TEACHING EVALUATION

Ethics

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

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CONTEXT

- Students in the Plymouth State University Doctor of Education Program participate in a cohort through 8 required core courses.
- The first course, Emerging Perspectives on Learning and Development, runs immediately before the Program Evaluation course, which is the second core course.
- For both courses, all readings and some writing assignments are pre-assigned, and essential questions are provided to guide readings and writing.
- The most significant assignment completed during the course is the development of a full Program Evaluation Proposal for a local agency. We have worked with our local shelter and will begin working with the more regional United Way in the coming year.

CONTEXT

- Students come to my Program Evaluation course with limited or no direct understanding of Program Evaluation as a profession.
- They come having had an intense introduction to working as a learning community during their first course.
- The 3rd course in the core sequence is Ethics and Advocacy, so the theme of ethics continues beyond this course.

FOUNDATIONS

- One of the primary texts is Michael Morris' book, *Evaluation Ethics for Best Practice: Cases and Commentaries* (2008) Guilford Press.
- Ethical principles in general, and the "Guiding Principles for Evaluators" as well as "The Program Evaluation Standards" are part of the core content of the course.
- All students must obtain the certificate of completion after taking the NIH online course and becoming familiar with all of the material and forms on the university's IRB website.

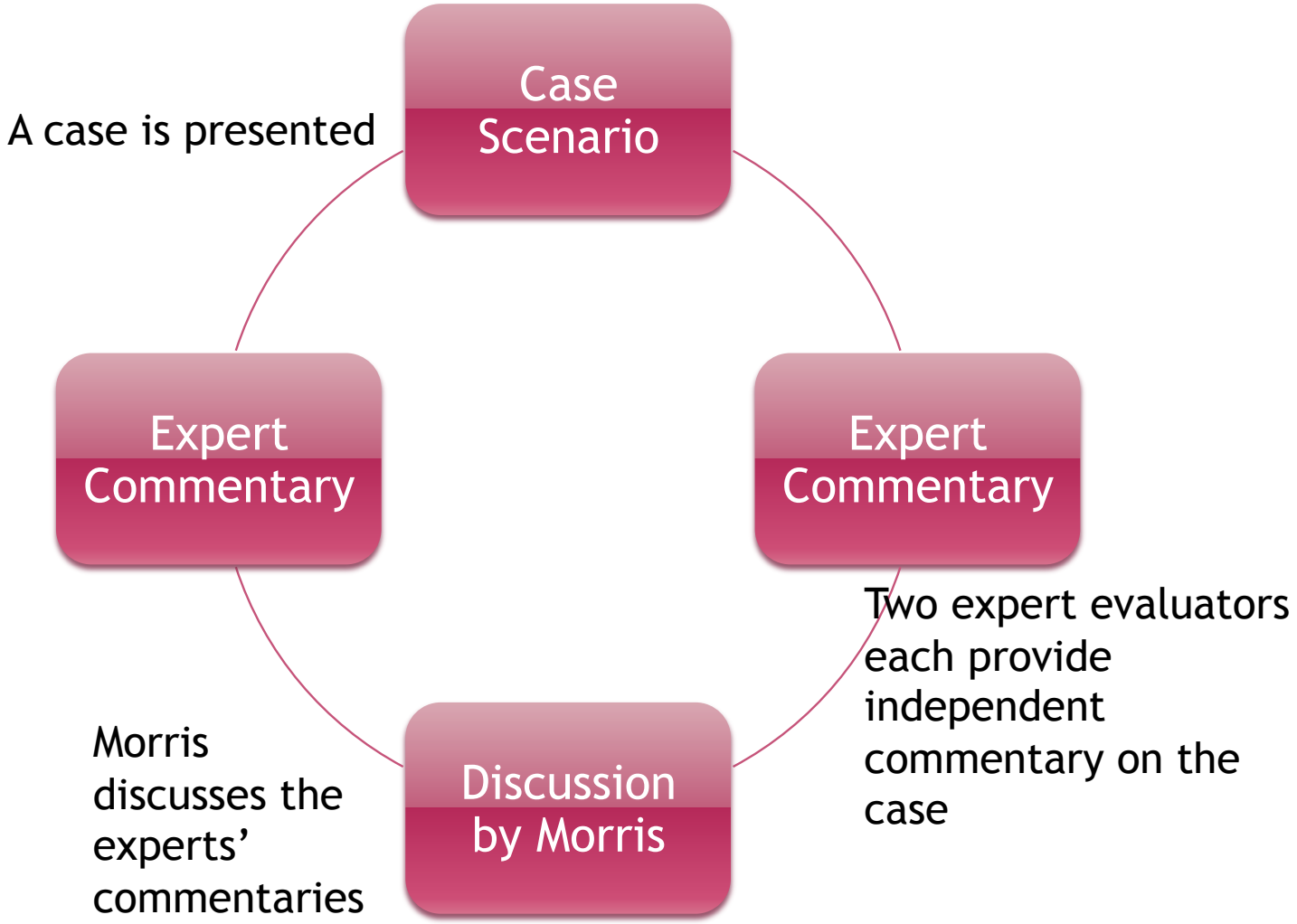
FOUNDATIONS

- “Professional codes for evaluators, such as the Guiding Principles for Evaluators, are specific applications of more basic ethical principles, and research on evaluation ethics… can enhance our understanding of the arenas where ethical guidance is most urgently needed.” Morris, p. 2

USING MORRIS

- Essential Question: What would you do if you encountered an ethical problem in your work as a program evaluator?
- "…the challenge of doing the right thing does not present itself in the abstract but rather in the concrete circumstances of specific evaluations." Morris, p. v (Preface)
- The book is built around 6 case scenarios, commentary and discussion. Each case represents one of the six major stages in the evaluation process.

