



Keough School Case Study Series: Criteria for Evaluating Student-Authored Cases

Has the student chosen a **known organization** as the subject of the case?

Has the student used (and properly cited) **reputable published sources**?

Does the case focus on a **nuanced issue** that lends itself to analysis/discussion?

Does the case feature a **principal protagonist**? With interviewed subjects, has the student submitted relevant **waivers**?

Are there any known **ethical issues** regarding the organization/protagonist? If so, is an explanation included in the submission package?

Does the case contain the **required elements**, including sufficient **background information** and a separate **Teaching Notes** document?

Does the case adhere to the **Submission Guidelines**?

1. The case focuses on a known organization for which there is verifiable published/publicly available information. Source material can include peer-reviewed literature and other published sources such as news stories, credible blogs, etc; the organization's website, publications, and social media channels; interviews with the main actors; programmatic, organizational, institutional documentation; and other relevant data.
2. The case focuses on a nuanced issue/challenging situation that an organization and/or an individual at that organization is facing. The case is not a PR document or a list of facts; it must be able to foster critical analysis and generate robust debate in class.
3. The case features a principal protagonist and/or other key actors with intimate knowledge of the issue/organization who have agreed to be interviewed. (If so, relevant waivers must be submitted along with the case). Alternatively, quotes from key actors may be taken from reputable published sources.
4. There are no known ethical issues associated with the individual(s)/organization, unless that is the focus of the case, in which case the student must consult with his/her faculty advisor.
5. The case includes the following elements:
 - a) **A Synopsis:** Briefly summarizes (in one paragraph) the relevant information: background, main challenges, key points.
 - b) **Intro/Overview section:** Introduces the protagonist(s)/other actors, briefly describes the problem/dilemma, and touches upon some of the challenges/opportunities.
 - c) **The Protagonist(s):** Focuses on one or more actors (such as the creator(s) of a program/project or initiators of an intervention, a recipient of the program/project/intervention, the founders/leaders of an organization/institution, etc) and provides insight into their situation.

- d) **The Past/Background:** Provides readers with the background information they need to round out their knowledge of the topic of the brief. Can include info on the protagonist's organization, locality, country, as well as any other subject-matter/historical info.
- e) **The Problem:** The issue/dilemma the protagonist/organization/institution/locality/country faced, the challenges/opportunities, etc. Note: Problems can span the spectrum from more immediate, local conundrums to complex institutional change to longer-term regional/national policymaking initiatives. They also frequently involve antagonists or other opponents.

6. In addition, the case also includes a separate Teaching Notes document, developed with significant input from the faculty advisor. The Teaching Notes include teaching/learning objectives, a synopsis/summary of the case, suggested class assignments/activities (optional), and list of supplemental materials such as additional readings, videos, etc (optional).

7. Finally, the case adheres to the Submission Guidelines.