



Students Wrestle with Real-Life Dilemmas at 13th Annual Ethics Bowl

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Should a police officer receive additional legal protection after a fatal shooting? Do fashion models with a high body mass index (BMI) promote unhealthy eating habits? Should a nursing home prevent a woman with dementia from having non-consensual sex with her husband?

University of Miami students debated these types of challenging real-life situations in the 13th annual Ethics Bowl, hosted by the School of Business Oct. 18. The multi-round competition was won by School of Business freshman Eleanor Martin and teammates Blake Weil and Rohit Reddy from the School of Arts and Sciences.

"The Ethics Bowl is important for all students, because we must address issues related to business, health, law, and the environment," said Kassandra Samuel, president of the University of Miami Ethics Society. "This competition encourages students to think on their feet and explore different viewpoints."

A panel of six volunteer judges, including Joseph Centorino, executive director of the Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust, evaluated the teams' presentations, asked questions and scored each round. "Competitions like this help students develop the moral reasoning skills to confront ethical issues," said another judge, attorney Ryan Kairalla (BBA '08) who was a member of the University's first-place 2007 National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Team.



First place team from left to right: Rohit Reddy, Blake Weil, and Eleanor Martin with Karl Schulze.



Second place team from left to right: Sathvik Plakurty, Constance Burri, and Vendant Acharya with Karl Schulze.

Anita Cava, professor of business law, director of the School's Business Ethics Program, and co-director of the University Ethics Programs, welcomed the six student teams. "The Ethics Bowl is a pillar in our School's mission to develop principled business leaders," she said. "Ethics is a priority for the entire University as well."

Cava also thanked California forensic accountant Karl Schulze (BBA '74) and his wife Terri, for their longstanding support of the Ethics Bowl. "Thirteen years ago, Terri and I were considering endowing a scholarship," Schulze said. "Instead, we chose the Ethics Bowl, which has an impact on far more students and has been very rewarding for us on a personal level."

Sophomore Richard Holmes, debate chair for the Ethics Society, agreed with Schulze on the importance of the annual competition. "Engaging in these discussions as a student can help instill strong ethical and moral principles that can guide you throughout life," he said.

Senior Nicholas Andoie, vice president of the Ethics Society, said the competition helps students sharpen their thinking and strengthen their presentation skills. For example, he and team members Faith Boone and Raina Coleman argued in the first round of the competition that promoting fashion models with a high BMI could lead to higher rates of obesity, diabetes and other serious health conditions.

However, the opposing team of Faraah Bekheet, Arjun Malholtra and Max Shelvin said the media should encourage diversity, rather than focusing only on petite women. "It's important to have equal representation of body types in the media," said Bekheet. "There are many larger women who want to see how fashions would look on them."

Reflecting on his commitment to the Ethics Bowl in a luncheon talk to students before the final round, Schulze said, "In my work, I see the downside when ethics is not part of business behavior. I strongly encourage you to tell the truth, since honesty is still the best policy. You should also be aware of the many schemes designed to steal money. Keep your eyes open and if you see something wrong, say something."



Participants in the 2015 Ethics Bowl, including members of the UM Ethics Society.