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Taking Stock: Eight Years of Embedded Ethics at UofT's Actuarial Science Program

For over eight years, we have conducted various embedded ethics pedagogical experiments in University of Toronto's actuarial science program. We incorporate ethical discussions organically into technical teaching, and to use examples and case studies with an ethical dimension to discuss technical content.

For our introductory courses, we have incorporated narrative-based pedagogy for life contingencies, creative artmaking in financial math, exploring financial puzzles from pop culture, and team-based projects to explore insurance ethics.

For higher-year courses, we coached students to write modified op-ed to deep dive in different perspectives, taught students to code in industry software AXIS while exploring insurance regulations. We have also approached insurance decision-making (i.e. whether to insure or deny access to insurance protection) as a distributive justice and fairness question. We explored with our students alternative fairness frameworks including Luck-Egalitarianism and Democratic Equality, and how insurability decisions would be made differently - from the industry-standard "actuarial fairness" perspective - under those alternative frameworks.

In this talk, I will present the key examples of embedding ethics education in actuarial math education, and discuss the importance of marrying active learning activities with embedded ethics to maximize the impact. I will also share students' feedback and lessons learned.