#APPE2026

2026 APPE & CONFERENCE

THE 35TH ANNUAL APPE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

March 5-8, 2026
St. Louis

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Fact-Checking Under Constraint: Toward a Contextual Ethic of Verification and Falsification in the Global South

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Zainuddin Muda Zainuddin Monggilo (The University of Alabama)

Fact-checking is vital in addressing misinformation, but its ethical complexities are underexplored, especially outside Western contexts. Existing frameworks often focus on accuracy and impartiality, overlooking how local constraints and knowledge gaps shape ethical responsibility in the Global South. This article outlines a contextual ethic for fact-checking, emphasizing public responsibility. Using a qualitative purposive literature review from 2015 to 2025, this study examines how fact-checkers manage ethical duties amid political pressure, limited data, and platform control. When full verification is blocked, it argues, falsification can be a valid way to reduce harm.
It also addresses what counts as truth in fact-checking, recommending a correspondence approach balanced with humility and awareness of knowledge injustice. Ethical responsibility, it argues, includes widely disseminating corrective information, especially when misinformation spreads through informal or encrypted networks. The article proposes a framework based on four obligations: protected independence, balanced verification and falsification, context-aware truth-seeking, and broad dissemination. By situating these ethics within unequal information environments, this shows why context matters for public trust, harm reduction, and democracy, particularly where misinformation is most damaging.

News Media Potentialities for Virtuous Maturation and Conation

Thursday, 5th March - 14:30: 1A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Patrick Plaisance (Pennsylvania State University)

Much psychology scholarship focused on moral reasoning has moved beyond the Kohlberg-based moral schema model and suggests a more complex constellation of factors that affect moral judgment. The "moral capacities" model developed by Sean Hannah and colleagues, widely incorporated in business ethics and organizational psychology research, seeks to explain both moral cognition and moral conation, or the impetus to act. This project suggests how a moral-capacities approach can augment media ethics scholarship on the dynamic of values and morally relevant media content. It outlines the value in considering possible interactions between journalistic content that features virtue-driven narratives and its role in a moral-capacities framework. Specifically, this project proposes the value in applying a capacities approach to explore how exposure to journalistic narratives may positively cultivate virtues, such as curiosity, humility, resilience, and civility.

Bridging the Gap: AI, Ethics, and Engineering Education

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1B (Grand B) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Bryn Seabrook (University of Virginia)

Since 2022, artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed education, not least within engineering curricula. As AI technologies increasingly permeate the workforce, understanding their implications for teaching practices is essential for developing ethically responsible engineers. This topic is crucial for professional and applied ethics, as it highlights the need to align technical skills with ethical considerations, ensuring that future engineers can navigate the complexities of AI in their professions.

Building on previous research, including studies from MIT that reveal cognitive debt associated with AI use in writing tasks, this work underscores the values conflict between industry expectations and educational preparedness. The Cengage Group's 2025 Graduate Employability Report further illustrates the gap in AI skill acquisition, noting that only 51% of graduates feel ready for the job market, despite projections of 78 million new AI-related jobs by 2030.

This paper seeks to understand the ethical responsibilities engineering educators have toward students facing these AI-related challenges. Through qualitative and quantitative analyses, this project will illustrate how educators perceive the role of AI tools in supporting higher-order thinking skills. I will provide examples of both challenges and successes reported by educators, emphasizing the ethical implications of integrating AI into curricula. My findings aim to inform pedagogical strategies that not only enhance technical competencies but also cultivate the character and virtues necessary for responsible engineering practices in a rapidly evolving landscape.

Virtue and Hope in an Age of Ignorance

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Katherine Johnson (Bellarmine University)

In *Uneasy Virtue*, Julia Driver challenges the Aristotelian claim that virtue requires knowledge, proposing instead that a distinct category of virtues, what she terms "virtues of ignorance," demonstrates a separation between epistemic awareness and moral excellence. These virtues are characterized by an epistemic defect, specifically a lack of factual knowledge. Driver argues that certain virtuous behaviors not only tolerate ignorance but, in some cases, require it. Examples such as modesty, blind charity, impulsive courage, a form of forgiveness, and trust serve to illustrate her claim.

What is striking in Driver's account is her treatment of ignorance. We praise virtuous behavior because we assume it reflects moral insight or excellence. Driver's contention that some virtues do not depend on knowledge is compelling, yet her account remains incomplete due to the ambiguity surrounding the nature of the ignorance involved.

