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### **Pacific-10 Compliance Officers' Morality and Moral Reasoning**

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*Critics contend that intercollegiate athletic administrators, including compliance officers who work in highly formalized environments, generally exhibit restricted moral thinking that is defined by organizational rules (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1999). Cognitive moral development's dominance on moral reasoning research has assisted in supporting this argument because investigations are framed from one independent theory (e.g., justice) and measure moral reasoning (Walker, Pitts, Hennig, & Matsuba, 1995). As a result, the interdependent nature between individuals' morality and moral reasoning in real-life work experiences is unclear. Using contextual practical reasoning as a framework, Pacific-10 compliance officers' were interviewed to examine their morality and moral reasoning. The findings showed compliance officers engaged in practical reasoning in resolving day-to-day work-related moral problems. Furthermore, the findings highlighted the interdependent relationship among participants' conceptions of morality, their moral perceptions and sensitivities, and their practical reasoning.*

**T**he extensive formalization of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has created a legalistic environment in which critics argue that athletic administrators are becoming rule-dependent in their judgments (Gough, 1994; Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1999; Malloy, 1991). The Association's stringent and complex legislative rules system allegedly hinders athletic administrators, including compliance officers, in their moral deliberations as they determine the rightness or wrongness of a situation based on a strict interpretation of the rules. Gough (1994) argued that

... the NCAA's legalistic atmosphere requires not so much the higher faculty of what moral philosophers sometimes call practical wisdom (i.e., the knowledge of how to exercise ethical judgment in particular cases) but the mere ability to recognize, interpret and follow formal rules. The great danger here ... is that operating primarily or solely according to the latter, low order ability can eventually prevent individuals from, as we say, doing the right thing. (p. 4)

These criticisms, specifically in relation to compliance officers, are unfair for three main reasons: First, compliance officers naturally reason to the level of the rules as they are required to abide by and uphold organizational rules and policies. Second, based on Dworkin's (1985, 1986) theory of interpretation, an individual can never really possess a "true" rule book conception of the law, as all rules require interpretation and deliberation in making a judgment. The types of

day-to-day work-related moral considerations that compliance officers make (e.g., rule interpretations and their application, education, and enforcement) are considered practical judgments. Practical judgments are required when people are confronted with uncertainty about the right course of action in their professional work (Wallace, 1988). Practical reasoning includes an individual's understanding of what is right or wrong (moral conception) that will inform one's ability to identify moral problems (moral perception) and their characteristics (moral sensitivity) (Blum, 1994; Vokey, 2001), which in turn influences alternatives that are considered in judgment making (moral reasoning) (Blum, 1994; Kekes, 1989). For example, a compliance officer's discernment of rightness as justice and respect for the rules will influence the type of issues she perceives as morally problematic and their salient features, which in turn informs her practical moral reasoning. To assist in her interpretations and judgments, the officer would draw on her professional "know how" (i.e., skills, experience, understandings of policies and procedures, organizational standards, values, and beliefs) and her deliberations would also be guided by her work-related practical knowledge and case particularities (Wallace, 1988; Winkler, 1993)

Last, cognitive moral development's dominance on moral reasoning research, (i.e., Kohlberg (1981, 1984) and Rest (1979, 1986, 1994)) has contributed to the argument in the literature that shows that administrators' moral reasoning in highly formalized organizations, such as in sport and business (Abdolmohammadi & Baker, 2006; Malloy, 1991; Monga, 2007; Soon, 2003; Sweeny & Fisher, 1998; Teal & Carroll, 1999; Weber, 1990; Weber & Wasieleski, 2001) reflect the pre-conventional and conventional levels on Kohlberg's scale or Rest's model and therefore uses organizational rules as a framework in making moral judgments. Trevino (1992) contends that "powerful organizational norms, reward systems, and structures may serve to constrain or even retard moral reasoning" (p. 456). In the context of sport management, Malloy (1991) measured sport administrators' moral reasoning using Kohlberg's theoretical framework and found that their moral reasoning about hypothetical moral problems reflected both pre-conventional and conventional levels. He concluded that the sporting environment fostered rule-bound behavior, limiting thoughtful moral thinking and judgment.

Sport management studies that have used a qualitative design, albeit a few, have demonstrated that sport administrators encounter a variety of moral problems (Bergmann Drewe, 2000; Rudd & Mondello, 2008; Thompson, 1992) and worked within a framework where organizational rules, values, and consequences informed their moral judgments (Bergmann Drewe, 2000; Thompson, 1992). For example, Thompson (1992) interviewed high school female athletic directors to examine their moral perceptions and reasoning and found that the majority of problems that the participants experienced related to eligibility, discipline, personnel, and gender. Deliberations were influenced by the principles of rights and responsibilities, utilitarianism, justice, enlightened egoism, and social contracts. In contrast, Rudd and Mondello (2008) found that sport managers across five sport industry segments showed a limited ability to identify examples of ethical issues in their work. Sport managers' understandings of an ethical issue were based on deciding between right and wrong, and the ethical examples they recalled were context-related. This literature provides preliminary support for the claim that moral reasoning (Daicoff, 1996; Timmer, 1999) is guided by an individual's characteristics, the context and nature of the problem, and an individual's work role (Daicoff, 1996; Malloy, 1991; Weber & Wasieleski, 2001).

## Morality and moral reasoning research

Morality and moral reasoning research are generally independently examined where morality is framed from one individual theory (e.g., justice or social justice) and levels of moral reasoning are usually measured (Walker et al., 1995). Several moral decision-making models (e.g., Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Hunt & Vitell, 1986; Jones, 1991) theoretically assume the influence that an individual's moral values impose on moral judgments (Blum, 1994). Research has attempted to either measure the relationship between value preferences and moral intensity (Shafer, Morris, & Ketchand, 2001; Wright, Cullinan, & Bline, 1997) or measure moral reasoning levels in relation to managers' value preferences (Fritzsche & Oz, 2007; Lan et al., 2008; Weber, 1993) where personal philosophies and or value orientations influence moral judgments (O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Shafer et al., 2001; Singhapakdi & Vitell, 1993; Weber, 1993). While this literature acknowledges the link between values and moral reasoning, it fails to consider first-hand accounts of managers' perceptions and experiences of morality. Individuals' narrative accounts afford a more veridical perspective of the depth and breadth in the practical moral domain (Walker, 2004b).

Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) theory of moral development articulates a three-level (preconventional, conventional, and post-conventional), invariant, culturally universal, and six-stage hierarchy model of moral development. Each stage of moral thinking represents a separate and coherent theory of justice that is applied in resolving conflict situations. The Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) was developed to measure moral development and entails conducting semi-structured interviews and asking participants to resolve three hypothetical conflict moral scenarios (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Building from Kohlberg (1984), Rest (1986, 1994) developed a four-step linear model where individuals: 1) identify the existence of a moral issue; 2) determine what constitutes a moral judgment; 3) decide about a moral course of action; and 4) make an appropriate behavioral response. Rest defined morality as social justice and assumed moral maturity occurred in schemas. Rest (1994) developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and subsequent DIT2 (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999), a non-interview instrument that asks participants to resolve six hypothetical dilemmas relating to social justice by rank ordering 12 statements that they believe are the most important considerations in making a judgment.

Limitations of cognitive moral development theories in general are well documented (e.g., Blum, 1994; Crittenden, 1990; Gough, 1995). First, critics argue that the structure (form) of moral reasoning is emphasized over content. However, it is impossible to separate structure from content in moral reasoning because the reasoning and values the individual uses to justify his/her moral judgment are interrelated and cannot be separated (Blum, 1994; Crittenden, 1990). Second, the claim that moral development occurs through universal and invariant stages has not been empirically supported and misrepresents the complexity of real-life moral deliberations (Crittenden, 1990; Walker, 2004a). Third, moral perception is not recognized in principled morality (Blum, 1994). Principled morality fails to take into consideration the moral capacity that informs one that a particular situation falls under a given principle as an important feature of morality. Fourth, Rest, et al. (1999), Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, and Bruel, (2000), and cognitive moral developmentalists in general, do not overtly state that the way a person perceives a situation as moral and his/her ability to identify its morally salient features is related to the general attributes of that person's character and moral make-up (Sherman, 1989).

