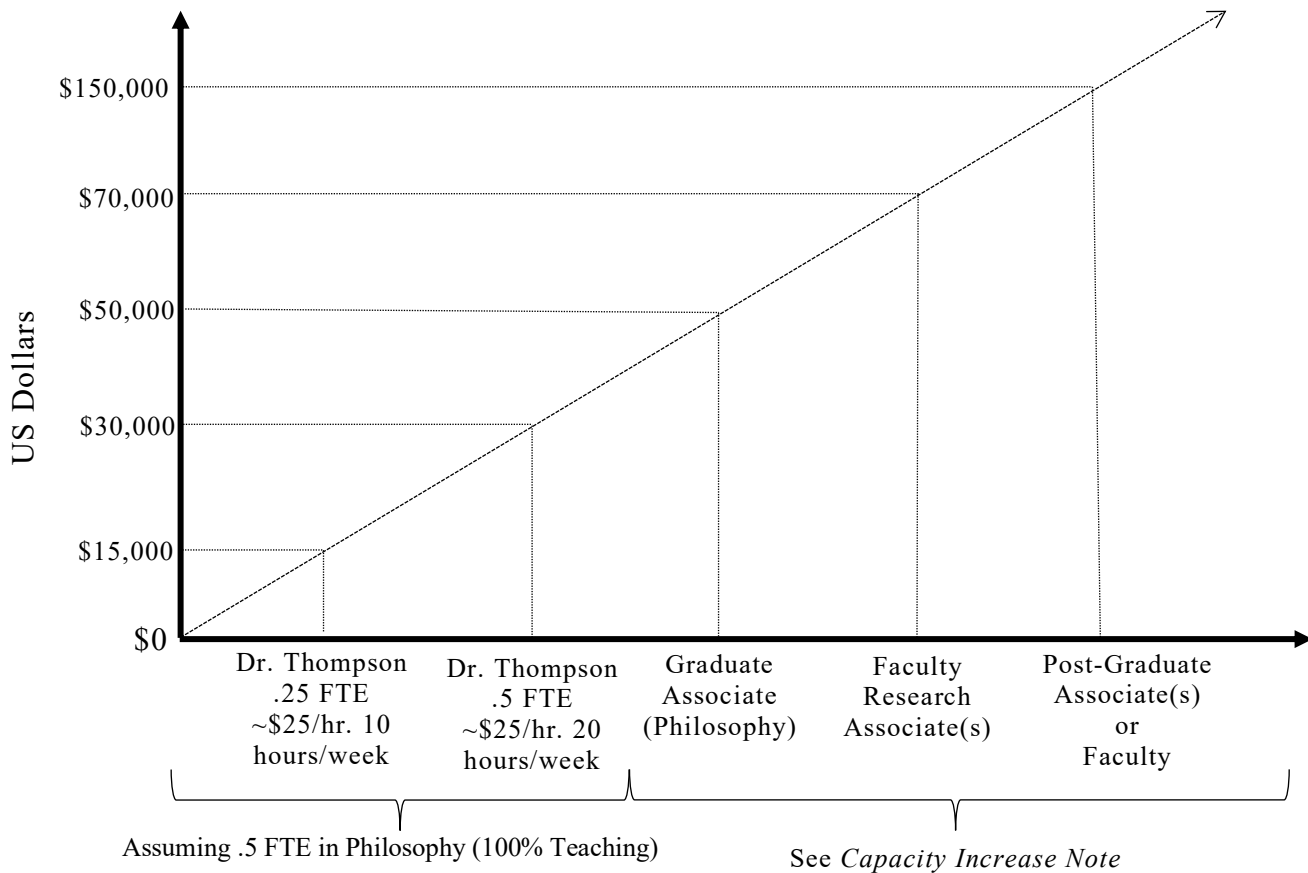
This section details funding benchmarks. To so, it divides funding into the following two categories:

Capacity Funds: Resources for overhead or day-to-day costs of a functional center—e.g., employee salaries, office supplies, and facility expenses.

Programmatic Funds: Resources used to implement a program.

The two categories are interconnected insofar as the time required to oversee and implement programming can outstrip a center’s personnel resources for managing the program. For instance, when capacity funding was eliminated and programmatic funding Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) dried up, Dr. Thompson had to shutter IEB. Without programmatic funding it was difficult to gain student buy-in. Without capacity funding Dr. Thompson could not justify the amount of time it takes to run IEB successfully. This was true for the Brown Bag Luncheon program as well. Without programmatic funds to pay speakers and offer boxed lunches to attendees it was difficult to book events and it was nearly impossible to ensure attendance.