I propose that hope serves as a paradigmatic example of a genuine virtue of ignorance, offering a more precise lens through which to understand the epistemic dimensions of virtue. Hope involves a kind of not-knowing, yet requires a connection to and separation from knowledge. Hope is a model for clarifying the nature of virtues of ignorance and our the relationship between epistemic states and moral character.

Hope arises in the face of uncertainty, a specific kind of ignorance, a kind of informed not-knowing. Socrates, in Plato's *Apology*, famously claimed that wisdom lies in recognizing one's ignorance. This kind of self-knowledge is central to hope. Alan Drengson argues this kind of self-knowledge is "knowledge of oneself as an agent." The hopeful person knows what they don't know and chooses to believe in possibility anyway. Hope is a response to the limits of agency and knowledge. It requires confronting uncertainty, not avoiding it.

I propose that the recognition of ignorance is a virtue. Nicholas of Cusa called it "learned ignorance," the more we understand our unknowing, the more truly we learn. In this way, hope is the manifestation of practical wisdom: it is grounded in self-awareness and thrives in uncertainty, freeing us from the illusion of knowing and allowing us to act meaningfully despite it.

Tradition, Moral Responsibility, and Courage in a Fragmented Age

Thursday, 5th March - 14:30: 1C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Timothy O'Donnell (Ivy Tech Community College)

What Do We Owe Each Other? examines the ethical responsibilities that bind people together in a rapidly changing world. Drawing on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Zygmunt Bauman, and Mary Eberstadt, the paper argues that authentic moral obligation cannot rest solely on individual preference or bureaucratic rule. Still, it must be grounded in living traditions of virtue and shared narratives.

MacIntyre provides the philosophical foundation, contending that moral reasoning is tradition-constituted and that virtues such as justice, courage, and charity can only be learned within communities that pursue a common good. Bauman offers a sociological complement, describing how "liquid modernity" dissolves stable institutions and long-term commitments, rendering duty provisional and fragile. Eberstadt highlights the family as the first and most vital school of love, where intergenerational care and sacrificial responsibility are first encountered and passed on.

The paper applies these insights to contemporary crises. A case study of the COVID-19 pandemic explores how obligations of care and solidarity deepen in times of catastrophe, challenging cultures that prize unfettered choice. Another case study analyzes debates over gender ideology, where MacIntyre's teleological ethics, Bauman's critique of fluid identity, and Eberstadt's defense of family converge to illuminate the duties of truth-telling and compassionate accompaniment.

Finally, the paper argues that standing up for the good—whether in high-stakes global emergencies or in the seemingly mundane choices of daily and professional life—requires courage nurtured by strong families, thick local communities, and living moral traditions. Without these, freedom becomes weightless and responsibility incoherent. Rebuilding them is not nostalgia but a prerequisite for justice and human flourishing.

By weaving philosophical analysis with present-day case studies, the paper offers a tradition-inspired ethics of mutual obligation that answers the perennial question—what do we owe each other?—with clarity, depth, and actionable insight.

Generative AI in the Classroom: Assignments, Reactions, Reflections

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1D (Mills 3) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Karin Ellison (Arizona State Univeristy), Dr. Sara Flowers (University of Maine at Augusta), Dr. Justin Hess (Purdue University), Dr. Laura Grossenbacher (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

Many educators despair over students' ability to complete traditional academic assessments, including essays and case analyses, by outsourcing thinking to AI systems. Can thoughtfully incorporating generative AI into assignments reduce this dynamic and instead create one in which students learn more using generative AI than without it? The goal of this panel discussion is for educators to learn from each other through discussion of assignments incorporating generative AI. Four panelists, who use AI in a variety of courses, will explain one or more assignments in which students use generative AI and reflect on lessons learned.

- Panelist 1 has added generative AI to a scaffolded case analysis sequence in an upper-division undergraduate course on research ethics. The course is large-over 100 students-and writing intensive.
- Panelists 2 uses generative AI in a required engineering communication course that includes a substantial module on applied ethics, also focusing on case analysis. The instructor provides background on deontology, consequentialism, and virtue ethics. Student teams use generative AI to analyze four to six novel ethics cases and assess the strengths and challenges of AI responses, focusing on how AI justifies its responses and alternatives. They compare responses from the AI in different platforms (Copilot and Gemini) to see whether the LLMs show bias.
- Panelist 3 has developed a model for use of generative AI in engineering design courses, which is based on teaching observations. The model is applicable to applied ethics analysis as well as design.
- Panelist 4 uses AI tools with students in undergraduate K-12 teacher preparation courses. Students use the tools in lesson planning, implementing universal design, and generating differentiated learning experiences for students needing accommodations.

