

## **Parr Center of Ethics Communication Audit**

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## **Executive Summary**

The Parr Center for Ethics at UNC - Chapel Hill has a strong reputation for fostering ethical discussions, but its communication strategies could be enhanced to increase visibility and audience engagement. Our audit reveals that while the Center's social media platforms provide consistent updates about programming and events, engagement remains low across most platforms. The Center also lacks sufficient video content and interactive media that resonates with UNC-CH Students and older adults.

Key strengths include the Center's passion for ethical discussions, clear and effective messaging on Instagram, and diverse content formats, such as scholarly discussions on YouTube. However, areas for improvement include more engaging content, especially short-form videos to attract Gen-Z students, along with a more consistent posting schedule, particularly during the summer months. The audit also noted that while Instagram maintains a distinctive visual theme, there is potential to improve the use of interactive features like polls and Q&A sessions to boost follower participation.

Our analysis also identified opportunities for collaboration with external organizations, particularly on social media, and the need for more interactive posts to increase engagement. In the long term, the Parr Center should enhance its website and digital presence to encourage donations and alumni engagement, supporting sustainable growth.

We recommend increasing the frequency of social media posts, utilizing more engaging formats like Instagram Reels and TikTok, and strengthening collaborations with external partners to increase visibility and engagement with broader UNC-CH and local communities.

## **Communications Analysis**

### **Introduction**

The University of North Carolina's Parr Center for Ethics has been focused on the professional and academic development of ethical decision-making for students at UNC-Chapel Hill since the organization's establishment in 2004. Located on the Chapel Hill campus at Caldwell Hall, 240 E. Cameron Ave., the center sprouted out of the Ethics Fellows Program in the College's Institute for Arts and Humanities, which itself was founded in 1997. The organization shares a goal to inspire fruitful discussions about ethics amongst intersectional university students.

### **Research**

The Parr Center provides resources and learning opportunities under the platform, "ethics is everywhere". With a mission to nourish and foster ethical reflection both on campus and beyond, the Parr Center targets the audience of students and older-adults. Between their undergrad and graduate fellowship programs, the Parr Center aims to attract students by their second year of attendance to promote the two-year fellowship programs and increase engagement.

Off-campus, the Parr Center strives to match older-adults with college students for extracurricular activities and learning experiences. Prior activities include staged readings of Shakespeare plays and mentorship programs with former Tar Heels. Along with older-adults, the Parr Center also partners with local prisons to match students to inmates for letter writing,

similar to that of a “pen pal”. With the initiatives set by the Parr Center thus far, their outreach has grown significantly, but still needs to reach a larger audience in order to excel. The following analysis reveals how their social media channels impact and/or hinder their on-campus and community outreach.

## **Social Media Analysis**

Facebook:

- Content: The majority of their content is duplicated across Facebook and Instagram. Their content promotes their programming, social accounts and special events.
- Target Audience: Their target audience is split between UNC students and the Ethics Bowl Community. They post a lot of informative information about events as well as information for joining their programs.
- Frequency of Posts:
  - During the school year: 1-2 posts per week
  - During the summer: 1-2 posts per month
- Engagement:
  - 1-10 likes across all posts (3 likes on average)
  - 0 comments on any post
  - 1-2 shares per post
- Followers: 789 Followers
- Positive/Negative Comments: The posts are very straightforward and informative. Not a ton of creativity or variation between each post site. A lot of graphic templates are used. Not a lot of video or audio content available.

#### Instagram:

- Content: Their content mostly highlights the Ethics Bowl and events happening at the Parr Center.
- Target Audience: Younger audience, most likely UNC students and other involved in the Ethics bowl community
- Frequency of Posts:
  - During the school year: 3-4 posts per week
  - During the summer: 1-2 posts per month
- Engagement:
  - 15-30 likes across all posts
  - 0 comments across all posts
- Followers: 1,153 Followers
- Positive/Negative Comments: The posts are very appealing and easy to read. There is a lack of engagement and limited interaction with the followers.

