MORAL PSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY

Providing tools for ethical character development

UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

Guide for the
Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom (CEAC)

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Rationale: The *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom (CEAC)* is based on research findings regarding what helps students develop ethical character and achieve academically. Particular classroom climates and teacher practices are related to student ethical development and achievement.

Purpose: The *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom (CEAC)* is a tool for educators. It is a way to consider the broad aspects of designing classroom practice that promotes ethical character development and achievement. Teachers assess their strengths and weaknesses, priorities and goals. Though the questions are crosscutting, CEAC fits primarily into "<u>R</u>elationships" and "<u>S</u>elf-Authorship" of the RAVE model and is a useful way for teachers to see the characteristics of these guidelines.

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<u>RAVE Model for Moral Character and Ethical Knowhow</u>

<u>R</u>**elationships**. Teachers establish a secure relationship with each child. For an individual to be open to ongoing experience, their needs and individuality need to be acknowledged and taken into account. The responsive teacher expresses openness to mutual influence and models 'unconditional positive regard' (Rogers, 1983) for the child's "becoming" a prosocial member of the community. In such a relationship, the child can thrive as a person and as a student. Relationships also include the climates or cultures that comprise the practices and expectations shared by members of an organization. Caring community classrooms provide the support students need for achievement and prosocial behavior (Battistich, 2008). A sustaining climate offers a caring, mastery-learning environment but also fosters human potential through intentional guidance for purposeful, democratic participation (see Narvaez, 2011) where students care for one another's welfare (Power & Higgins–D'Alessandro, 2008).

<u>A</u>**pprenticeship.** When teachers view children with a growth mindset (instead of a fixed mindset; Dweck, 2006), they realize that students require structured guidance to foster development in a host of skills needed to live a good life (Lave, 1988). This takes modeling and coached practice along with immersion in experience for developing intuition (Hogarth, 2001). Mentors provide deliberate, intentional instruction is required to foster moral problem solving skills, which include social and emotional learning (Elias et al., 2008). The Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education project (Narvaez et al., 2004) identified sets of ethical skills that can be taught in public schools using a novice to expert instructional approach.

<u>V</u>**illage Support.** Development occurs in a context of supportive relations that include the wider community. Educators can help restore the ecological system of support. Reinvigorating and coordinating the child's network of support among family, community, and neighborhood institutions means that each area aligns goals to build assets and foster flourishing in the child and neighborhood (Lerner, Dowling & Anderson, 2003). It is in the community that children and youth practice and apply ethical competencies. After all, moral development is about learning for life (Dewey, 1938).

<u>E</u>**thical Expertise.** Ethical skills are developed through a novice-to-expert pedagogy in the apprenticeship context until the individual is able to self-author. Autonomy is a fundamental characteristic of intellectual and moral maturity (Piaget, 1932) and is particularly important for moral functioning (Narvaez, 2011).

<u>S</u>**elf Authorship**. Moral self-authorship capacities include executive functioning capacities like moral self-monitoring (am I taking all sides into account in making my decision?) and moral self-reflection (does this action align with my moral identity?). Those with good self-monitoring are able, for example, to change strategies when a particular course of action is not working, whether working a math problem or a moral problem.

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Development of the *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom*

The *Checklist for an Ethical Classroom (CEC)* was developed during the Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education Project, 1998-2002[1]. It has since been refined and extended into the *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom (CEAC).*

There are two levels of self-assessment, the basic level which is appropriate for most educators and a "going deeper" level for those who would like more suggestions for self-development.

Design of CEAC

The *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom* has eight categories. Most categories have both a basic and a deeper level.

Social Climate variables are those that emphasize relationships.

> *Caring Classroom Community* addresses the teacher practices that influence a sense of community in the classroom and that are linked to students' sense of belonging.

> *Teacher Style* includes elements of responsiveness, warmth and immediacy, characteristics particularly important for some minority groups. It also includes elements related to providing a sense of safety, security and trust, all of which are vital for maximum achievement and sense of community.