Panelists will address the following in their presentations:

Type of course (e.g. discipline, level, number of students, and delivery mode)
The assignment

- Learning objectives
- Assignment prompt

Student reactions and accomplishments
How discussion of ethical use of AI is incorporated into the assignment
Plans for assignment revision
Implications of experience for developing research projects that explore use of generative AI in ethics education

A Social Justice Framework for Neurodivergent Adults: Shifting to a Supported Engagement Model

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1E (Mills 6) - Panel Discussion

Kayhan Parsi (Loyola University Chicago), Nanette Elster (Loyola University Chicago), Dominic Parsi (St. Louis University)

In the US, a robust set of state and federal entitlements exists for autistic children. Few social programs are specifically designed to meet the varying needs of autistic adults. Autistic adults are not a monolith and may or may not have any of the following: 1) an intellectual disability, 2) communication difficulties, or 3) difficulties with social engagement. Autistic adults experience inequity in healthcare and other indicators of social well-being, including employment, housing, and political engagement. This presentation will consider a model of supported engagement to allow for more meaningful social, community, institutional, and political participation of autistic adults. Recently, many states in the US have passed legislation to facilitate supported decision making. The rationale behind this legislation is to provide legal mechanisms for individuals who may need support in making healthcare decisions. Ostensibly created to help support individuals with IDD, autistic individuals or neurodivergent individuals, these new laws reflect the fact that many often seek the support of a trusted individual to help make healthcare decisions. We welcome this trend and wish to develop it further. We argue that autistic and neurodivergent individuals not only benefit from supported decision-making for their own personal choices but by a more robust commitment and coordination of social services to help them live flourishing lives. A supported engagement model addresses need at the micro, meso and macro levels. Thus, at the micro level, need may be met through a supported decision-maker. But at the meso and macro levels, this model demands greater coordination of social services, whether for housing, employment, transportation, family building, wellness or education. At all levels, participation and voices from those most impacted must be included.

The panelists include academic bioethicists with expertise and experience in autism, neurodiversity, and policy, as well as a pre-law student studying psychology who is a sibling of an autistic adult. The panelists strive to create greater understanding of not only the needs of autistic adults but of those who support them.

Is The Totality of Allegiance an Accurate View of Trump Supporters: Authors Meet Critics

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1G (Grand G) - Author Meets Critics

Dr. Brad Agle (Brigham Young University), Dr. Travis Ruddle (Brigham Young University), Dr. Justin Ames (Boise State University)

In 2025, political science professor Travis Ruddle and ethics professor Brad Agle published the book "The Totality of Allegiance: Inside the Hearts and Minds of Trump Supporters" based on their focus group research on Trump supporters in Massachusetts, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, and Nevada in 2023 and 2024. In this work, they discuss the social and psychological phenomena that exist with followers of a would-be authoritarian leader.

In this work, the authors argue the following:

"The research uncovers a powerful psychological force: a fervent devotion that blurs the boundary between perception and reality—a phenomenon that can be termed the "totality of allegiance" in which the capacity for critical thinking deteriorates and consistently prioritizes allegiance in opposition to truth itself."

In this session, ethics professor Justin Ames will provide a critique of this work, assessing whether the authors have provided valuable, unique, and accurate insight into these followers. In doing so, he will examine their discussion of topics such as moral rationalization, tribalism, cults, strongmen, conmen, and information literacy.

The two authors of the book will then respond to these critiques, as well as those of audience members. In doing so, they will draw on their extensive examination of earlier research on the rise of authoritarianism and the phenomenon of such a rise. This research examines both psychological and sociological phenomena.

In their responses, they will draw on fascinating quotes from focus group members such as the following:

"Trump, a moral person? Probably not. But none of them are."

"For what it's worth, we as a nation benefited secondarily because of his narcissism to an extent."

"Does he bully people? Yes. Name a politician that doesn't."

"I'm unimpressed with smart people"

"It is what it is. I'll go to my grave believing it was stolen."

The authors look forward to a lively discussion with Dr. Ames and the participants of the session. We could add a second critic to this session, but we feel given the very public nature of this research and the familiarity most people have with this topic that we'd save the time for audience participation.