#### X (Twitter):

- Content: The tone of the content is friendly and informative. They congratulate current employees and volunteers, and frequently repost important announcements that would benefit the ethical community.
- Target Audience: The target audience is aimed for current students active at the center and students interested in working with the center.
- Frequency of Posts: They post about 3-5 times every week.

- Engagement: 1-10 likes, reposts, and comments per post.
- Followers: 1,126 followers
- Positive/Negative Comments: This social media channel does not populate comments. If there are any comments made, they are published as reposts.

#### YouTube:

- Content: The content primarily focuses on a forum series where scholars and other participants gather together to discuss ethical issues.
- Target Audience: Student and faculty at UNC
- Frequency of Posts: 11 videos ranging from 1-4 years ago
- Engagement:
  - 20-355 views across all posts
  - 0-8 likes across all posts
  - 0-1 comments across all posts
    - @beatricekelly-russo487 3 years ago: “Thank you for posting this! Learned a lot.” [here](#).
- Followers: 41 Subscribers
- Positive/Negative Comments: The videos are pre-recorded of panelists presenting in a classroom, at a Zoom meeting with other faculty, or in a group meeting in an auditorium.

#### **Audience Feedback**

Based on the social media analysis and a survey conducted through [Qualtrics](#), there is a lack of knowledge of the Parr Center. All respondents surveyed were UNC students ranging from

sophomores to graduate-level. In the survey, when UNC students were asked if they were familiar with the Parr Center's existence, 26% responded yes, and the other 74% had not heard of it before. Along with the knowledge of the Parr Center, 93% of respondents had said they would be interested or possibly interested in learning more about ethics. 6% of respondents were not interested in learning more about ethics. The target audience is interested in discussions and events surrounding ethics; however, the lack of programming knowledge through the Parr Center will ultimately hinder client engagement.

## **SWOT Analysis**

After review of the Parr Center's communication channels and audience feedback, the results have been summarized in a SWOT analysis.

### **Strengths:**

- The YouTube videos produced by the center highlight the center's enthusiasm for the topics discussed on the channel relating to ethics. The videos are informative for students.
- Their X account has a good and functional usage of hashtags, external links and captions for their photos. Additionally, the center makes use of enthusiastic language choices when posting.
- The Instagram account is effective at notifying their followers of upcoming events such as the Parr Heel interest meeting that took place on August 29th. Overall, their Instagram has a distinctive theme, and the branding is relatively clear. Of all of the center's social media accounts, their Instagram is by far the most successful account for follower engagement averaging around 25 likes per post, with lows around 15 and highs around 90.



#### Weaknesses:

- The YouTube Channel hasn't uploaded any video content in over one year, so the content isn't current. When the channel was actively posting, the videos were too long to hold the average audience member's attention. Furthermore, the content misses the target audience, which is Generation Z college students. A transition to TikTok or other trendier platforms could be beneficial.
- Although their X account has over 1,000 followers, the page's engagement (likes, reposts and comments) is extremely low relative to their follower count. On the appearance of content, it seems as if the account posts in a format that is more recognizable to Instagram posts compared to the typical formatting of X posts. X posts are typically short and "fun." Additionally, the account doesn't engage or repost content related to ethics to boost their page engagement, i.e., the account should perhaps repost content created by other organizations or students that discuss philosophy or ethics.
- The Parr Center for Ethic's Instagram does not actively engage with other Instagram pages or content on a daily or active basis. During the school year, they post either once or twice-weekly, with an obvious lull in post frequency during the summer months, where this could be important recruiting months for incoming students for the fall semester. Thematically, the content that is produced sporadically could come off as unengaging to a younger audience due to the transition of what online content registers as engaging to a Gen Z audience.

