

# Bloomsburg University Summer Assignment Reading

## Good Work at Bloomsburg University

We at Bloomsburg University strive to do Good Work in and out of the classroom. An easy way to remember what it means to do Good Work is to think of the “three E’s”: excellent, ethical, and engaged. In the reading that follows, we define each of these terms.

### Excellent

Can you think of someone who has achieved **excellent** work? We have found that students sometimes have misconceptions about what it means to do excellent work. When asked to define excellence, they often talk about trying their best or working hard. While it is certainly true that excellence requires sustained effort and hard work, trying your best does not guarantee excellence. Perhaps you can even think about a time when you tried your hardest but did not achieve excellence. For example, you might try really hard to be an excellent soccer player, but you are unable to make the soccer team. Or you might try your best to be an excellent musician, but you fail your audition.

Achieving excellence requires more than just trying your best. Bloomsburg University’s website notes that “We are Huskies. At Bloomsburg University, being a Husky is about **striving to be the best** ... in the classroom, in your community and in your career.” Notice, it doesn’t say that we strive to *try* our best – it says we strive to *be the best*. Now more than ever, given our country’s underperforming job market and the recovering state of the economy, it is important to be *the best* in your field. To be clear, we are not saying that you need to be the best at *everything*. Nobody is. But your years of undergraduate study should help you identify at least *one* thing in which you can demonstrate truly *excellent* work.

### Ethical

To do Good Work, you must not only demonstrate excellence, but also act ethically. Do you know what it means to be **ethical**? We have found that students sometimes struggle to define this concept. To be ethical means to be socially responsible. In other words, it means putting the good of others above the gains of the self. Can you think of someone who demonstrates ethical behavior? When asked to give examples of ethical work, sometimes students say staying home to study instead of partying, or going to class instead of sleeping in. While these behaviors demonstrate good personal choices, do you see how they don’t meet the definition of ethical?

As Bloomsburg University students you will be held to high standards of ethics in your academic work – perhaps higher than you may have experienced in high school. Have you heard of the term **academic integrity**? All universities have policies regarding academic integrity in order to build a community of trust among their members. Bloomsburg University’s policy states, in part, the following: “Academic integrity refers to the adherence to agreed upon moral and ethical principles when engaging in academic or scholarly pursuits. Our policy is part of an effort to nurture a community where trust, honesty, and **personal integrity** guide all of our dealings with one another. Personal integrity is vital to our pursuit of educating and becoming educated. This student academic integrity policy is only part of, not the entirety of, efforts to foster a **community of trust**; trust is built first on our actions toward each other. The responsibility to be honest, fair and forthright **with others** is a responsibility that each member of the Bloomsburg University community must accept.”

Having opted in to our community, opting out of our policies is not an option. Realize that with every action you take, you have a choice to betray or uphold our community of trust. If you are not sure if you are upholding your ethical responsibilities, ask yourself, “If everyone acted this way, what would become of this community?” If your answer is, “This community would thrive,” then you are behaving ethically.

## **Engaged**

To do Good Work, your work must not only be excellent and ethical but also **engaged**. A good way to think about this “third E” is to consider people who find purpose in their work or feel fulfilled in what they do. Can you think of people who find purpose and fulfillment in their work? When asked to define what it means to do engaged work at Bloomsburg University, students sometimes talk about participating in class or joining organizations on campus. These behaviors would only exemplify engaged work if the person found purpose and fulfillment in doing those things. Think about students who go to every class, participate in every class discussion, are members of several organizations on campus, but are just doing these things for the sake of getting good grades or adding another line to their resumes. If they do not feel fulfilled by the work they do, then they are not demonstrating engaged work. By trying out a variety of activities, we hope that you will find activities that lead to a sense of fulfillment.

Now think about students who have aspirations, or dreams, but do not know where to start or what activities will bring them closer to fulfilling those dreams. They are not demonstrating engaged work either. To show engaged work, you must not only have a dream; you must also pursue activities that turn your dreams into reality. Do you know someone like this? Bloomsburg University chooses a few students each year to highlight on its website. These students are people of purpose. In the videos, students talk about their dreams, which are typically their professional goals. They also talk about activities they are pursuing at Bloomsburg University to make their dreams a reality. For example, [Maryam Cristillo](#), a dual major in Art Studio and Anthropology, speaks of her love of culture and art, her transformational trip to an Egyptian excavation site, and her desire to address ethnic discrimination through paintings, sculptures, and digital designs. [Eric Bisong](#), an international student from Africa, originally came to Bloomsburg University to study nursing. Upon further reflection on his professional dreams, he recognized that justice in his homeland was inadequate, inequitable, and something that he could address if he learned more about how to work toward the creation of a just society. Eric switched his major to Criminal Justice and he became the northeastern president of the National African Student Association. As a motivational speaker and role model, he seeks to empower African youth to gain leadership skills in order to contribute to the development of their continent. Clearly, these students are role models of engaged work. But note also how they demonstrate ethics in their work by seeking to contribute to something beyond themselves in the process.

## **One final point**

As you think about what it means to do Good Work as a student at Bloomsburg University, keep in mind that all three E’s must be present for Good Work to be achieved. George Bernard Shaw, an Irish playwright, wrote, “The most tragic thing in the world is a [person] of genius who is not a [person] of honor.” If a person is excellent and engaged in their work but is not ethical, they cannot achieve Good Work. Some of you might be thinking, “Good Work sounds hard!” It is. It takes self-reflection, sustained effort, and at times personal sacrifice. Let the three E’s of Good Work guide your actions as you enter your first year at Bloomsburg University so that you can do work that you can be proud of now and in the years to come.