Capacity Funds Graphic:



Capacity Increase Note:

At this level of funding, the idea is to begin by adding a graduate student to support Dr. Thompson’s work. As funding increases from there, it makes sense to increase CESR’s research impact by adding research associates through named chairs or named professorships who will receive funding for focusing on ethics and social responsibility issues in their research (e.g. Riedesel Chair of Ethics and Social Responsibility or McKittrick Professor of Responsible AI). Eventually, a post-graduate position could emerge. Each of these additions would benefit CERC and Philosophy. CERC could better pursue its mission. Philosophy would have a broader range of resources for executing its research, teaching, and service mission.

Beyond this, reconfiguring Dr. Thompson’s salary, which could include teaching responsibilities in Philosophy, as well as hiring associate and assistant directors makes sense.

Capacity Increase Note (continued):

This is modeled on some top-notch ethics centers like The Parr Center for Ethics at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the Prindle Institute at Depauw University, the Rock Ethics Institute at Pennsylvania State University, and the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University.

Programmatic Menu

Obviously, as funding increases in terms of Capacity funds for staffing the center and Programmatic funds for developing and implementing programs we can do more to pursue our mission. Less obviously perhaps is that we can do more by adding to existing programs and do more by adding new programs. Internally, for instance, we could add to Embedded Ethics through materials production, website and social media support, graduate student support staff, incentives for faculty/staff involvement, fellowships and scholarships, and workshops/conferences. Of course, we could also add external components like seed funds, incentives for community engagement, experiential learning courses, major/minor collaborative projects, and training seminars. Other programs, like Ethics Bowl could make the same sorts of additions, but would also be able to travel funding and other things more specific to that program.

Examples of new programming that might come by way of increased funding:

- Internal: Luncheons with public discussions, graduate student support staff, collaborations, experiential learning courses, degree programs, fellowships & scholarships, and workshops/conferences.
- External: seed funds, fellowships & scholarships, summer camps or retreats, community engagement, and major/minor collaborative projects.¹

¹ Internal programming primarily involves (a) persons who either study, teach, or work at UNL, (b) UNL colleges, schools, departments, offices, centers, institutes, or units, or (b) spaces on, in, or controlled by UNL. External programming does not primarily involve (a) persons who either study, teach, or work at UNL, (b) UNL colleges, schools, departments, offices, centers, institutes, or units, but (b) may primarily take place on or in spaces controlled by UNL.

Program-Types and Examples

PROGRAM-TYPE	EXAMPLES
Materials Production	Creating content in the form of promotional materials or classroom resources.
Website & Social Media Support	Maintaining a database and webpage for open access modules, reporting progress, and raising awareness about embedded ethics programming and research.
Seed Funds	Funds provided by CESR to students at educational institutions interested in establishing an embedded ethics program or ethics bowl team.
Incentives for Community Engagement	Funds provided by CESR to encourage community members and professional organizations to participate in program-related activities.
Experiential Learning Course	<p>A course in which students learn how to develop and embed ethics modules in various contexts.</p> <p>A course in which students learn how to guide an high school ethics bowl team in their preparation for regionals.</p>
Undergraduate, Graduate, and Faculty and Staff Research Partnerships	UCARE, FYRE, and paper or grant work.
Graduate Student Support Staff	Graduate students compensated through programmatic funds to support the program.
Fellowships and Scholarships	Funds that the CESR could use to support program-related scholarship.
Workshops & Conferences	Program-related workshops and conferences (academic or research oriented).
Summer Camps & Retreats	Program-related camps or retreats to encourage and promote community engagement.

3: CONCLUSION

Assessment

The CESR is well positioned to grow and strengthen the department and, so, the college in which it is housed. Currently, on a \$0 budget, Dr. Thompson has managed to maintain six out of the eight programs that constituted the CESR's suite of programming as the Kutak Center for the Teaching and Study of Applied Ethics in the College of Law. During that time, the operating budget was ~ \$30,000, which provided for Dr. Thompson's salary and benefits. Other funds were gained through grants and private donors. Similar funding opportunities abound. In addition, UNL is flush with resources that, developed in the right way, would significantly impact CESR's capacity to thrive as a Philosophy and CAS asset.