#### Opportunities:

- It would be prudent of the center to create collaborative videos with external organizations, which could either be on-campus groups or other organizations that align with the messaging the center wants to broadcast. Another recommendation would be creating YouTube shorts that could be posted on the center's X and Instagram accounts.
- The Parr Center for Ethics X account could engage and interact with external brands on a daily or near daily basis to improve their engagement levels. If the center retweeted posts by students in the philosophy department or content related to ethics, it's likely that they will see an increase in followership and/or the more probable outcome of content engagement from followers.
- It would be beneficial if the center posted more interactive content on their Instagram to promote content engagement from their current followers. Similarly to other suggestions made for the other primary platforms, the supplementation of video content in the form of Instagram reels would most likely be of greater appeal to Gen Z students.

#### Threats:

- Due to change in management and name, X lost more than 15 million users in 2023, dropping 3.9% in users. In 2024, it has been projected to lose more than 18 million users, totaling more than 32 million users in 2 years (Clark 2022). With this loss, maintaining X as a vital communication channel can end up negatively impacting the Parr Center's communications.
- Overall, lack of community engagement can lead to unclear messaging within Parr Center's brand and what they stand for. This can also lead to insulation away from the UNC community in which they reside.

## Recommendations

### Short-term Recommendations:

- The Parr Center for Ethics should increase its social media output frequency for consistent engagement with audiences. On Instagram, daily posting would ensure a stronger relationship with students, featuring events like student experiences and behind-the-scenes activities. Instagram Stories can post interactive content, such as Q&A sessions or polls. In the same way, Facebook could be used to share personal stories, testimonials and any valuable resources that might interest students and faculty. Additionally, the X account may benefit from using trending hashtags related to ethics and higher education to enhance visibility. Engaging with similar organizations and retweeting relevant content will help increase the Parr Center's reach.

### Medium-term Recommendations:

- The Parr Center for Ethics should refine its content strategy to align with Gen Z's preferences. They should shift to shorter, more dynamic content on YouTube, showing event highlights, mini-podcasts and interviews. Incorporating bite-sized videos is more likely to catch the attention of a younger audience attracted to straightforward content. Posting content such as "ethical dilemmas of the week" could help generate conversation. On Instagram, hosting live events during key panels or workshops can boost engagement and enable real-time interaction with followers. Lastly, Parr Center's campaigns would benefit from increasing its engagement by tagging faculty members or related

organizations and reposting relevant content to amplify its visibility while encouraging ethical conversation on social platforms.

#### Long-term Recommendations:

- The Parr Center for Ethics should leverage structural changes to its digital presence and alumni relations. A significant opportunity awaits in strengthening its website by adding a dedicated “Giving” tab that may inspire donations and sponsorships to provide a sustainable financial future for the center, including tiered donation options linked to specific programs that may incentivize patrons at various levels. Another long-term recommendation would be strengthening alumni relations by promoting greater post-graduate involvement. This includes opportunities for alumni to stay in touch with the Parr Center’s mission, such as networking events or mentorship programs. Finally, having collaborations with outside organizations – like partnering with educational platforms or creating joint content like Ted-Ed videos - could further strengthen its visibility in the digital space.

Increasing social media engagement and tailoring content for Gen Z will reinforce the Parr Center’s online presence. At the same time, cultivating alumni relations and developing external partnerships will drive long-term growth. These strategies will improve visibility and secure the center’s future success.

## Appendix

### Brand Recognition Survey



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* NORTH CAROLINA  
*at* CHAPEL HILL

What is your first thought when you think of the word "ethics"?

Do you consider "ethics" to be an important topic?

☐ Definitely not

☐ Probably not

☐ Might or might not

☐ Probably yes

☐ Definitely yes

Do you consider yourself to be an ethical person?

☐ Definitely not

☐ Probably not

☐ Might or might not

☐ Probably yes

☐ Definitely yes

If UNC offered a center for ethics, would you be interested in learning more?

☐ No

☐ Maybe

☐ Yes

Have you ever heard of the Parr Ethics Center?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Would you be interested in attending any of these events:

<https://parrcenter.unc.edu/events/>

☐ No

☐ Maybe

☐ Yes

What year are you?