> *Community Connections* refers to teacher respect for diversity and inclusion of the community in learning.

> *Ethical Expertise Development* includes the additional elements necessary for cultivating ethical skills and expertise (Narvaez, 2006) that have not been included in other categories.

Learning Climate variables are those that contribute to academic motivation and learning, beyond the social climate variables which do also.

> *Mastery Atmosphere* refers to instructional practices that motivate students to learn rather than focus only on comparing their performance to the performance of others.

> *Stimulating Curriculum Content* addresses the types of instruction and curricula that motivate students to engage in learning.

> *Self-Development and Resilience* includes factors that help students in their self-development as teachers assist students in managing their own learning and development.

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Supportive Physical Structure suggests that teachers be also aware of how infrastructure influences learning potential.

Summary Table

	Basic	Going Deeper
Social Climate:	Caring Classroom Community-I	Caring Classroom Community-II
	Teacher Style-I	Teacher Style-II
	Community Connections-I	Community Connections-I
		Ethical Expertise Development
Learning Climate:	Mastery Atmosphere-I	Mastery Atmosphere-II
	Stimulating Curriculum Content-I	Stimulating Curriculum Content-II
	Self-Development & Resilience-I	Self-Development & Resilience-II
		Supportive Physical Structure

How to Use CEAC

The CEAC may be used in staff development settings or by individual teachers as a form of self-authorship.

The educator is encouraged to complete as many pages as comfortable. Once a goal or set of goals is in hand, there is no need to complete the whole measure. Educators can return at a later date to reassess progress on selected goals and move further through the checklist to adopt new goals.

Scoring CEAC

There is no particular scoring used for the CEAC because it is a self-assessment and strategic planning tool. Ideally, a teacher uses it annually and compares responses across years, and sees scores increasing (more "Lots" and increased self-ratings).

Research with the *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom*

We developed an early version of CEAC, the Checklist for an Ethical Classroom during the Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education program, offering it as a resource for teachers' self-assessment. Pam Lane-Garon (2003) and colleagues have found it helpful to use the CEC in teacher education programs.

Terms of Use

The *Checklist for an Ethical and Achieving Classroom (CEAC)* may be used for educational purposes. You must obtain permission for other uses. For-profit companies need a special contract and may be charged royalties.

Contact information

If you have suggestions or questions, please contact Darcia Narvaez, Department of Psychology, 154 IEI Building, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame IN 46556, dnarvaez(at)nd.edu.

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DIRECTIONS FOR CEAC

1. The teacher should ask him or herself each question and complete the self ratings

      (circle "Lots" "Some" or "None").

2. Then mark the overall ratings.

3. Finally select a goal to work for the next interim.

SOCIAL CLIMATE BASICS: CARING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY-I

Lots Some None   1. Do I have clear positive expectations for student behavior?

Lots Some None   2. Do I highlight shared values by engaging the whole class in thinking about how they want to be treated and how they want their class to be?#

Lots Some None   3. Do I explicitly emphasize common positive ideals and purposes?

Lots Some None   4. Do I emphasize compassion and graciousness in how we treat one another?

Lots Some None   5. Do I encourage students to help one another, the class as a whole, and the teacher by organizing the environment to support student interaction?#

Lots Some None   6. Do I encourage students to help one another, the class as a whole, and the teacher by being open to students' suggestions?#

Lots Some None   7. Do I build interdependence and responsibility by asking students to take responsibility for the classroom and then help students learn to take responsibility?#

Lots Some None   8. Encourage students to create their positive understanding of school tasks.