Last, cognitive moral development theories only pertain to problems of moral conflict and exclude problems of relevance (Wallace, 1988). Moral relevance problems arise when we

are not sure if a given moral principle or concept is at play in a particular situation. Problems of conflict occur when two or more moral principles that we hold come into conflict with each other. Suggesting that individuals only encounter one type of moral quandary provides an inadequate notion of what constitutes a moral problem.

The central methodological limitations of using the MJI or the DIT are that these tests are unable to definitively identify moral perception and sensitivity during the moral reasoning process. While Rest's (1979) theory includes moral sensitivity (i.e., being aware that a moral problem exists and deliberating about how a decision affects other people), the DIT measures a person's preferences for prefabricated answers, which limits the ability to examine the individual's interpretation and understanding of the situation. Both instruments also measure morality based on one principle—either justice or social justice—which frames scoring and inadequately measures a person's true moral orientation and reasoning abilities (Gilligan, 1982; Walker, Pitts, Hennig, & Matsuba 1995). Using the DIT in assessing moral reasoning provides an incomplete investigation because of its narrow conception of morality and the moral reasoning process.

Cognitive moral psychology's reliance on specific philosophical theories of morality (e.g., Kohlberg and Rest) has therefore confined the field (Blasi, 1990; Jones & McNamee, 2000; Walker et al., 1995). Walker et al. state that:

... our research paradigm for too long has been unnecessarily constrained— subjects have been asked to react to “canned” moral problems within a restricted perspective on morality. It is now time to explore individuals' moral understandings and moral conflicts without posing such restraints and to base our theory and research more on everyday morality. (p. 377-378)

Such approaches to the study of morality and moral reasoning have contributed to the literature, but have nonetheless “stagnated” the field because of their conceptual skew and biases (Marnburg, 2001; Walker, 2002, 2004b; Walker et al., 1995). This influence has led to our current restricted understanding of morality and moral reasoning as the literature provides a segmented understanding of people's understandings of right and wrong in connection with their moral deliberations. Therefore, the call to examine people's real-life morality (Krebs & Denton, 1997) and moral reasoning from an inclusive theoretical and methodological perspective underpinned the rationale for this study and its design. This study examined the interrelated nature of Pacific-10 conference (Pac-10) compliance officers' morality and moral reasoning. The following research questions guided the study: What are Pac-10 compliance officers' conceptions of morality? What work-related moral issues do Pac-10 compliance officers identify? How do Pac-10 compliance officers approach practical reasoning in resolving moral issues they experience in their work? And how are Pac-10 compliance officers' conceptions of morality reflected in these practical deliberations? In the context of sport management, investigating this kind of reasoning would assist educators to better prepare future athletic administrators for the moral quandaries they might encounter and enhance our understanding how this type of administrator might approach practical moral problems.

This article is organized as follows. First, the theoretical approach that framed the study, including morality and contextualist practical reasoning, is outlined. The research process is then described, followed by the presentation of the findings showing the interrelatedness of morality and moral functioning in compliance athletic administrators' understandings of morality, the practical problems they deemed moral, and the reasoning in their resolution. Finally, discussion

and conclusions are provided regarding the contribution to the field and the potential for this research to be utilized by sport management ethics researchers, practitioners, and educators.

## Theoretical Approach

### *Morality*

Morality is a heterogeneous collection of moral values and/or principles (justice, fairness, honesty, responsibility, equality, empathy, and respect) as well as practical knowledge that an individual accepts and places significance on, which subsequently directs how one should live his/her life, and ultimately guides decision-making (Frankena, 1980; Wallace, 1996). Morality is a dynamic concept that adapts and changes (Wallace, 1988) when individuals modify their understandings of morality as they encounter new real-life moral problems. Their set of moral beliefs assists individuals in making moral judgments in their work. Frankena (1980) maintains that morality is a social endeavor where individuals or groups make evaluative judgments based on the consideration of other people/sentient beings, and avoidance of harm in determining first-order substantive questions about what is morally good, bad, right or wrong. While there are multiple definitions of morality, Frankena's conception of morality is broadly defined and accepts the notion that differences exist among individual and societal understandings of right and wrong within a pluralistic society. Individuals possess a distinct moral code (normative system) that consists of a set of moral beliefs that "a person or society subscribes to" (Frankena, 1980, p. 17). Each individual's moral code, therefore, consists of a set of values or principles that is independent from another's moral code. Similarities might exist between individuals' moral codes, yet distinct differences would be notable.

### *Contextualist practical reasoning*

Contextualist practical reasoning is the engagement in deliberations, which aim to determine the most reasonable solution to a moral problem through a case-driven and inductive process that strives to fulfill relevant standards of good thinking (Wallace, 1988, 1996; Winkler, 1993). Contextualism's guiding assumption is the accurate understanding and modeling of practical moral reasoning (Wallace, 1996; Winkler, 1993). The starting point is moral interpretation and assessment of case particularities. Accurately recognizing the existence of a moral problem (moral perception) and identifying salient features (moral sensitivity) in the problem is the first critical activity in the reasoning process (Blum, 1994; Coombs, 1998; Kekes, 1989). An individual's moral perception and sensitivity abilities are related to his or her knowledge, experience, and moral character. Contextualism posits that practical problems should be resolved in consideration of the concrete particularities of a situation (Wallace, 1988; Winkler, 1993). Considerations are based on appealing to relevant historical antecedents, social and cultural conditions, institutional and professional norms, beliefs, and values, and by using comparative case analysis. In contrast to ethical theory approaches to resolving practical moral problems, Winkler describes the justification process as essentially case-driven and inductive in nature where the goal is to "seek the *most reasonable* solution to a problem" conducted within a framework that is comprised of various standards that are informed by relevant "central cultural values and guiding norms, professional functions, obligations, and legal precepts" (Winkler, 1993, p. 360).

Coombs (1984) contends that practical reasoning “involves deciding what to do as the result of considering two logically different kinds of reasons: (1) motivating reasons in the form of value standards accepted by the agent and (2) beliefs about the degree to which the actions under consideration fulfill or fail to fulfill the value standards” (p. 3). This conception of practical reasoning relates to moral reasoning because circumstances that place moral importance on a judgment imply that the decision is conceived to be normatively right or wrong, or normatively good or bad. Practical reasoning is comparative, meaning that judgments are made based on whether one course of action is more or less desirable compared to an alternative course of action, including the alternative of not acting or deciding not to change an existing program. The soundness of practical reasoning is evaluated by assessing the reasons (or premises) for making a judgment. Assessing which set of reasons holds more weight or is supported by the best argument is the basis for making a practical judgment.

Coombs (1984, 1997) identifies three constituent tasks that encompass practical reasoning:

- 1) ***Deciding among acceptable alternatives.*** The importance of meeting this standard of deciding among acceptable alternatives is to gain confidence in the values that underlie our decisions, as it is these values that will be realized. This kind of reasoning requires meeting standards of inclusiveness of possible alternatives, being consistent in how we use moral concepts, having accurate understanding of values, attempting to identify the alternative that best realizes the way of life we want, and gaining sufficiency and accuracy of information.
- 2) ***Resolving moral uncertainty.*** Wallace (1988) maintains that the two most common types of moral problems are those of relevance and those of conflict. Resolving these two types of problems requires meeting the standards of: 1) consistency, where our use of moral precepts should be consistent in resolving relevance problems; 2) value preservation, in conflict problems, we should seek to preserve the values of competing moral concepts; and 3) universalizability, in resolving new problematic cases we should determine if the new moral concept applies to other similar uses of the moral concept in comparable situations.
- 3) ***Deliberating as a member of a group.*** The standards of greatest benefit and moral acceptability must be met by the group in resolving a practical problem. Group deliberation requires determining what good is to be maximized in the case, to what degree, and determining how this good can be equally realized (standard of moral acceptability). In making group decisions it is therefore essential to determine who is to benefit before deciding what good is to be maximized.

