What is ethics?
- applied or professional ethics
- “What is right or wrong to do in this particular situation?” \(^1\)
- “How do we determine appropriate and inappropriate behaviors?” \(^1\)

Ethics: Determining Right v. Wrong
- Rule Compliance Test
- “Gut Feeling” Test
- Role Model Test
- Exposure Test
Ethics: Determining Right v. Wrong

- Rule Compliance Test
  - UC Standards of Conduct
  - Research integrity policies
  - Academic integrity policies
  - Sexual harassment policies

What other policies/codes/regulations do you have to follow?

Ethics: Determining Right v. Wrong

- "Gut Feeling" Test
  - Do I sense that what I’m doing might be wrong?
  - Will I experience some shame over my action?
  - Am I hoping that nobody finds out?
Ethics: Determining Right v. Wrong

- Role Model Test
  - What would the most ethical person I know say about this behavior?
  - What would the local ethics officer say about this behavior?
  - What would my clergy think?

- Exposure Test
  - Would I still do the behavior if...
    - my supervisor was standing there watching me?
    - my UC colleagues knew?
    - my non-UC colleagues knew?
    - it was published on the University website?
    - it was published on the front page of the city newspaper?

Determining Right vs. Wrong: Case Studies
Why ethics? (and not just compliance)

- Problems and challenges today are not black and white
- Complex ethical dilemmas created by:
  - Diverse work environments & global work tasks
    - Lead to conflicting interests, priorities and values
  - Multiple policies and codes
    - Cause confusion and rule overload

For example....

- UC researchers collaborating with Chinese researchers fail to follow human subjects protocols when conducting research in China
- Staff member keeps silent on workplace bullying because the UC ethical value of "excellence" privileges the department's award-winning productivity
- Students help each other cheat because they value loyalty to each other over truthfulness to the institution

Ethics: Determining Rights v. Rights

- Ethics is not a state of being - it is an action
- It is not only an action to determine right versus wrong
- But right versus right
- Sometimes the "wrong" is difficult to discern and "rights" conflict
- So individuals need to make decisions
Ethics: Determining Rights v. Rights

- **Deontological**
  - What do the rules, norms or maxims say I should do?
  - But what if they are not aligned?

- **Utilitarianism**
  - What are the effects or consequences of my decision?
  - But what if they conflict?

- **Virtues**
  - What actions would be aligned with my values or valued virtues?
  - But what if my values conflict with the values of my profession or my community?

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Ethical Decision-Making: Case Study

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Ethical Decision-Making Model: Step 1

Determine if the situation being faced has an ethical dimension to it.

- Right vs. Wrong Tests
- Right vs. Right Tests
Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 2

Consider all of the possible alternatives for resolving this situation.

- Brainstorm
- Consult with as many as you can

Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 3

Determine which of the above choices for action, may be possible “right” choices based on:

- values that might be undermined or upheld
- consequences (positive and negative) that might result and who they might impact.
- rules, standards, codes of ethics, integrity policies, or other guidelines that might be violated or upheld

Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 4

Discuss the possible “right” choices for action with those who may be affected by your decision.

- What do they think of the “right” action choices you have narrowed down to?
- Are there still other “right” choices they think you should consider?
Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 5
Choose one “right” course of action
- In general, the “right” action should be something that results in more good than harm, upholds fundamental values and is in accordance with established and agreed upon standards.

Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 6
Consider obstacles to choosing the “right” action
- What frustrations, challenges, or obstacles might you experience in choosing the “right” action?
- Consider if there are any ways to mitigate the consequences (for yourself or others)

Ethical Decision-Making Model:
Step 7
Enhance your motivation for acting ethically
- Consider what reasons/motivations you have for choosing the right action despite the frustrations, challenges, or obstacles
- Be prepared to accept the consequences (good and bad) with the choice
Summary

- Making ethical decisions is a learned and practiced behavior
- Educational institutions should teach the practice
- A simple model is a more robust approach than any single criteria

Bibliography


