



Online Ethics Center  
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

# Test of Ethical Sensitivity in Science and Engineering (TESSE)

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## Description

The Test of Ethical Sensitivity in Science and Engineering is an instrument designed to detect the awareness of ethical issues. It contains a collection of science and engineering ethics case studies, and is suitable for assessing undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in engineering and science ethics courses, or courses with a substantial ethics component.

## Body

**Description:** The TESSE was developed at the Georgia Institute of Technology to assess different modes of ethics instruction after the authors ran into problems using the second edition of the Defining Issues Test (DIT-2) that measures moral judgment. In response, the authors developed an instrument that examined ethical sensitivity, or the ability to identify and recognize ethical issues emerging from a situation. The measure is a scalable instrument that can be used with a large number of students. The measure consists of seven short case studies followed by a series of statements. Respondents are asked to read the case rate each statement on a Likert scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”)

**What it Measures:** Ethical Sensitivity in science and engineering practice.

**Format:** The TESSE consists of seven case studies followed by a series of statements about the case. Respondents are asked to read the case rate each statement on a Likert scale from “strongly agree to “strongly disagree.”

**Disciplines it Assesses:**

- Engineering
- Life and Environmental Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Social Sciences

**Audience:** Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in a STEM ethics course or STEM courses with significant ethical content.

**Use Notes:** The TESSE was developed at the Georgia Institute of Technology to assess different modes of ethics instruction after the authors ran into problems using the second edition of the Defining Issues Test (DIT-2)

**Access/For More Information:** Contact <https://ethicxcenter.gatech.edu/> for access and more information.

## Associated References

1. Borenstein, J., & Drake, M., & Kirkman, R., & Swann, J. (2008). “The Test Of Ethical Sensitivity In Science And Engineering (Tesse): A Discipline Specific Assessment Tool For Awareness Of Ethical Issues.” Paper presented at 2008 Annual Conference & Exposition, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.  
<https://peer.asee.org/3253>.

### Rights

Use of Materials on the OEC

### Resource Type

Assessment Tools

### Parent Collection

Evaluation Tools

## **Topics**

Evaluation and Assessment

## **Discipline(s)**

Research Ethics

Teaching Ethics in STEM