The justification process is the critical factor that separates contextualism from opponents as decisions are justified by appraising them “against objections and rivals” (Winkler, 1993, p. 360). Judgments are made based on determining which judgment is the most reasonable solution to a problem in comparison with other viable decisions. This process requires the continual adaptation and readjustment of strategies, reflecting about one’s understandings of concepts, values, beliefs, and principles that are espoused and contemplating how these relevant factors were utilized in resolving past cases of a similar nature (Wallace, 1988). (Wallace, 1988, p. 122) argues that the strategies and “their associated values do not remain fixed” when resolving practical problems. Rather, this justification process necessitates the continual intelligent ability to modify relevant concepts and strategies, as such changes require further adjustments in novel circumstances. These standards entail both evidential and conceptual claims that require standards identified in critical thinking literature (Bailin, Case, Coombs, & Daniels, 1999a, 1999b).

## Research process

## *Participants*

For the study, purposeful intensity sampling was employed as this technique allowed for the selection of information-rich cases that strongly manifest the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Three criteria for participant selection was used: 1) currently working as a Division I-A (DIA) compliance officer; 2) serving within their role at a Pac-10 Conference member institution, and 3) working knowledge of NCAA, conference, and institutional rules. At the time of data collection, the Pac-10 was subject to one the most comprehensive rules systems that included the NCAA, the Conference, and respective institutional rules. The Conference conducts its own rule violation investigations, and in addition to the NCAA sanctions, the Pac-10 also assigns sanctions to violators. Therefore, choosing Pac-10 compliance officers provided an appropriate sample group to adequately examine their morality and moral reasoning in a competitive and highly formalized athletic context.

The sample consisted of four women and six men aged 30-55 years ( $M=37.3$  years) that served in the role of compliance officer from each of the Pac-10 member institutions. A compliance officer is an intercollegiate athletic administrator whose primary role is educating organizational stakeholders about Association, Conference, and institutional rules and enforcing these rules. The Pac-10 is one of the major conferences of the NCAA and its members include: the University of Arizona; Arizona State University; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Oregon; Oregon State University; Stanford University; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Southern California; the University of Washington; and Washington State University. The participants had served in various positions in higher education administration (i.e., university or athletic administration) and in different types of athletic compliance roles for an average of 10.85 years.

## **Data collection**

### *Interview guide*

Based on a pilot study, an interview guide was developed that had a tripartite structure. The first section asked participants to provide background and demographic information. The second section asked the participants to explain their perception of and experience with a moral problem: How they defined a moral problem; how they knew when they were experiencing a moral problem; and to recall how they dealt with and resolved a particular moral problem they encountered in their position. The recall questions were generated from the literature (Walker et al., 1995) and were aimed at identifying not only the participants' moral sensitivities and perceptions, but also how they determined right from wrong, and their moral deliberations. The third section asked the participants to reason through three different scenarios (Appendix A)<sup>1</sup> in relation to different NCAA rules: 1) *Academic assistance*-relating to extra benefits and ethical conduct rules; 2) *Churches charity*-related to eligibility and amateurism rules; 3) *Drug testing*-relating to eligibility and drug testing consent rules. The scenario questions were developed from NCAA DI-A rule issues experienced by various NCAA members prior to the time of data collection. These issues were collected from reports appearing in issues of the Chronicle of Higher Education in 2000-2001. Specific probing questions were directed at discerning participants' moral sensitivities and perceptions as well as revealing how they resolved hard cases.

Including the real-life scenarios provided a more reliable gauge of participants' moral perceptions and sensitivities, because they were asked to identify the moral problem and its salient issues in the different scenarios. Consequently, it permits an assessment of participants' understandings of different moral concepts that they may not identify in the recall problems (Walker et al., 1995). Walker et al. contend that including both recall moral problems and real-life scenario questions affords more insight into how people think about morality in everyday life. Asking participants only to recall moral problems and describe their deliberations does not adequately provide the opportunity to examine their moral sensitivities and perceptions in new moral situations.

### *Interviews*

Access to participants was gained through my prior professional relationships with Pac-10 compliance officers. An email was sent to all Pac-10 compliance officers and each of the member schools agreed to participate. Since the aim of this study was to gain a holistic understanding into the meaning compliance officers ascribe to their moral experiences, data collection occurred in a natural setting through face-to-face interaction. Using the interview guide, face-to-face semi-structured interviews (Bernard, 1994) were conducted with each of the participants. The interviews were audio-taped and ranged in length from 45 to 120 minutes. Interviews took place over the course of 14 months (September 2001-October 2002). Each interview was transcribed verbatim yielding over 200 pages of interview data. Where further explanation or clarity was needed, follow-up questions were asked through email, thus enhancing the confirmability of the data.

### *Data analysis*

The data were prepared and downloaded into the qualitative data analysis software program Atlas.TI (Scientific Software Development, 1997), which assisted in providing a systematic approach to examining these complex phenomena in an exploratory manner. Data analysis occurred in five phases: 1) initial reading; 2) code creation and definitions; 3) code structuring; 4) code revisions; and 5) code checking. Upon initial reading of the transcripts a list of thematic codes was created both inductively and deductively. Each code was then defined. The inductive thematic codes, or in-vivo codes, represented the salient concepts/ideas held by the participants and reflected Strauss' (1987) grounded approach whereby the codes more aptly represent the data. "Moral intuition" and "seeking final interpretation" were examples of in-vivo codes and represented participants' understanding of right and wrong or their approach to engaging in practical reasoning and making rule interpretations respectively. Deductive thematic codes were created from the theoretical framework, which, for example, is illustrated by the code "PR-consistency" that referred to engaging in practical reasoning, and decisions were based on considering the consistency in similar situations.

Codes were then constructed into major categories and their relevant subcategories based on specific properties and dimensions relating to morality and moral reasoning. A category represents "concepts derived from data that stand for phenomena" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 114) and a subcategory further delineates a category by providing specific explanatory information. The major categorical codes reflected more conceptually inclusive ideas and the sub-categorical codes reflected more differentiated instances of the data. For example, a major

categorical code was “conception of morality.” The conception of morality code described participants’ larger thinking about right and wrong, including the moral codes and their respective values that guided their moral judgments. An example of a sub-categorical code was “conception of morality-right vs. wrong-background” and identified participants’ understandings of morality (i.e., how they determined right from wrong), and how their conceptions of morality were influenced by their backgrounds (e.g., their upbringing, their education, and their personal and work experiences). Check coding was then performed by two additional expert researchers to enhance the clarity of the codes and their definitions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The next stage of the analysis involved reading through each transcript and performing first and second order analyses to relate the codes with concepts and representative quotes. Abductive analysis was performed to determine how the data either corresponded or diverged from the theoretical approach (Patton, 2002). This process included continuous comparisons of each participant’s interpretations and meanings of morality and their practical reasoning with one another, and then relating their understandings with the theoretical approach. Emergent understandings were tested and alternative explanations were sought (Côte, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

## Findings

The analysis process indicated that a contextualist practical reasoning framework provided a suitable schema for examining Pac-10 compliance officers’ morality and moral reasoning. The description, explanation, and discussion of all of the participants’ interviews are presented in the findings in three broad areas: 1) participants’ understandings of morality; 2) participants’ moral perceptions and sensitivities; and 3) participants’ practical reasoning. The interrelatedness of three broad areas in relation to the compliance officers’ morality and moral reasoning is highlighted. To illustrate the three broad themes and their interdependence, four participants’ represented quotes are displayed in the respective tables and are emblematic of the 10 compliance officers’ interviews. Presenting the findings in this manner allows for an in-depth presentation of the complexities (Patton, 2002) and independent nature of individuals’ morality and moral reasoning (Tod & Hodge, 2002).