☐ Freshman

☐ Sophomore

☐ Junior

☐ Senior

☐ Grad Student

Brand Recognition Survey Results

Q1 - What is your first thought when you think of the word "ethics"?

What is your first thought when you think of the word "ethics"?

|                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Morals                                                         |
| Morals and laws that are universal                             |
| Morality; right or wrong                                       |
| morality                                                       |
| society's moral view of norms                                  |
| Media ethics                                                   |
| Morals                                                         |
| standards of right and wrong                                   |
| Morals                                                         |
| Honesty                                                        |
| Morality, how you treat others and how others should treat you |
| Rules, Customs, The right thing                                |
| Morality                                                       |
| Morals                                                         |
| morals                                                         |

Q2 - Do you consider "ethics" to be an important topic?



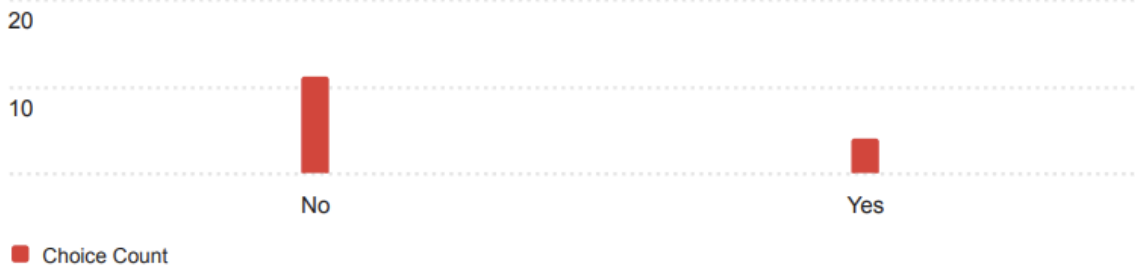


### Q3 - Do you consider yourself to be an ethical person?

Print



### Q5 - Have you ever heard of the Parr Ethics Center?



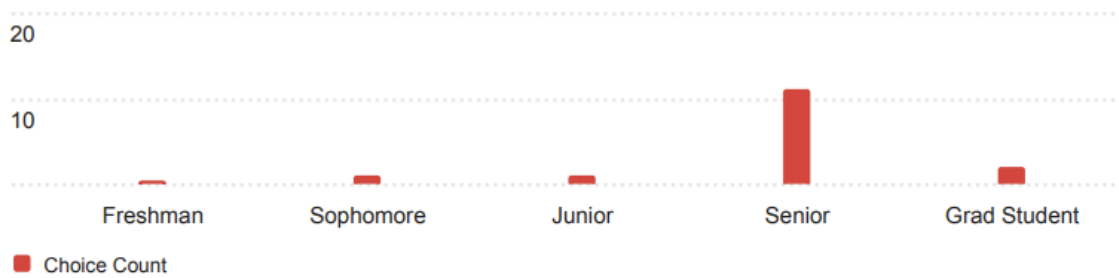
### Q6 - If UNC offered a center for ethics, would you be interested in learning more?



Q7 - Would you be interested in attending any of these events:  
<https://parrcenter.unc.edu/events/>



Q8 - What year are you?



## References

- Clark, Douglas. "Twitter Will Lose More than 32 Million Users Worldwide by 2024 amid Turmoil." *EMARKETER*, EMARKETER, 13 Dec. 2022, [www.emarketer.com/press-releases/twitter-will-lose-more-than-32-million-users-worldwide-by-2024-amid-turmoil/#:~:text=Following%20essentially%20flat%20growth%20in,tracking%20the%20company%20in%202008](https://www.emarketer.com/press-releases/twitter-will-lose-more-than-32-million-users-worldwide-by-2024-amid-turmoil/#:~:text=Following%20essentially%20flat%20growth%20in,tracking%20the%20company%20in%202008).
- "Qualtrics XM - Experience Management Software." *Qualtrics*, 15 Oct. 2024, [www.qualtrics.com/](https://www.qualtrics.com/).