Strategies for Successful Scholarly Publishing

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1H (Grand H) - Panel Discussion

Prof. Dennis Cooley (North Dakota State University), David Wasieleski (Duquesne University), Travis Holloway (Springer)

Publishing remains a cornerstone of academic and professional achievement, yet the process is often complex and evolving. This panel brings together experienced authors, editors, and publishing professionals to demystify the journey from idea to publication. Participants will gain practical insights into navigating the publishing landscape, understanding expectations, and building sustainable writing practices.

The discussion will begin with an overview of the current publishing ecosystem, including traditional academic presses, commercial publishers, and open-access platforms. Panelists will address key considerations such as identifying the right venue for your work, crafting compelling proposals, and responding effectively to peer review. Special attention will be given to the differences between book and article publishing—timelines, audience engagement, and the role of scholarly impact metrics.

Beyond mechanics, the panel will explore strategies for developing a strong authorial voice and maintaining ethical standards throughout the process. Topics include managing co-authorship, avoiding predatory publishers, and leveraging digital tools for research and writing without compromising originality. Attendees will also learn how to position their work for maximum visibility through networking, social media, and conference presentations.

By the end of the session, participants will leave with actionable guidance on planning, writing, and submitting manuscripts, as well as insights into sustaining productivity in a competitive environment. Whether you are an early-career scholar seeking your first publication or an experienced academic aiming to expand your portfolio, this panel offers practical advice and inspiration for success in scholarly publishing.

What Exactly Do Ethics Professionals Do?

Thursday, 5th March - 14:00: 1F (Sterling 9) - Panel Discussion

Deni Elliott (University of South Florida), Chris Arroyo (Providence College), Abram Brummett (Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine), Christopher Meyers (Kegley Institute of Ethics, CSU Bakersfield), Alan Preti (Rosemont College), Timothy Weidel (Gonzaga University)

Ethics professionals, whether they work in higher education or elsewhere, tend to focus externally. The priority, appropriately, is to meet the needs of the students, staff, clients, citizens, or professionals whose needs the professional is expected to serve.

Without denying that priority, this panel turns the examination of ethics inward. We begin with the assumption that active personal engagement is essential for participants and ethics professionals regardless of the context in which the teaching, consultation or facilitation occurs.

Five panelists, who are among the contributors to a recently published collection on the practice of ethics, will provide different avenues for exploration. Topics include (1) how the practice of ethics has changed in the 21^{st} Century, (2) academic freedom as a necessary condition for teaching ethics, (3) working through one's own conflicts of interest, (4) accepting that one's ethical expertise leads to justified moral guidance, and (5) facilitating moral growth and development as a legitimate goal in doing ethics.

In this proposed 90-minute session, the panelists' presentation will take no more than 45 minutes. In the second half of the session, panelists will engage participants in discussion designed to make this session an ethically educational experience for us all.

From Survey to Insight: Collaboratively Designing AI Ethics Education Research with Ethics Educators

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2A (Grand A) - Workshops/Professional Development

Kylee Shiekh (Virginia Tech), Dr. Qin Zhu (Virginia Tech)

This interactive session explores how the instructional and research expertise of ethics educators, particularly those with backgrounds in the humanities and humanistic social sciences, can inform the design and implementation of a mixed-methods study investigating faculty perceptions of AI ethics education in the United States. It will begin by an overview of the major goals and methodological framework of this project, which includes two surveys designed to capture how faculty and administrators approach AI ethics education, followed by in-depth interviews to further explore their perspectives. Participants will then work in small groups on two collaborative tasks: (1) reviewing the faculty survey and brainstorming potential hypotheses that might emerge from the survey data; and (2) proposing questions for the follow-up interview protocol, aimed at deepening insights into faculty perspectives on AI ethics education. This session aims to foster collaborative knowledge-building and invite contributions to a broader national effort in AI ethics education research.