TEXT USE AND ASSIGNMENTS



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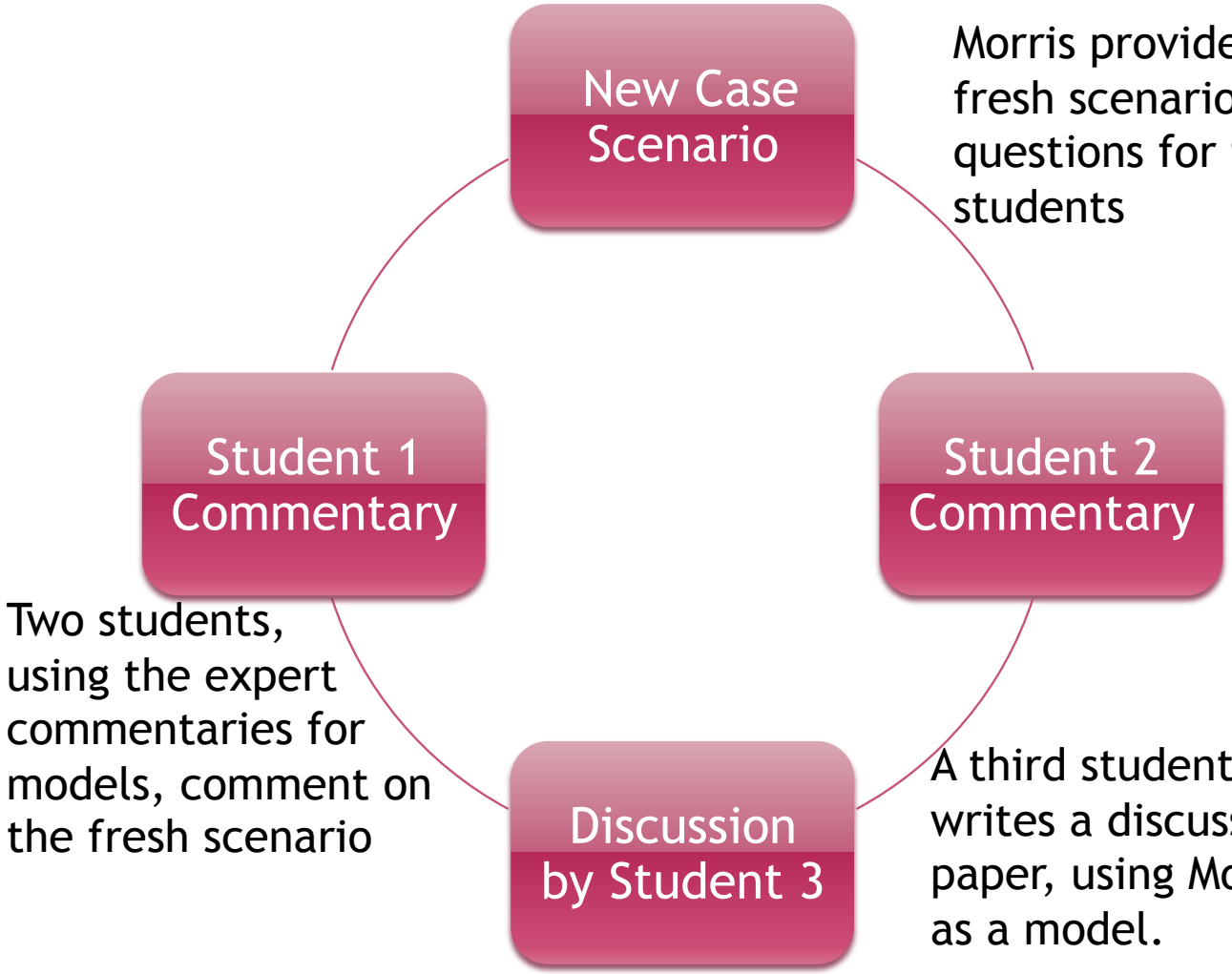

Morris provides a fresh scenario and questions for the students

Two students, using the expert commentaries for models, comment on the fresh scenario

A third student writes a discussion paper, using Morris as a model.

EVALUATION

- The case scenarios provide students with a combination of both the major phases of an evaluation project and ethical dilemmas that might arise during each phase.
- The expert commentaries and discussion provide excellent models for the students as they craft their own writing.
- The students deepen their collaboration by commenting on the same scenarios, discussing other students' work, and then discussing in class all of the scenarios, the experts' work, and their writing.

THANK YOU!

Contact me anytime:

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