

**DANIELS FUND**  
**ETHICS INITIATIVE**  
**Collegiate Program**

**Nursing Ethics, Medical  
Bioethics, and the DFEI  
Principles: Comparison  
and Incorporation into  
Nursing Education**

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# Teaching Ethics to Nurses - Students

- *“Yet nursing graduates still lack adequate skills to be morally accountable practitioners. This creates a dilemma for the educator to find ways to integrate more ethics content into an already crowded curriculum” (Weber, 1992)*

# Teaching Ethics to Nurses – Students WHY?

- *“There is no doubt that nurses are continuing to rise to the challenges of caring in this pandemic, but questions surround their ethics education and preparedness to be able to deal with public health emergencies on this scale.” (Turale, Meechamnan, & Kunaviktikul, 2020)*

# Teaching Ethics to Nurses – Faculty WHY?

- Most faculty will tell you that ethical principles are threaded throughout the curriculum, but it is not discussed in depth.
- *“Participants indicated that marginalization of ethics content in nursing curriculum occurs because it is considered less important; therefore, it is pushed aside to make room for more core nursing content.... One participant stated, “It does take an effort on everyone's part to integrate it [ethics] to keep the quality...[and] application of ethical decision-making”.” (Grason, 2020)*

# What to do?

- Recommendations include:
  - Inclusion of the ANA Code of Ethics at every level of education, adding more depth of critical thinking
  - Preparing undergraduate nurses to respond appropriately to ethical issues
    - *Toolkits*
    - *Responses*
  - Deep discussion of actual ethical cases at the graduate levels.

# Need for Education



|                                      | <b>Consequentialist</b>   | <b>Duty</b>   | <b>Virtue</b>  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b>Deliberative process</b>          | What kind of outcomes should I produce (or try to produce)?   | What are my obligations in this situation, and what are the things I should never do?         | What kind of person should I be (or try to be), and what will my actions show about my character?                                |
| <b>Focus</b>                         | Directs attention to the future effects of an action, for all people who will be directly or indirectly affected by the action. | Directs attention to the duties that exist prior to the situation and determines obligations. | Attempts to discern character traits (virtues and vices) that are, or could be, motivating the people involved in the situation. |
| <b>Definition of Ethical Conduct</b> | Ethical conduct is the action that will achieve the best consequences.  | Ethical conduct involves always doing the right thing: never failing to do one's duty.        | Ethical conduct is whatever a fully virtuous person would do in the circumstances.   |
| <b>Motivation</b>                    | Aim is to produce the most good.  | Aim is to perform the right action.   | Aim is to develop one's character.   |

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/science-and-technology-studies/framework-making-ethical-decisions>

# One possible Framework

- **Recognize the Ethical Issue**
- **Consider all Stakeholders**
- **Gather Relevant Information**
- **Consider Alternatives**
- **Formulate Actions**
- **Decide and Reflect**
- **Act**
- **Reflect Again**





# ANA Code of Ethics

- 9 Provisions guiding the professional ethics every nurse must follow for ethical analysis and decision-making.
- Non-negotiable
- Understanding of nursing's contract with society
- First Code established by the ANA in 1950 last revision in 2015
- The Code never specifies the philosophical underpinnings, nor does it describe underlying principles, but it describes duties and obligations (deontological) of the nurse





# DFEI Principles

- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Fairness
- Respect
- Rule of Law
- Viability



# How do they Line Up?

| DFEI Principles | ANA  | Medical Bioethics |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|
| Integrity       | Integrity of Profession  | Beneficence       |
| Trust           | Maintains ethical environment  | Beneficence       |
| Accountability  | Commitment to patients and society;<br>Collaboration with other HCPs | Non-Maleficence   |
| Transparency    | Articulates nursing values   | Autonomy          |
| Fairness        | Social justice   | Justice           |
| Respect         | Respect for dignity of all humans;<br>Compassion                     | Autonomy          |
| Rule of Law     | Generation of policy through scholarly inquiry and research          | Non-maleficence   |
| Viability       | Professional Standard Development                                    |                   |

# Teaching Ethics to Graduate Nurses

- DNP students
- NURS 7200 – Leadership and Organizational Systems
- Numbers
  - Fall 2020 – 10 students
  - Spring 2020 – Projected 10-15
- 2 weeks of content



# Dedicated 2-week Course Content for Ethical Leadership

- Instructor lectures on different ethical principles as shown above
- Live discussion session via Zoom
- Readings and videos of cases
- Asynchronous discussions of actual cases
- Writing assignment – Expository Essay arguing for the necessity (or not) of ethical leadership using principles learned



# What do I hope to achieve?

- Knowledge of ethical principles, comparing the 3 different philosophies
- Ability to respond to ethical issues encountered in their current and future workplaces
- Ability to argue for ethical leadership, and to know why they are taking this position
- Convey these principles to other healthcare providers



# Case #1





# Case #2







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