A very small initial investment will provide Dr. Thompson with the means for a more concentrated effort on maintaining and developing CESR's current excellence. CESR's curricular programming is wide and already includes experiential learning initiatives. One of those experiential learning initiatives provides support to a local high school ethics bowl team. The other experiential learning initiative employs a graduate student to design embedded ethics modules for computing and information technology courses in the School of Computing at UNL and in the College of Information Science and Technology at the University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO). Each curricular program extends the sorts of desirable opportunities that Philosophy, and, as a result, CAS can offer. In addition, each is interdisciplinary, scalable, and multi-realizable. For example, CESR's embedded ethics work involves the disciplines of computer science, software engineering, information technology, and philosophy. An increase in funding for the program simply increases the number of courses the center can service, and the number of internal and external opportunities it can offer for raising literacy and critical skills in responsible computing. An increase in funding would also translate to an increase in the quality of the embedded modules. Finally, since the model is one-way, discipline-independent—i.e., ethicists are the only constants, course content is the variable—more funding would allow the embedded ethics programming to extend to academic programs and disciplines outside of computing and technology. Hence, the center could design and implement ethics modules in physics courses, chemistry courses, or courses in agriculture or climate science or any other discipline in looking to support their students' understanding of ethics and social responsibility as it applies to their field.

CESR could serve to increase course enrollments within Philosophy by bundling courses to earn a programmatic major/minor by taking specific courses within a certain bundle. In particular, Dr. Thompson is interested in working to establish a Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) program at UNL. Dr. Thompson has already identified standing courses and current faculty at UNL that, when bundled appropriately, would constitute a strong PPE program. Like the embedded ethics program, PPE programs offer a model for meeting the student demand for concentrated and practically valuable courses of study that prepare them for a wider range of professional engagements.

Dr. Thompson maintains CESR's research capacity through partnerships internal and external to UNL. Internal to UNL, Dr. Thompson has partnered with two separate groups on a catalyst grant—one in the area of computing and one in the area of natural resource management and civic engineering. External to UNL, Dr. Thompson has partnered with individuals at UNO and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) on ethics and AI focused projects.

Thus, as it stands:

- (a) \$0 is enough to continue limited but impactful programming;
- (b) The most impactful programming requires CESR expertise but is otherwise open to any discipline and is scalable;
- (c) Dr. Thompson and CESR's partners are excited to work to increase the effectiveness and impact of the center; and
- (d) As funds increase the quality, effectiveness, and reach of CESR's effort increase exponentially.

Thus, small operational investments in Dr. Thompson and small programmatic investments in curricular programming is highly likely to return high academic and research value.

Recommendations

Center status should be retained and strengthened.

1: Retain Dr. Thompson

Dr. Thompson has cared for the development of CESR since 2013. As of now, the center runs on an operational or capacity budget of \$0 and a programmatic budget of \$10,000. The center's continuation requires retaining Dr. Thompson.

2: Increase Dr. Thompson's Compensation

Currently, the work Dr. Thompson does for the center is not compensated. Rather, Dr. Thompson oversees the center voluntarily. It is unclear how much longer he can or should do this. Compensating Dr. Thompson for his valuable work would provide him with the means to exert a more concentrated effort on maintaining and developing CESR's current excellence and strong programming. In addition, Dr. Thompson could pursue more programmatic funding opportunities and internal or external partnerships.

3: Increase Programmatic Funding

Even without operational funding to compensate Dr. Thompson's work, programmatic funds can go a long way to support CESR's mission. For instance, through the Riedesel Fund, Dr. Thompson oversees the work of the Riedesel Fellow who designs and implements embedded ethics modules at UNL or UNO. This year the Riedesel Fellow also worked with and trained a volunteer to do develop and implement the module. In addition, increases in programmatic funding would bring back the programs that Dr. Thompson had to mute after the move from the College of Law—namely, Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl and the luncheon colloquium series. In short, the graduate student work that we compensate through programmatic funds increases CESR's exponentially.

4: Provide Resources for Securing Foundation Funding

One of the most promising things to occur at CESR was being put in direct contact with individuals at the NU Foundation—specifically, Ellen Fitzsimmons. The support they provide when pursuing external funding from foundations was integral to the success of our embedded ethics program. There is no doubt that continued or increased support toward securing external funding from private and public foundations would significantly contribute to CESR's mission. Prior to the move from the College of Law, the center was isolated from those sorts of resources and discouraged from pursuing external funding. One of the most encouraging things post-move has been CAS's attitude of support in this regard.

5: Create Workshops, Conferences, Seminars or Other Products as a Source of Revenue

One way that many centers generate revenue beyond grants and private donations is through the cultivation of programming that interested parties can purchase. For instance, the College of Information Science and Technology created the Center for Management of Information Technology ([link](#)), which offers a paid subscription to their services to public and private firms.

Responsibility for Monitoring:

Progress towards addressing these recommendations will be the responsibility of Dr. Adam R. Thompson and others as appointed by Dr. Thompson's direct and indirect supervisors.

***Team Membership:**

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