### *Understandings of morality*

Participants’ understandings of morality were informed by their individual normative systems, their awareness in experiencing a moral problem, and their moral intuition.

### *Individual normative systems*

The findings showed the individual nature of each participant’s normative system. A normative system is a moral code or set of moral beliefs that directs people’s moral decisions (Frankena, 1980). Participants’ moral codes were comprised of different values such as fairness, care, responsibility, obligation, empathy, honesty, equality, and integrity. Compliance officer normative systems displayed some similarities, yet their normative systems were all distinct. For example, all of the participants’ accounts represented the values of responsibility, fairness, and honesty. Three of the participants’ discussions also exhibited the value of care, while two participants also expressed, in certain circumstances, empathy toward athletes. Frankena (1980)

and Wallace (1996) argue that we would expect individuals to display a unique normative system, as individuals had a distinct moral upbringing, and they possessed distinctive emotions and cognitive processes. The development of people's moral characters occurs over time, which cultivates into practical wisdom (Wallace, 1996).

### *Awareness of experiencing a moral problem*

The participants' responses about how they knew they were experiencing a moral problem reflected Frankena's (1980) first order thinking in determining right or wrong (see Table 1) where they sought answers to substantive questions such as, "Is it wrong not to report a violation?" "Is this the right rule interpretation?" "Is it right to circumvent the rules?" "Is it right to penalize individuals for something that was against what 'I' believe in?" or "Is it right to adhere to the rules when it might unfairly disadvantage a student-athlete?" The participants' understandings of experiencing a moral problem generally reflected problems of conflict. A problem of relevance was also mentioned when a participant was uncertain as to how to apply a rule (Table 1–Andy). Once the individual had assessed how to apply the rule then the problem developed into one of conflict.

Table 1 - *Participant Understandings of Morality and Definitions of a Moral Problem*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Andy	Right or wrong ... unfortunately in applying these rules there is gray and that is sometimes an occasion when you do have a dilemma.	Relevance	<u>Moral definition</u> Right and wrong; Intuition (gut feeling); Gray area
	R: how do you know that you have a dilemma?  A1: It is kind of applying the facts to a particular bylaw ... it is a gut feeling ... such and such happened to this student-athlete....this is the result that we would like to have, can we get this result with these facts...let me look at the legislation, let me see what applies....you apply the legislation and you go, that doesn't seem right...but the way it is set up ... there isn't often much wiggle room. There are mechanisms within the rules to hopefully eliminate some of those dilemmas ... the waiver	Conflict	<u>Moral signifies</u> Following procedures (Substantiative ethics); Upholding professional code (responsibility); Unfairly harmed

processes is one mechanism we use. As for other scenarios, I may not like the rule but it is very clear. It is probably not that I don't like the rule, I don't like the result of the particular instance but never the less if it matches perfectly with the scenario I am given I have got to decide that this rule applies and that in fact this activity is not permissible or something to that nature.

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by application of rules (care; fairness)

Table 1 - *Participant Understandings of Morality and Definitions of a Moral Problem(Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Terri	You are somehow struggling between two things, each of them having equal value. The rules and what your inherent sense of what is right and wrong. I think ultimately in compliance the idea is that the NCAA rules don't inherently lend themselves to logic or sense, or what someone would say is reasonable.	Conflict	<u>Moral definition</u> Right and wrong
	R: How do you know whether something is right or wrong?		
	T4: For me it starts with my stomach and then it goes to my head, and then my heart decides ... and other people start with their head ... and they think with their stomach. But ultimately, I am not a lawyer, I am in student services, apparently that is what I am doing. I am still trying to make everyone work within the rules. I am still very much of a people person and again my heart still has to tell me whether, we are dealing with 18, 19 and 20 year old kids and you know I can be very maternal at times, so if I go through and say, my gut tells me probably something is wrong, my head evaluates but then my heart makes the decision and that is probably not always ... your head should probably make more of the decisions than anything else.		<u>Moral signifies-</u> Intuition (stomach); Upholding rules (responsibility); heart (care).

Table 1 - *Participant Understandings of Morality and Definitions of a Moral Problem (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Sandy	<p>... if a rule or a by-law or [a person] performs a certain function or penalizes someone that was against what I believe in, or believe what I believe was right. That would be contrary to my morals and my ethical problem. But some of the scenarios there is room for unethical conduct by the compliance officer or a coach ... and in investigating that I would see that as an ethical problem because that person violated ethical norms or violated the rule, which is unethical.</p> <p>R: how you determine what is right or wrong?</p> <p>Generally, it is whether they are contrary to the rule or note, whether they are wrong. If I believe a certain student-athlete based on their exceptional circumstances is being harmed unfairly by the application of the rule that I would consider an ethical quandary for me.</p>	Conflict	<p><u>Moral definition</u> Right and wrong</p> <p><u>Moral signifies</u> Rule breaking (dishonesty); Upholding professional code (responsibility); Unfairly harmed by application of rules (care; fairness)</p>

Table 1 - *Participant Understandings of Morality and Definitions of a Moral Problem (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Robert	<p>A moral issue is something that I am conflicted with. Where I think I know the morally right thing to do, yet I know it could be very easy to get the answer I want by being unethical. I don't have as many years experience as a lot of my counter parts in the Pac-10 but I think I have seen enough situations where I can kind of anticipate the outcome. Especially when you have the rules right there in front of you, it would be very easy to by-pass the rules and would go against everything that we do. It would be easy to manipulate information to make something go in your favor so the ethical problem is the conflict I have with knowing that I have to be morally right yet at the same time I know that I can get the answer I want by doing something unethical.</p> <p>Morality it is somebody who goes against the rules ... is cheating. Especially in the coaching profession when you are out there recruiting and you are busting your butt, day in and day out, you are doing things the right way and then you don't get a kid because somebody else has decided to circumvent the rules ... do whatever at no expense to get that kid to their institution. Then that is when the conflict comes. I can't bring myself to break the rules but I can see how people get frustrated because you know people are cheating.</p>	Conflict	<p><u>Moral definition</u> Right and wrong</p> <p><u>Moral signifies</u> Honesty; integrity; upholding the rules (responsibility)</p>

Decisions of right and or wrong were based on different moral values including honesty (i.e., truthfulness and integrity), care (i.e., helping others and maintaining relationships), empathy, loyalty, compassion, responsibility (i.e., contractual and social obligations), upholding a professional code, being compliant to authority, respect (i.e., not harming others, respect for rules and fellow co-workers), fairness, and integrity. An examination of the values that encompassed participants' understandings of morality revealed that these particular groups of intercollegiate athletic administrators dealt with issues that are not well-reflected in dominant models and measures of moral maturity. Intrapyschic values that reflect basic values, lifestyle, and character were common in compliance officers' moral reflections in addition to interpersonal aspects of morality (e.g., fairness and responsibilities). For example, maintaining relationships

through developing trust and rapport, and by being fair and educating individuals was deemed a critical aspect to effective compliance work, which is reflected by the following statement:

... when somebody [coaches, athletes, or staff] screws up you bring them in ... there is some measure of consequences but mostly you teach them. Teach them what they did, why they did it, how to prevent them [from repeating the behavior] and then how to have them be a better citizen in your area ... I never stand in judgment. I am not going to say you are bad, I am not going to not talk with you because you are not good ... I don't care what sport you are in, I don't care male or female ... everyone who walks in the door, I try my very best to treat every single one of them the same. I am teaching them lessons ... I think if you spend too much time policing them they are going to avoid you, they are not going to think what you are doing is valuable. They are going to be dismissive about the rules and the compliance things that you are trying to uphold ... then you are going to have more problems than not ... (participant interview, November 7, 2001)

Interwoven in the participants' value of maintaining relationships was the interpersonal value of upholding the responsibility of effectively performing compliance work. The complexity of values presented by the participants adds to our knowledge about sport administrators' real-life moral thinking. In addition to encompassing legalistic thoughts, athletic administrators' moral thinking was multifaceted. First, their reasoning reflected a wide range of values that raised their awareness about the existence of different moral problems related to compliance work. Second, they constantly weighed these values in deciding the most appropriate decision. The weight they placed on values was more than just following the rules; importance of values was also influenced by their personal and professional philosophies.

