Ethics Refresher Video Module Transcript

Narr1: Hi, I’m Dave.

Narr2: And I’m Janice.

Narr1: We both work in public higher education for the state of Georgia, just like you.

Narr2: We both want to welcome you to the University System of Georgia ethics refresher course.

Narr1: The content of this course will help you better understand certain aspects of your responsibilities as an employee. The scenarios are based on real situations you might encounter while at work.

Narr2: We will be referencing the Board of Regents policy throughout this video, pointing you to specific areas where you can get more information if you need it.

Narr1: The Board of Regents ethics policy can be found at http://www.usg.edu/audit/compliance/ethics

[FADE]

Narr2: Let’s look at our first scenario.

[SCENE: Two people are inside a classroom]

Phillip: Hey Tom, I just finished this room.

Tom: Looks great Phil. Thank you

Phillip: Thank you, thank you very much, thank you. I’m about to get started on the other one and that one will be done probably tomorrow. How about other rooms on this floor?

Tom: Well, I’m glad you mention that because I do need all those rooms painted as well.

Phillip: Next week?

Tom: I need them done by Monday.

Phillip: Oh, I don’t think I can do that. There is just too much on my plate.

Tom: We’ve got to get these rooms done.
Phillip: But I do know about a company that might be able to help you out. Are you interested? They are reasonable.

Tom: If they do a good job, I would. Yeah

Phillip: Let me see if I have a card. Yeah, this is it.

Tom: All right, great. I'll give them a call. We have got to get these rooms done over the weekend. Thank you.

Phillip: All right.

[FADE]

[SCREEN TEXT: Monday morning]

Phillip: Hey Tom.

Tom: Hey Phillip, what’s up?

Phillip: I’d like to take a sick day today.

Tom: You’re not feeling well?

Phillip: I’m feeling fine, but I’d like to finish the job I couldn’t finish this weekend, the painting job on this floor.

Tom: Don’t we have Great Paint doing that?

Phillip: Yeah, yeah. And I kind of work for them in my free time so, I’d like to finish the work today.

Tom: Phillip, you can’t take a sick day unless you’re sick.

Phillip: Okay. Fair. So how about I take a vacation day?

Tom: Now, that’s really not the point Phillip. We’re already paying you to do this same kind of work. You can’t be doing this.

[FADE]

Narr2: Phillip shouldn’t have called in sick since he wasn’t sick. And he shouldn’t have worked a job as a contractor if he is already paid to do that job. Please check the Board of Regent’s Policy regarding situations that sick leave can be granted for.

Narr1: Ok. Let’s look at another scenario.
[FADE]

[SCENE: Office]
[Knock, knock…]]

Art: Hi. Can I help you?

Alex: Hi, I’m Alex Smith with SportBuilt. Do you have time to take a look at our new line of soccer uniforms?

Art: Sure. Take a seat.

Alex: Great. We have a new line of soccer uniforms this year that we think you’ll really like.

Art: Well, we don’t really need uniforms this year. Our uniforms are in great shape and the uniforms we bought from you guys a few years before, these didn’t last very well.

Alex: Are you sure? The quality of these uniforms is really much better than it used to be. But if you buy for your team this year, we’ll provide free jerseys for you, your staff, your wife, your kids, the parents of the players. Buy it from us, we’ll take care of you.

Narr2: As a state employee, you should not accept offers of gifts, money, trips, or other goods. These things might influence your decision, or just as importantly, be perceived to influence your decision in choosing a vendor. However, there are some exceptions. Please check the Board of Regents Ethics Policy to find out more about which items are excluded.

[FADE]

Narr2: Let’s explore the topic of travel.

Narr1: For researchers and scholars, attending and presenting at conferences is an important part of your job. But travel can raise ethical dilemmas.

[SCENE: Man in Office]

Dr. Horne: (on the phone in his office) Hey Anette I can’t wait to see you and the family next weekend. I’m so glad the conference is being held in Seattle this year so I can see you guys. [Pause] Oh, no worries, I’m just going to stay in the hotel after the conference ends – the
university will pay for it. So you guys don’t even have to get the guest room ready for me.

[SCREEN TEXT: After the conference]

Dr. Harmon: (Appears in the doorway of Horne’s office) Hey Joe, I got your expense report for the conference. Didn’t the conference end on Friday morning?

Dr. Horne: Um, well, yeah, it did – but I stayed over to visit my sister. So that’s why the extra Friday and Saturday night is on the expense report.

Dr. Harmon: You can’t be reimbursed for those nights at the hotel. If I turn in this report with those nights on it, we’d be violating the ethics policy.

Dr. Horne: Oh, I didn’t think it would be a big deal – the hotel had a lower weekend rate.

Dr. Harmon: Violating the ethics policy is always a big deal. Please submit a revised report.

Narr2: When you travel for your institution, it’s important that your purpose for traveling clearly benefits your institution and job responsibilities. It is unethical to seek reimbursement for personal expenses.

Narr1: And if you approve travel for others, it is your responsibility to make sure that their travel and expense report is legitimate. As the approval authority, you are subject to audit by the state if travel funds appear to be dishonest. As a state entity, the employees of the University System are required to abide by the State Accounting Office of Georgia’s travel regulations. Now let’s talk a little bit more about money.