How would you rate yourself overall on "Caring Classroom Climate-I?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>:
CARING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY-II

Lots Some None 1. Do I help students build a sense of group membership by using class meetings to share personal news and class accomplishments?#

Lots Some None 2. Do I help students build a sense of group membership by involving students in planning and problem solving?#

Lots Some None 3. Do I use inclusive group language (e.g., frequently refer to the class as a whole, for example: "This class sure likes to learn!")?#

Lots Some None 4. Do I help the class build a shared history by creating shared learning experiences?#

Lots Some None 5. Do I help the class build a shared history involving students in developing class procedures, customs, and rituals?#

Lots Some None 6. Do I highlight shared goals by generating with students lists of things they hope to learn?#

Lots Some None 7. Do I highlight shared goals by trying to weave what they hope to learn into the curriculum?#

Lots Some None 8. Am I straightforward with students, never deceiving them?

Lots Some None 9. Do we have times of play and delight in one another?

How would you rate yourself overall on "Caring Classroom Community-II?"

<u>1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7</u>

How would you like to rate yourself?

<u>1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7</u>

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

LEARNING CLIMATE BASICS: MASTERY ATMOSPHERE-I

Lots Some None   1.   Are there important and engaging learning opportunities?

Lots Some None   2.   Is there an emphasis on mastering tasks and learning (rather than on getting good grades or competing to top others)?

Lots Some None   3. Do I Answer student questions about the purposes of tasks and assignments

Lots Some None   3.   Do I emphasize strategic effort rather than right answers?

Lots Some None   4.   Do I coach a student when he or she is having difficulty with schoolwork?

Lots Some None   5.   Do I build hopefulness in struggling learners by helping them see how they are making progress?#

Lots Some None   6.   Do I stand firm on the importance of learning, but make allowances for special stresses in their lives?#

How would you rate yourself overall on "Mastery Atmosphere-I?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

LEARNING CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>: **MASTERY ATMOSPHERE-II**

Lots Some None   1. Do I adjust learning activities to match student skills?#

Lots Some None   2. Do I adjust learning activities to provide additional scaffolding for students who are struggling?#

Lots Some None   3. Do I help students see that learning is interesting, relevant, and important by, for example, connecting learning activities to students' lives and interests and providing opportunities to share their learning with others?#

Lots Some None   4.   Do we discuss ideas and do I encourage deep thinking (e.g., pursuing a line of questioning to the end, logically and/or creatively sorting out the elements in a problem and coming up with a solution)?

Lots Some None   5. Are there materials in the classroom to foster curiosity and serendipitous learning in many domains and at different levels of difficulty?

How would you rate yourself overall on "Mastery Atmosphere-II?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

LEARNING CLIMATE BASICS:
STIMULATING CURRICULUM CONTENT-I

Lots Some None 1. Do lessons use different teaching styles (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, oral, individual/cooperative, olfactory, gustatory, spatial) and assessment styles (oral, written)?

Lots Some None 2. Do I provide opportunities for students to think logically and provide criteria for judging the adequacy of ideas?

Lots Some None 3. Do I provide opportunities for students to ask content questions and idea questions?

Lots Some None 4. Do I allow opportunities for individual self-expression (e.g., let students choose an assignment or way to prove learning took place)?

Lots Some None 5. When relevant, does the curriculum present diverse viewpoints in an exciting, positive, interesting manner?

Lots Some None 6. Are value conflicts and ethical dilemmas discussed in lessons?

Lots Some None 7. Does instruction and assessment involve analytical, creative, and practical thinking (CAP) as well as memorization learning?

> Creative tasks: create, design, imagine, suppose
> Analytical tasks: analyze, compare and contrast, evaluate, explain
> Practical tasks: use, apply, implement

How would you rate yourself overall on **"Stimulating Curriculum Content-I*?"***

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

LEARNING CLIMATE GOING DEEPER: **STIMULATING CURRICULUM CONTENT-II**

Lots Some None   1. Do I provide opportunities for students to invent various solutions to problems?

Lots Some None   2. Do lessons foster different types of thinking and understanding (e.g., creative, prospective, reflection, motivational, practical, procedural understanding, semantic knowledge, narrative framing)?