### *Moral intuition*

Moral intuition was also used in deciding right from wrong and identifying the existence of a moral problem. Participants mentioned that they recognized a situation as not being right based on a "gut feeling." They made statements such as "my gut tells me probably something is wrong," "my stomach gets queasy," or "there is a gut reaction." Based on their past experiences, they appealed to their intuitive power and verified their intuitive thoughts through practical reasoning. Consideration of the rules, of legal and institutional experts (athletic director, faculty representative, and coaches), of other compliance officers, and of past cases helped them verify their intuitive power. Through various experiences, education, and background knowledge people become more observant or perceptive to certain situations, yielding an intuitive power (Baier, 1963; Dewey, 1910). Baier (1963, pp. 22-23) notes that "our intuition or our conscience" can act as an aid in determining what is right or wrong. He argued that individuals develop this intuitive power through appropriate or reliable "techniques of confirmation," that is, deliberation or practical reasoning. Moral philosophy and moral development models rarely mention intuitive power as a factor in our conceptions of morality, moral perceptions and sensitivities, and moral deliberations. However, Walker et al. (1995) contend that intuition is a viable means in evaluating the moral acceptability of a decision.

### *Moral perceptions and sensitivities*

The analysis indicated that while some overlap occurred, each compliance officer possessed distinct interpretations of moral situations recalled and in the scenarios. This was

demonstrated in several ways, i.e., each compliance officer recalled a different moral problem; their judgments varied regarding whether or not a moral problem existed in each of the scenarios; they offered distinctive reasons in explaining why they thought a moral problem did or did not exist, and each identified different salient features in the scenarios.

### *Recall moral problems*

Inconsistent with Rudd and Mondello's (2008) findings, compliance officers recalled a variety of moral problems that were examples of problems of both conflict and relevance. As depicted in Table 2, the recalled problems were generally of conflict that related to NCAA rule violations, specifically relating to eligibility rules (e.g., amateurism, improper benefits, and transfer). The problems of relevance recalled were about experiencing uncertainty related to the correct definition and application of a rule. For example, in Table 2, one participant described a situation in which he/she was unsure of the correct reading of a rule interpretation related to eligibility rules and international student-athletes.

Table 2 - *Participant Recall Problems*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Recall Problem</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Andy	I came by some information by someone that gleaned a possible infraction of NCAA rules. However, this information was gleaned in the context of a doctor-client relationship and I didn't do anything. I didn't know how to get that information in any other manner without compromising this persons' relationship with their patient so that was kind of taboo. It is a line that I can't cross, it just makes you keep your eyes open for any other avenue that perhaps you could step in and start looking at things but to this point I haven't discovered.	Conflict	Eligibility rules & Improper benefits; Prof. ethics

Table 2 - *Participant Recall Problems (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Recall Problem</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Terri	We had a violation with outside awards. Basically it was my violation. The financial rules are very cumbersome and I had pretty much convinced myself of one thing [interpretation]. I had gone right down that path whole heartedly and not realized something [criteria] about outside awards. A player got recruited and [she received an outside scholarship] and we have to count money that people get from outside sources even when they are not getting any athletic aid. So I figured they are not getting any athletic aid they should be able to go out and fund their education any way they can and who are we to say that [athletes cannot get their own funding] and it seemed to be logical to me. Come to find out, that is not how it works and basically someone asked me a different question. Then looking through the rules, it said no, if someone was recruited, not getting any athletic aid, got an outside award where athletics was a major criterion, then that person's aid has to count. At my university, for financial aid, I am the only one that does it [monitors]. So I had to tell the University what I did.	Conflict	Financial aid award rules;  Honesty   Responsibility

Table 2 - *Participant Recall Problems (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Recall Problem</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Moral themes</i>
Sandy	I interpreted the application of a rule and it was very clear, there was no interpretation. I was basically restating this is the rule [and] this is what we cannot do. I was told by someone higher up than me, that this is what we are doing. No it didn't even happen that way. I found out later that despite my [interpretation], I was told later that it in fact it happened [certain people ignored my interpretation] regardless of what I had said [they] couldn't do. The department did it, [broke the rule and engaged in the activity]. It [the action] was never brought to light. There is no way I would have found out about it, had this person not told me. At the time I did nothing, I was relatively new too.	Conflict	Rule interpretations & improper benefits Violating rules & prof. ethics



(i.e., transfer student-athletes, extra benefits, and amateurism and international student-athletes). At the time of data collection, student-athlete eligibility was considered a NCAA area of emphasis (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2003) and thus provides a rationale for these results. In relation to moral perception and sensitivity theory, the types of issues that are brought to people's attention and how they are taught the meanings of the issues (breadth and depth) will inform their ability to recognize a moral problem, and determine the level of salience (Blum, 1994; Kekes, 1989; Sherman, 1989). Kekes (1989) contends that in accordance with an individual's teachings, he/she will evaluate situations and become committed to perceiving a moral precept in a particular way.

Compliance officers recalled problems that were generally within the scope of how they defined a moral problem and were related to the values of responsibility, fairness, and honesty. For example, Table 1 shows that Sandy determined right from wrong based on whether an action was contrary to the rules or if someone was treated unfairly. These values were also evident in participants' recall moral problems and deliberations regarding the scenario problems. Sandy's conception of morality was consistent with her definition of a moral problem—a situation where the application of the rules creates a disadvantage. However, as shown in Table 2, some of participants' recall moral problems did not exemplify their definition of a moral problem. For example, Terri recalled a problem about making an incorrect rule interpretation and having to correct the mistake after the fact. This example did not precisely illustrate her definition of a moral problem, which was "struggling between two things, each of them having equal value ... the rules and what your inherent sense of what is right."

### *Scenario moral problems*

Consistent with the compliance officers' exhibiting a unique normative system and recalling a variety of moral problems, participants also displayed diverse moral perceptions and sensitivities in their interpretations of the scenario moral problems. While similarities among the participants' perceptions and levels of saliency existed, as shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5, differences were also evident in their answers. For example, in the academic assistance scenario (Table 3) the participants believed that a moral problem existed in the situation depicting a violation of NCAA rules because the student-athlete was not producing her own work. This perception related to an understanding of morality as defined by honesty and upholding the rules. The participants identified various salient issues including the counselor sitting at the computer typing which included the student-athlete's grade point average, her eligibility, and that the counselor had helped other students. In the Churches Charity scenario, the participants differed in their perception of the existence of a moral problem (Table 4) where their answers included yes, no, and uncertain. The reasons for their answers ranged from uncertain as it requires more research, believed no moral problem existed as the award was legitimate, to a moral problem existed because the scholarship was not legitimate and broke the rules. The salient issues identified included the coach's relationship with the pastor and the principal, the scholarship criteria, the NCAA's attempt to legislate behavior, and similar past cases. The Drug Testing scenario demonstrated that participants were split on their perceptions of a moral problem (Table 5). Some participants understood that a moral problem was apparent because the situation invoked on student-athletes' rights (i.e., violation of the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments). Conversely, others believed that playing intercollegiate athletics was not a right and an individual must uphold the rules in order to participate. Salient features noted included waiving

one's rights to privacy to participate in intercollegiate athletics and organization's rights to define their own policies, past legal cases, detecting potential drug use by student-athletes, and discovering reasons why the athlete does not wish to consent to testing.