Narr2: Sounds good.

[SCENE: Cynthia’s Office]

Narr1: Cynthia works as a Business Manager for the Psychology department. She helps manage the petty cash for the student psychology group. It’s never a lot of money, but there’s usually around $100 in petty cash. [We see Cynthia taking some bills from a student, opening a cash box and putting the money inside the cash box and updating the register.]
Narr2: According to the policy, USG employees should ‘act as good stewards of the resources and information entrusted to our care.’ And this means that USG property is intended for use in support of the USG mission and legitimate public purposes.’

Narr1: What’s next?

Narr2: How about a conflict of interest?

[SCENE: Henry’s Office]

Narr2: Henry works at the university in the IT department. Unknown to his colleagues at the university, Henry also works part-time as a consultant with MobileSocial, an IT consulting company that specializes in developing mobile social apps for universities. Right now, Henry is updating a web page for his company while on the job at the university. [On the screen, we see a web page for the company with a picture of Henry featured prominently on the page with his bio. Henry is actually editing the page while on campus, doing work for another company while on his job at the university]

Narr1: Valerie also works in the IT department at the university, and she manages Henry and has tasked him with hiring an outside firm to help them develop some social apps.

Valerie: (speaking to Henry in his office) Henry, have you lined up the consultants? When are they coming in to do the work?

Henry: Yes, MobileSocial will be here on Monday.

Valerie: I hope we made a good choice with this group.

Henry: You know, I hear they do really work.

Valerie: Let’s hope so, because they certainly aren’t cheap.

Henry: Yeah. But you know, you get what you pay for!

[FADE]

[SCREEN WORDS: 2 weeks later…]
Valerie: (in her office she is looking at the SocialMobile site and discovers the page with Henry’s photo. Her mouth drops open and she shakes her head…she picks up the phone and makes a call…)

Narr2: The BOR Ethics policy clearly states that USG employees should ‘disclose and avoid improper conflicts of interest.’ Make sure you clear any outside consulting work with you manager, no matter what the circumstances.

Narr1: Should we talk a little about ethical issues related to the technology we use while we’re at work?

Narr2: Absolutely. For many of us, collecting, managing, and using sensitive personal information is a big part of our job. The BOR ethics policy and several state laws require that we carefully protect sensitive data.

Narr1: While we often associate information protection with information systems on our computer, it’s just as important to protect information on paper.

Narr2: Let’s consider this scenario to learn more.

[FADE]

[SCENE: Cassie’s Office]

Narr1: Cassie is Director of Enrollment Services. She oversees a large department who comes into contact with a lot of sensitive data. Matt is a manager who often makes large purchases with Cassie’s p-card.

Matt: Hey Cassie, can I borrow your p-card? I need to order those new machines for the registration system and my p-card limit isn’t high enough.

Cassie: Sure, here you go (she takes out the p-card and hands it to Matt). Make sure you send me the receipt.

Matt: You got it. Thanks.

Matt: (back at his desk, ready to place the order – thinks to himself via voice over). You know, I could just write down the number, expiration date and security code, and then I wouldn’t have to bother Cassie every time I need to make a big purchase. [Matt writes the numbers down on a piece of paper.]
Narr2: And you should never record and store other peoples’ full credit card information for later use. In addition, it’s against policy to let someone else use your p-card. So Cassie should not have given her employee her p-card. Instead, she should have used her p-card to make the purchase – not her employee.

Narr1: There are other important guidelines around handling information such as social security and credit card numbers that must be observed in order to comply with federal and state laws. When you handle this kind of information, it’s your responsibility to know the guidelines and to seek assistance from your local information security experts if you have questions.

Narr2: Let’s look at another information security issue.

[FADE]

[SCENE: Cody’s Office]

Narr1: Cody is a database administrator who handles student data. Linda is his coworker.

Cody: (working at his desk) Hey Linda.

Linda: (from the other side of the cubicle wall) What?

Cody: Come check out this game I downloaded.

Linda: What’s going on?

Cody: Remember this game Night of Hunters I was telling you about? Well, I just downloaded it from this foreign site.

[Window pops up saying “This site contains information that may harm your computer. Do you want to continue? Cody clicks “Yes”]

Linda: Should you be doing that? Isn’t your machine is connected to all kinds of student data?

Cody: Well, it’s okay. I’ve got this anti-virus program.

Linda: Eh..

[FADE]
Narr1: The BOR policy is very clear about downloading personal software on your work machines.

Narr2: And playing games at work is definitely against policy.

Narr1: Everyone should be mindful of visiting web sites that might contain spyware or other malware that could harm your computer or put sensitive and confidential information at risk.

Narr2: We hope you learned more about the Board of Regents ethics policy in the video, and how to incorporate these ethical principles in your work. If you have questions or concerns about ethics, contact an HR representative in your organization (Screen text: Contact your institution’s Human Resources Department)

[FADE]

Narr2: You’re ready to take the quiz.

Narr1: So, just click the ‘Quiz’ link to start. You’ll also need to click “I Agree” in the agreement section, indicating you agree to abide by the BOR Ethics policy.