Lots Some None   3. Do lessons foster different types of intelligences (e.g., musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, logico-mathematical, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal)?

Lots Some None   4.   Does instruction and assessment enable students to identify and capitalize on their CAP strengths, and identify, correct, and, as necessary, compensate for weaknesses?
        Creative tasks: create, design, imagine, suppose
        Analytical tasks: analyze, compare and contrast, evaluate, explain
        Practical tasks: use, apply, implement

Lots Some None   5.   Does instruction involve utilization, at various times, of at least six performance components, including (a) encoding of information, (b) inference, (c) mapping, (d) application, (e) comparing of alternatives, and (f) response.

Lots Some None   6.   Does instruction and assessment integrate rather than separate all of the CAP elements of intelligence?

Lots Some None   7.   Does instruction and assessment involve utilization, at various times, of all seven metacomponents of the problem-solving cycle, including
        (a) problem identification,
        (b) problem definition,
        (c) formulation of problem-solving strategies,
        (d) formulation of mental and external representations and organizations of
        problems and their associated information,
        (e) allocation of resources,
        (f) monitoring of problem solving, and
        (g) evaluation of problem solving.

How would you rate yourself overall on "Stimulating Curriculum Content-II?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE BASICS:
TEACHER STYLE-I

Lots Some None   1. Do I communicate with each student personally during the class period?

Lots Some None   2. Do I adjust my behavior for each student to make each feel welcome and supported?

Lots Some None   3. Do I try to find out what will help the student succeed in the class?

    Lots Some None   a. By asking parents?

    Lots Some None   b. By asking the students themselves?

    Lots Some None   c. By consulting relevant experts, if appropriate?

Lots Some None   4. Do I convey support of students as human beings and treat them with dignity?

Lots Some None   5. Do I expect students to treat each other and themselves with respect?

Lots Some None   6. Are opportunities provided for building trust among members of the class?

Lots Some None   7. Do I help students find steady personal support?

Lots Some None   8. When a student misbehaves, do I make sure that the <u>student understands</u> why an action is <u>harmful</u> and what s/he could have done differently.

How would you rate yourself overall on "Teacher Style-I?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>:
TEACHER STYLE-II

Lots Some None   1.   Do students feel like they can relax and be themselves in the classroom?

Lots Some None   2.   Do I provide opportunities for appropriate and safe expressions of feelings?

Lots Some None   3.   Is trust of rules and systems encouraged but changes are made when they are unfair?

Lots Some None   4.   Is justice/fairness an explicit concern of mine, as a teacher?

Lots Some None   5.   Do I avoid getting angry with the students?

Lots Some None   6.   Do I help each student share their strengths with the class?

Lots Some None   7. When a student misbehaves do I look for what basic need they require?

Lots Some None   8. When a student misbehaves, do I make it an opportunity for character development rather than punishment?

How would you rate yourself overall on "Teacher Style-II?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE BASICS:
SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE-I

Lots Some None   1.   Do I help each student meet basic needs (belonging, competence, autonomy,

purpose, understanding, self-actualization, trust)?

Lots Some None   2.   Am I aware of students' personal lives?

Lots Some None   3.   Do I help student practice and develop social competencies?

Lots Some None   4.   Do I provide opportunities for developing self-awareness?

Lots Some None   5.   Do I provide opportunities for developing self-control?

Lots Some None   6.   Do I provide opportunities for developing self-direction?

Lots Some None   7.   Do I share plans with students and explain why things are important?

Lots Some None   8.   Do I encourage students to ask questions?

How would you rate yourself overall on "Self-Development and Resiliency?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE GOING DEEPER:

SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND RESILIENCE-II

Lots Some None   1. Do I provide students with as much autonomy in their learning as they can handle?#

Lots Some None   2. Do I balance autonomy with authority, clearly communicate what is negotiable and what is not?#

Lots Some None   3. Do I look for and be open to opportunities to engage students in negotiation and problem solving?#.