Table 3 - *Participant Interpretations of the Academic Assistance Scenario*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Andy	Yes	The scenario allows for right and wrong. Depending on what the facts are, the counselor may [have] crossed the line from what is proper and permissible conduct, into what is not proper. It also kind of highlights an area that I think that compliance people are perhaps most sensitive to and that is academic fraud. I tend to think of a tutor's involvement in student-athlete's preparation of academic coursework as a spectrum from the athlete who writes the paper on the one end (good) to the tutor writing the paper for the athlete on the other end (bad). Where I draw the line at "impermissible assistance" may be different then where the tutor draws it. However, I am probably going to take a stricter view than the tutor. In my mind, the work has to be the sole product of the athlete's effort. He has to come up with the thesis, write the paragraphs, do his own research. A tutor can give direction on how to get started review research, review the paper, offer suggestions (that could lead to trouble), may be even circle misspelled words. For a tutor to do much more that is crossing the line.	Not student's work  Past cases

Table 3 - *Participant Interpretations of the Academic Assistance Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Terri	Yes	... it's more important when you are dealing with someone who needs it, is that you do it really cleanly because the perception ... when asking ourselves, if I printed this in the newspaper, received help, you know they are not going to say good things about the situation. It was all her ideas, we helped her organize, and we typed her ideas and thoughts. The idea is the student could at least type or write or something, the last sentence says that the academic counselor has helped other athletes similar to Danielle ... I don't care what athletes they have helped, if they help students that would be one thing. All of the most wonderful people, well intention things, whose salary comes from the athletic department, the perception is going to be, yeah, which is kind of unfair to the integrity [of the people at the institution], probably perfect integrity of academic people but the idea is to remove all things [connections with the athletic department] out and make sure they [academic counselors] report to someone else. So I think inherently for me anything that has someone sitting with the student while they are writing a paper is inherently room for ... well it can swing one way or the other.	Perception

Table 3 - *Participant Interpretations of the Academic Assistance Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Sandy	Yes	There is a problem definitely, ethical I don't know if this counselor has mal intent. Sounds like this person does it all the time, although based on my experience here, we do not allow this. Every time we orientate our tutors that this is not the way you help students. If there is a line I can see very far over it. This counselor is at a place where this is not clearly articulated and they believe that this is acceptable conduct, there is no ethical problem, however this would very much raise the level, what are you doing? It is seen as doing the work for the student, unless the student has a broken hand or something ... then we are talking a typing problem, if the student is able to type or write the paper themselves they should. Also it is against all academic rules we have here, as well by definition.	Not intentional Violates rules Not Student's work
Robert	Yes	... I agree with just about everything in this scenario and my ethical problem comes because of our policy's here. Why we pay close attention, obviously, because of cases that happened in Minnesota, most recently. I don't have a problem with the counselor sitting at the computer and helping someone organize their thoughts because we do have tutors that work with the kids and you know for various reasons kids sometimes have trouble putting their class together they have never been trained Now granted they are Danielle's ideas and thoughts but I do have a problem with the counselor typing those thoughts because even though she sounds to me like after reading this that she is typing basically what Danielle is telling her. B it is not Danielle writing the words down, the counselor could have the opportunity to influence the way she said or change things around to help her. I do have a problem with her typing and even though this second last sentence and has helped on rare occasions I still think that is okay... I am trying to put it into perspective of what we do here.	Past cases Empathy Can't type Counselor typing

Table 4 - *Participant Interpretations of the Church's Charity Scenario*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Andy	Uncertain	<p>... was there any involvement between the school and the institution, that she subsequently enrolled? LK: No. The only connection seems to be the Pastor and the coach are buddies.</p> <p>The high school coach and the Pastor are buddies and so the issue from an NCAA perspective would be this is an area of recent concern as a result of some high school students receiving improper educational benefits so that would be an analysis for an NCAA rules perspective so it sounds like other kids have been awarded scholarships in need (reads scenario) ... I don't know if there is, from my perspective, there is enough going on there, that if someone presented this to me, I would probably want to look at it ... as far as an ethical problem with them helping out Sarah. I can rationalize it and empathize with her position, I don't necessarily think that anything is wrong, as far as my morality is structured has occurred ... however, I think there might be a possible problem with NCAA legislation and how it is applied in this situation.</p>	<p>Requires more research</p> <p>NCAA area of emphasis</p> <p>Breach of rules But personally morally acceptable</p>

Table 4 - *Participant Interpretations of the Church's Charity Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Terri	No	<p>I think this happens all the time, people set up things all the time. When the pastor starts saying may be we should set up something, so it is, not just this one person. If your feeling is that they are setting up something that they know is wrong and may be if we have it established in the future for other people then it will hide what we have done. I don't think that is right. I think it is probably that they did it before, I think it is based on need, I think the churches do that for all the right reasons in a very legitimate way all the time ... I suspect for me, this will sound like the mom, it sounds like everybody in the church thought that was a good use of their money. As far as I can tell, she got into the school legitimately... where members [her family] of the church before, it is not like we have a volleyball player she is going to Thornton, and now she is going to start being a member of our church, there is something there. This question is asked on eligibility forms now, did you go to a private school, how was it funded, if someone had written yes and funded through them [Thornton] I am still going to ask those questions just to ensure that it isn't a problem ... if I were to guess how many times this is or isn't, more times than not ... it is not just because it is a church group and I think well, that is different, we have plenty of people visiting churches and churches paying for visits for recruits, if the church said oh come to us and the church will pay and while you are here visit the local college and you can be a member of our church ... the idea is one or two of the members also happen to be professional basketball players, who also happen to share the same agent, who has also been seen with that player, that is all way too coincidental for me to be attached to the institution.</p>	<p>Happens all the time;</p> <p>Legitimate award and criteria</p>

Table 4 - *Participant Interpretations of the Church's Charity Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Sandy	No	<p>I don't immediately see this as a violation primarily because, well is not clear, is she the first award winner?</p> <p>R: no it has been awarded in the past but the criteria from my understanding is not clear in how they awarded the scholarship ... there have been other people who have been award the scholarship.</p> <p>Right. So it doesn't immediately seem to be like a violation because I would latch onto the fact that it has been awarded to non-athletes in the past then it is not strictly athletically related even though athletics is taken into consideration. I would first try to make the argument that there is not even violation here ... is there an ethical problem with this scenario? not with the scenario but not with the rule. I understand the abuses the NCAA is trying to curb with this rule but we just get into such a problem how we are suppose to monitor this, is it any of our business to monitor what kids are doing, receiving from high schools prior to their attending our school ... and for this very reason, I mean this is very heart warming situation with the church and the school, it is generally a good thing ... a lot of times you have to ask that this money is given back it is usually at the students detriment, or the families financial detriment, especially if there is a large academic component rather than athletic sports ...</p>	<p>Awarded in the past</p> <p>Scholarship criteria-Not strictly athletic related</p> <p>Personal vs. prof. code</p> <p>Empathy</p>

Table 4 - *Participant Interpretations of the Church's Charity Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Robert	Yes	... there is a problem with the pastor of the church being a close friend of the principal and the Volleyball coach ... use the term athletic nexus ... when we are dealing with issues of extra benefits we have got somebody using this term athletic nexus to determine if the benefit occurred because of any type of athletic relationship. And there is always that fine line, where is that preexisting relationship, you know, is there a legitimate reasons for this benefit to occur, other than we are just helping out an athlete. If you had told me that the scholarship fund was unknown than I may have had a different view of this even though it is still an athletic issue, depending how that scholarship was defined ... I think it said here something about extracurricular was one of the requirements.	Relationships  Scholarship criteria