Promoting Equity and Valuing Everyone Equally

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2B (Grand B) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Samuel Kerstein (University of Maryland)

The Covid-19 pandemic raised ethical issues concerning the distribution of scarce, life-saving resources (Wasserman et al., 2020). Shortages of ventilators forced policy makers to ask: Who, morally speaking, ought to receive life-extending interventions when there are not enough to go around? This question presses continually, for example, regarding the allocation of organs for transplantation (National Research Council, 2022). Early in the pandemic, a concern raised about some scarce resource allocation protocols centered on their fairness to disadvantaged groups, for example, certain racial minorities (Schmidt, 2020). Some researchers argued that triage schemes aiming to maximally preserve lives or life years would treat members of these groups unjustly (Stone, 2020). As a result of systematic differences in determinants of health, these groups arrive in the arena of triage sicker and with shorter expected lifespans should they get through the health crisis they face, they maintained. The researchers advocated for modified triage schemes, ones that would give people from disadvantaged groups a greater chance at receiving a life-saving intervention (Schmidt, 2020; Sederstrom, 2020). This critique apparently led to a significant revision of at least one influential triage scheme put forth by the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (White & Lo, 2020). The later version, the Pittsburgh Framework, has as one of its explicit aims to promote equity in the allocation of scarce, life-saving resources (White & Lo, 2021).

In public health literature, disparities in health between groups have been documented for decades (Institute of Medicine, 2003). Researchers have judged some of these disparities to be inequitable. They have offered accounts of what the ideal of health equity would amount to, and they have specified what it would mean to make progress towards equity.

This presentation investigates how an account of health equity widely employed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2024) relates to the Pittsburgh Framework's effort to promote equity in triage. According to the HHS account, achieving equity requires valuing everyone equally. The paper argues that some of the Pittsburgh Framework's allocation prescriptions would, on the HHS account, be inequitable.

Surrogate Decision Makers And Decisional Capacity: Assessment And Policy Recommendations For Medical Professionals

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2B (Grand B) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Agnieszka Romanowska (Saint Louis University)

This presentation addresses the question whether decision-making capacity (DMC) of surrogate decision-makers' (SDMs) should be clinically verified and how and if so, how it ought to be assessed within clinical practice when SDM makes decisions for incapacitated patients. The purpose of this talk is to address a critical gap in current medical ethics and law by proposing criteria and procedures for evaluating surrogate capacity.

The topic is significant for applied ethics because the legitimacy of decision-making rests on respect for patient's autonomy and informed consent. The validity of informed consent hinges on the individual's decisional capacity – that is, the ability to understand, deliberate, and make informed choices among medically appropriate options. When adult patients lack DMC, surrogates are empowered to make choices that directly shape patient's treatment outcomes. Yet, unlike patients, surrogates are not evaluated for their own DMC.

Though some states' statutes recognize the obligation of surrogates to possess decisional capacity, they fail to provide informed frameworks to guide the process of its assessment and recommended ways of proceeding when capacity is lacking. This oversight can expose patients to harm, enable manipulation or neglect, and undermine the moral integrity of clinical decision-making.

This presentation argues that surrogates should be held to the same capacity standards as patients because they make decisions with equally significant consequences. First, surrogate decision-making is best understood within what I term an *extended clinical relationship*, wherein the patient—physician relationship extends to encompass also the surrogate. Second, capacity assessment should not occur only in cases of conflict or disagreements but also when there is evidence of cognitive decline, coercion, emotional instability, or decisional impairment of SDM's. Differentiating between these contexts underscores the ethical salience of the surrogate's capacity in clinical outcomes. Third, recognizing surrogacy as a responsibility rather than mere authority requires procedural safeguards and ethical oversight.

The presentation concludes offering policy recommendations for healthcare institutions and professionals, including standardized assessment protocols for surrogate capacity, documentation procedures, thresholds for clinician intervention, and ethically justified mechanisms for surrogate replacement.

The Moral Incompatibility of Pro-Natalist and Anti-Abortion Stances

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Cynthia Coe (Central Washington University)

The purpose of this presentation is to analyze the normative principles at work in the simultaneous affirmation of the personhood of embryos and support for in vitro fertilization (IVF), even when those practices involve the disposal of fertilized embryos.

This topic is pertinent to current cultural debates in the United States, both within academic circles and in the wider society. It speaks to the moral, legal, and political dimensions of in vitro fertilization and, by extension, other reproductive technologies.

In the fifty years since the method was first used successfully, there has been a great deal of academic and non-academic discussion of the moral significance of IVF. This presentation draws together the threads of anti-abortion arguments and pro-natalist arguments – that is, those who are against disposing of unused embryos and those who are encouraging reproduction – to trace what they jointly and implicitly promote, given the inconsistency of their stances on IVF.