Lots Some None   3. Do I make allowances for students with strong autonomy needs (e.g., give them time to comply on their own; ignore "attitude" until mutual trust is established; problem solve with them to come up with a way to help them comply) ?#

Lots Some None   4. Do I allow students freedom to grow? ?#

Lots Some None   5. Am I prepared to adjust rules in response to student growth?#

Lots Some None   6. Do I encourage student initiatives, allowing students sufficient freedom, for example, to spontaneously help others?#

How would you rate yourself overall on "Self-Development and Resiliency?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High 7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High 7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE BASICS:
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND BONDING-I

Lots Some None   1. Am I aware of the diversity in the classroom (culture/ethnicity, economic well-being, family configuration, family values, ability/disability, and so on)?

Lots Some None   2. Do my practices and style support diverse students?

Lots Some None   3. Do I convey appreciation of students' families and cultures?

Lots Some None   4. Do I provide opportunities for respectful discussion of different viewpoints?

Lots Some None   5. Do I include all students (and their backgrounds) when using terms "we" and "us"?

Lots Some None   6. Do I point out the benefits of diversity for helping everyone learn more and build skills for getting along with each other?

Lots Some None   7. Do I encourage students to relate to diversity outside the classroom, especially in the community?

Lots Some None   8. Do we discuss the experiences of others to build empathy & perspective taking?

How would you rate yourself overall on **"Community Connections and Bonding-I"***?*

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High 7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High 7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>:

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND BONDING-II

Lots Some None 1. Do I emphasize how students are embedded in networks of relationships and support?

Lots Some None 2. Do I promote respect for family and cultural traditions?

Lots Some None 3. Are there respectful, supportive relationships among students, teachers, and parents?

Lots Some None 4. Do I link lessons to ancestors, family, community members and traditions?

Lots Some None 5. Do I invite community members to class as mentors and models for lessons?

Lots Some None 6. Do I try multiple ways to strengthen relationships with parents and guardians?

*How would you rate yourself overall on "***Community Connections and Bonding-II***?"*

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

SOCIAL CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>:
ETHICAL EXPERTISE DEVELOPMENT

Lots Some None   1.   Do I immerse students in examples of ethical goals?

Lots Some None   2.   Do I encourage students to foster their own virtue development?

Lots Some None   3.   Do I guide students in ethical skill development by allowing them to practice multiple skills across multiple contexts?

Lots Some None   4.   Do I encourage students to aim for and find a higher purpose for their lives?

Lots Some None   5.   Do I emphasize the positive (or negative) impact individuals and groups can have on others?

Lots Some None   6.   Do I help students gain skills for self-authorship?

Lots Some None   7.   Do I encourage the students to foster compassion for others along with techniques for self-calming?

Lots Some None   8.   Do I display and encourage a positive regard for others, including giving others the benefit of the doubt and avoiding negative attitudes about others such as an "us against them" mentality?

Lots Some None   9.   Do we practice reflecting on personal behaviors in light of prosocial values such as fairness, respect, & social responsibility.

How would you rate yourself overall on "Ethical Expertise Development?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?

LEARNING CLIMATE <u>GOING DEEPER</u>:
SUPPORTIVE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

(to the degree made possible by finances and opportunity)

Lots Some None   1. Is the furniture set up to be comfortable for students?

Lots Some None   2. Can the design and furniture of the room accommodate different teaching styles?

Lots Some None   3. Does the room décor reflect the diversity in the school?

Lots Some None   4. Is the room decorated in an aesthetically-pleasing manner?

Lots Some None   5. Is the room temperature comfortable?

How would you rate yourself overall on "Supportive Physical Structure?"

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

How would you like to rate yourself?

1 Low   2   3   4   5   6   High   7

Based on your responses, what goal will you set for yourself for improvement by what deadline?