Table 5 - *Participant Interpretations of the Drug Testing Scenario*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Andy	Yes	<p>It is a matter of principle for this kid. He seems to feel strongly that his personal rights are being invaded by him signing this drug consent form.</p> <p>R: why/how does a matter of principle relates to it being considered an ethical problem?</p> <p>I tend to think that matters of principle relate very closely to social ethics. In this instance, it's a right to privacy that is being asserted. That's a right guaranteed as under our Constitution. As such, unless the student-athlete gets some judicial relief, he is going to have to choose between his right to privacy and the privilege of playing intercollegiate basketball. If the young man has an honest belief in his rights (as opposed to trying to cover –up impermissible drug use), that is a tough position to be in: something you believe in versus something you love. However, from an administrative standpoint, if he wins an injunction from a court, the drug testing program would be in essence be dead. Suddenly, everyone who was using steroids would have a new found love for the right to privacy and assert it to prevent from being tested. The cheaters (drug-users) would win if he wins.</p>	<p>Principle-right to privacy</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Conflict-rights &amp; privilege</p>
Terri	No	<p>It is really hard for me. Our University does not have campus drug testing. We did have a basketball player not wanting to sign his drug testing consent form. His argument was you cannot make me, this is not ethically right, this was just a no brainer, you want to play the game you have to play by the rules.</p>	<p>Past case Don't sign-don't play rule violation</p>

Table 5 - *Participant Interpretations of the Drug Testing Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Sandy	No	... it's not a right to play intercollegiate athletics and especially in basketball there are club teams that during your four years of college you can competitively play basketball in pro am teams. You don't necessarily have to play for the NCAA. My feeling is influenced by the Stanford court decision. Legal action has been pursued and they lost. For those very reasons. If his argues the rest of the campus population is on scholarship and not singled out for drug testing, he is quite free to be part of the rest of the campus population and by voluntarily putting himself in our intercollegiate programs he also gains rights that the campus student population doesn't. It is a special circumstance. I am sure he feels very strongly about this. I am sure he feels that it is ethically a violation of his rights but from an institutional standpoint, from an administrator, from the NCAA because he states he competes on his own merits and does not use performance enhancing drugs, well of course, if you were using performance enhancing drugs you would say that as well I am not a thief, I didn't whatever, so out of those three [arguments]... that is the weakest and the Fourth amendment and right to privacy I am sure poses an ethical problem to him. But what would make it an ethical problem to me, if intercollegiate athletics was the only forum for him to compete and be seen and may have a chance to go pro.	Conflict- Right vs. a privilege  Past legal case  Empathy

Table 5 - *Participant Interpretations of the Drug Testing Scenario (Cont.)*

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Moral problem?</i>	<i>Reasons</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Robert	Yes	Yes because I truly do believe in kids having their own rights. Because here is the NCAA, they have some rules that truly apply where the rest of the world or just the legal system alone could not get away with that. I [also] tell the kids they sign off their Buckley Amendment rights too.	Don't sign don't play Rule violation

Compliance officers' understandings of certain concepts and thus their rule interpretations were influenced by past cases and their experiences. For example, there were several working definitions of concepts such as amateurism, equal and fair treatment, and academic assistance. An individual's understanding of amateurism would influence his/her perception of whether a problem existed and identifying morally salient features. The participants also identified different salient features, though some overlap in their answers existed. Blum (1994, p. 45) stated that the way people perceive particular situations and their ability to discern a situation's morally significant characteristics "is related with general features of their character and their moral make-up." He further argued that people's moral awareness of aspects of moral situations occurred at different levels in particular situations. For example, certain compliance officers were more perceptive to the moral issues of particular cases over others and identified the issues around those cases differently. This phenomenon was most apparent in Scenario 2, the Church's Charity scenario, where compliance officers came to different conclusions based on their understanding of amateurism and its application.

### *Standards of practical reasoning*

The analysis showed that the type of moral problem, case particularities, and participants' understandings of moral/athletic concepts (such as fairness, amateurism, or academic assistance) influenced the standards of practical reasoning used during deliberations. Understandings of moral/athletic concepts informed the background information they collected, the questions they asked, the people they interviewed, the people they took into account in relation to case particularities, and the values they assessed. For example, the participants' conceptions of what constituted appropriate academic assistance, how they learned about the problem, their experience with student-athlete academic counseling services and how they "normally" operate, and how they interpreted NCAA rules influenced their judgments. It was also found that compliance officers' practical reasoning occurred generally within two of Coombs' (1984, 1997) contexts: deciding among morally acceptable alternatives and resolving moral uncertainties (Table 6). The nature of compliance officer work in resolving practical problems justified the strong tendency toward utilization of the two standards of sufficiency and accuracy of information. These two standards were met by using the following methods: a) researching relevant Association and Conference rules and past interpretations of the rules, b) conducting interviews, c) learning the intent of rules, and d) obtaining expert advice. Envisioning alternatives and their consequent standard was generally strived for after participants had determined if a violation had occurred. They arrived at rational considerations by assessing their

professional and personal moral codes and determining the way of life they wished to pursue. The meeting of these two standards is significant because compliance officer responsibilities include educating athletic department stakeholders (coaches, student-athletes, staff, administrators, boosters, and so forth) about NCAA and Conference rules and providing advice and interpretations concerning the rules and their application. Imperative to fulfilling this responsibility therefore, required that these compliance officers were diligent in accurately researching correct rule interpretations, the rules' intent, and subsequently acting as a resource for athletic department stakeholders in learning and applying the rules. A failure to meet these standards could have dire consequences for an athletic department (e.g., major rules violation).

Table 6 - *Practical Reasoning Standards Used By Participants*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Standard of practical reasoning</i>	<i>Method</i>
Deciding among morally acceptable alternatives	Sufficiency of information	Interviews, researching rules, learning the intent of rules and defining rule interpretations, and consulting expert advice
Resolving moral uncertainties	Accuracy of information	
	Inclusiveness of envisioned alternatives and their consequences	
	Rational consideration	Assessing personal and professional moral codes
	Consistency	Assessing past experiences and past cases

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to illustrate the interdependent relationship among Pac-10 compliance officers' conceptions of morality, their moral perceptions and sensitivities, and their practical reasoning. This examination demonstrated participants' broad and complex real-life understandings of morality, how these understandings guided their recognition of the identity and characteristics of moral problems, and their deliberations. The findings contradicted traditional cognitive moral developmental (i.e., Kohlberg, Rest, and Gillian) concepts of the moral domain where participants' normative systems were comprised of several moral values rather than on just one philosophical concept such as justice, social justice, or care. Unique to this study was compliance officers' reliance on their moral intuition in sensing the existence of a moral problem. The analysis showed that in some circumstances they relied on prior experiences that triggered a "gut feeling" or used a sixth sense that something was not right. Baier (1963)

suggests that people do not really have a sixth sense that helps them identify or resolve moral problems. Rather, an individual's experiences assist him or her in identifying moral situations. A lack of empirical evidence exists to compare or contrast these findings with other comparable circumstances in helping understand how administrators rely on their moral intuition to guide their moral judgments.

In assessing professionals' morality and moral reasoning it is important to use a theoretical framework and research design that incorporates and allows for the investigation of the broad nature of the moral domain. The interview guide, which included both scenarios and recall problems, was an effective tool to expose the varying layers of participants' moral perceptions and sensitivities. For example, there were several working definitions of concepts such as amateurism, equal and fair treatment, and academic assistance. Sport management, as a field, rarely discusses or debates these concepts. Furthermore, insufficient national discussions occur within the NCAA community about the various understandings of these concepts and their influence on policy and decision-making. The NCAA tends to make a declaration pertaining to how a concept and/or rule is defined which is communicated in seminars or other educational trainings. In turn, these rules interpretations and applications are conveyed by the compliance officers to their respective athletic department stakeholders through on campus compliance education training sessions. A discussion about the meaning of a concept does not arise however until an incident occurs (e.g., a rule violation). Wallace (1988) argued that the meanings of concepts evolve over time and thus it is important to engage in on-going discussions about how concepts apply to new cases.

Critics of the NCAA athletic administrators argue that the strict legislative and rules systems deter them from using practical wisdom (Gough, 1994; Lumpkin et al., 1999). The findings demonstrated that Pac-10 compliance officers engaged in practical reasoning. The nature of compliance work is complicated; each case confronted required interpretation and deliberation. In resolving practical problems, cases necessitate accurately recognizing the existence of a moral problem and its salient features. In deciding the right course of action, case particularities (including assessment and discussion of relevant institutional rules, norms, standards, and values, along with appraising NCAA and Conference historical and cultural factors), the context in which the problem occurred, and their understandings of moral and/or athletic concepts influenced their reasoning. These features informed the background information they collected, the questions they asked, the people they interviewed, the people they took into account, the values they assessed, and the comparable cases they considered. While participants' interpretations and deliberations did reflect the rules, the research design demonstrated how these administrators reasoned and the complexity of their reasoning. They strove to meet standards of sufficiency and accuracy of information, and envisioned alternatives and their consequences, rational considerations, and consistency. Learning how sport managers morally navigate through such complex organizational systems in relation to their own normative system is an important area for future research. Specifically, examining sport managers' conceptions of morality and the types of moral problems they encounter would enhance our understandings of their judgments within different athletic environments.

It is well accepted in the business literature that managers' moral decision-making in the workplace is situation-specific (Trevino, 1986, 1992; Weber & Wasieleski, 2001); however, building upon the literature, it was demonstrated that the specific kinds of standards of practical reasoning Pac-10 compliance officers used in their deliberations about context-specific problems assisted in learning how and why they made justifications. The standards of practical reasoning

used by study participants also suggested that their experiences in resolving moral ambiguities enhanced their practical wisdom. These experiences helped participants learn how to weigh various virtues in resolving problems. For example, their experiences included the type and level of education, work-related experiences (including compliance, administrative, coaching, and playing), their backgrounds, and the standards of conduct within their respective institutions, the Conference, and the NCAA. Hence, the compliance officers' practical wisdom is an accumulation of moral knowledge that has been formulated from not only the standards set by the Association, their teachings, and their professional experiences, but also from their individual personal experiences and background.

While the context of the study was intercollegiate athletics, the findings have broad implications for professionals, researchers, and professional ethics educators. Enhancing our insights about the nature of conceptions of morality and the kinds of problems these professionals deem to be moral could lead to a greater awareness of how individuals interpret situations as well as their justifications. The diverse nature of sport administrative practices suggested that an enhanced understanding of the moral domain may assist in learning about sport administrators' moral behaviors. Professional ethics could also benefit by improving individuals' practical reasoning. Advancing individuals' knowledge and discernment of the moral domain and understandings of different concepts/principles that inform moral perceptions and sensitivities ultimately could lead to quality moral reasoning (Coombs, 1997). Sport managers come from a variety of backgrounds (e.g., legal, higher education, corporate) and thus it is important to develop our knowledge of different professionals' practical moral reasoning so that the differences in moral thinking can be incorporated into various professional ethics curricula. Students would ultimately gain from dealing with moral problems they will typically confront working within different sport contexts.

In conclusion, the literature portrays athletic administrators' moral reasoning as straightforward (Gough, 1994; Lumpkin et al., 1999). In contrast, this study showed that compliance officers' conceptions of morality and moral reasoning were complex, deliberate, and thoughtful. The participants' moral codes were comprised of many values and their deliberations strove to meet various standards of practical reasoning that include the consideration of the various legislative systems and notions of justice and fairness. This research has contributed to the field by examining athletic administrators' (specifically Pac-10 compliance officers) everyday moral experiences in intercollegiate athletics, along with recommending areas for future investigation.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The scenarios were developed from NCAA DI-A rule issues experienced by various NCAA members that were collected from reports in issues from the Chronicle of Higher Education (2000-01). I also asked various informants (i.e., coaches, athletic trainers, and compliance officers) about moral problems they had experienced while working at NCAA DI-A institutions. Based on the information collected, three real-life scenarios that pertained specifically to NCAA DI-A rules were constructed and piloted.

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## Appendix A-Scenarios

### 1. Academic Assistance

An academic counselor is helping Danielle, a junior on the women's basketball team, write a research paper on "the effects of poverty on education" for her Issues in Education class. Danielle tries really hard in school but struggles academically. She is currently maintaining a 2.0 g.p.a. and is holding a C- in her Issues in Education class. She wants to do really well in her final paper or she could get a D and perhaps fall below the required minimum 2.0 g.p.a. to be eligible to play during the winter quarter. The academic counselor is sitting at a computer with Danielle helping her organize and clearly articulate her ideas. The academic counselor asks Danielle questions and then types her ideas and thoughts as they converse. The academic counselor has helped other athletes similar to Danielle on rare occasions. Danielle finishes her paper and receives a B-.

- a) Is there an ethical problem in this scenario? Why? Why not?
- b) What are the ethical points in this situation? Why?
- c) Is this scenario an incidence of academic fraud? Why? Why not?
- d) If you had to deal with this situation what would you take into account? And who would you take into account? Why?
- e) What do you think you should do?
- f) Are there any factors that would change your decision? Why? Why not?

### 2. Church's Charity

Sarah is a freshman volleyball player at Northern University-ranked nationally in the top 5 for NCAA Division 1-A women's volleyball and has won 4 NCAA National titles in the last 10 years. Sarah was recruited from Thornton Academy for girls, and earned High School All-American honors in her junior and senior years. Thornton Academy also won the State girls' volleyball titles in both of those years. Sarah graduated with a 3.1 g.p.a., which is a remarkable improvement from her 1.7 she earned while at City High School in Chicago, IL. City High School was ranked last for academic achievement and the volleyball program was average.

Sarah's mother is a single parent and earns \$12,000/year as a receptionist for a local company. Sarah and her mother are members of the local First St. Baptist church. Sarah was able to enroll at Thornton Academy (a private girls high school) when her local church awarded her a \$10,000 scholarship her junior and senior years to pay for tuition. The scholarship has been awarded to other needy high school church members to attend Thornton Academy but the scholarship is not awarded on an ongoing basis. The protocol for the scholarship is not clearly defined. Awards tend to be based on the circumstances of needy members, extracurricular activities, and available church funding.

The Pastor of the church is a close friend with the principal and volleyball coach at Thornton Academy as they are active members in the church. The Pastor is not a booster to any institution of higher education. The Pastor was concerned about Sarah's future since her grade point average was so low and he felt that she had a lot of potential and if she could just be in a more positive academic environment she might gain entrance into University and

perhaps gain an athletic scholarship. The principal and volleyball coach agreed with the Pastor and suggested the scholarship should be ongoing in an effort to help other students in a similar circumstance to Sarah. A scholarship fund was established by the church community raising money from portions of the weekly tithes received from the congregation and from other donations to the church.

- a) Is there an ethical problem in this scenario? Why? Why not?
- b) What are the ethical features (points) in this problem? Why?
- c) If you had to deal with this situation what would you take into account? And who would you take into account? Why?
- d) What do you think you should do? Why?
- e) Are there any factors that would change your decision? Why? Why not?

### 3. Drug Testing

The men's basketball coach has just signed one of the nation's top-ten high-school recruits, "A McDonald's All-American". After last year's disappointing 14-16 record and a fifth placing in the conference the head coach is under a lot of pressure to have a winning season. The coaching staff worked really hard at recruiting and successfully signed a player who could help them toward achieving a winning record and into post-seasonal play. However, this incoming High School All-American men's basketball player refuses to consent to NCAA drug testing because of the following reasons: 1) the rest of the campus population that is on scholarship is not singled out for drug testing, 2) he should not have to waive his Fourth Amendment right, and 3) he states that he competes on his own merits, and does not use performance enhancing drugs. He believes that athletic organizations have no moral or legal authority to force him to consent to be drug tested. The basketball player informs his coach that he will pursue legal action if he is required to sign the NCAA's drug testing consent form.

- a) Is there an ethical problem in this scenario? Why? Why not?
- b) What are the ethical features (points) in this problem? Why?
- c) If you had to deal with this situation what would you take into account? And who would you take into account? Why?
- d) What do you think you should do? Why?
- e) Are there any factors that would change your decision? Why? Why not?