I argue that there is no consistent ethical principle that justifies the claim that personhood begins at conception and current IVF practices. The Alabama Supreme Court ruled in 2024 that embryos created through IVF should legally be considered children. Shortly thereafter, Alabama passed a law giving IVF clinics criminal immunity if embryos are destroyed, which legislators and the governor justified through the pro-natalist claim that people should be encouraged to have children.

Since there is no consistent principle that justifies both stances, we should look for a different underlying motivation. Where the pro-natalist and anti-abortion movements overlap is in the attempt to restrict access to contraception and the ability to end pregnancies. Functionally, this set of stances point back to a desire to advocate for traditional gender norms, in which the core of women's identity is reproduction (having children and caring for them). This ideal instrumentalizes women's bodies rather than treating them as persons and autonomous moral agents.

As an alternative, we should commit ourselves theoretically and practically to reproductive justice: the freedom on the part of individuals to have or not to have children (including through IVF), and to parent them in safe and supportive environments.

Are All Autistics Disabled? How Compensating Abilities Can Alter Disability Status

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Daniel Wilkenfeld (University of Pittsburgh)

Purpose: In this presentation I argue for determining the disability status of at least some individuals on the basis of self-identification.

Importance: Whether and/or when someone can determine their own disability status is relevant for at least two reasons salient in our contemporary world. First, the question of who really needs care and treatment speaks to our political moment. I particularly focus on autistic individuals, whose status is under question in various respects. Second, the idea that people can define their own identities generally is under threat, so showing that this ability should be expanded rather than contracted is a vital argument to make.

Connection to previous research: There is extensive literature on what constitutes a disability, a portion of which is of course referenced here. My main approach picks up on a question raised but very quickly dismissed by Barnes (2016) regarding whether some putative disabilities can actually confer advantages that balance or even override their state as disabilities. I also tie in (though do not deeply explore) the literature on the importance of gender self-identification e.g., Zimman (2019). The connection is that I argue that in cases where there are complementary advantages and disadvantages to a putative disability (specifically being autistic) best practice should be to allow the individual in question to self-identify.

Sample argument: While I make some reliance on the literature on models of disability, much of my argument is intuition driven. For example, if someone were to replace a limb with a bionic counterpart as part of a military improvement program, we would be unlikely to classify them as disabled. I then move through a series of cases—first someone who has an accident and gets a bionic limb, then someone who acquires a disability with other countervailing benefits, and finally the real-life case of autism with countervailing benefits. I thus argue that autism is not always disabling. However, since in many cases autism clearly is disabling, I contend that we have a zone of genuine indeterminacy where best practice should be to empower individuals to self-identify.

Caring for Bureaucracy: Duties to Neighbors in the Minimal State

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Andrew Baldassarre (Saint Louis University)

To ground the legitimacy of the (minimal) state in a defense of rationality and rights presupposes, erroneously, that the state is a body separate from the people. I argue that we ought to regard our duties to the state as an outgrowth of our amalgamated duties to our neighbors. Moreover, what we owe the “state” is not conceptually distinct from what we owe our communities. In keeping with the tradition of care ethics, I argue that even in the minimal state, we have duties to act in a way which elevates the state’s power consistent with the needs of our neighbors. I aim to extend recent accounts of bureaucratic discretion by Daniel Engster and others, to a broader understanding of how best the citizenry should relate with their government in democratic societies. I further argue that this “raises the bar” on what good citizenship looks like in a democracy—to the point that most Americans likely are failing in their duties to others. This is meant to serve as both a rebuff of contemporary arguments in favor of a Nozickean minimal state and as a positive account of the duties we have to our government. These include the moral imperative of informed civil participation, direct political action, and defense of the civil service.

Ethical Training for Employing Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Boston Graf (United States Military Academy at West Point), Ms. Elizabeth Bardales (United States Military Academy at West Point), Mr. Maksymilian Olszowka (United States Military Academy at West Point)

In contemporary warfare, Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) are developing faster than the ethical training frameworks needed to use them responsibly and ethically. DoD Directive 3000.09 outlines that commanders and operators must exercise appropriate levels of human judgment in the employment of LAWS. Despite this policy, we still lack a clear way to train commanders and operators to exercise that judgment in practice. From this, our guiding question is: How do we train future commanders to apply appropriate human judgment (DoD 3000.09) when employing LAWS? To approach this, we first defined what “appropriate levels of human judgment” means through doctrinal analysis and philosophical reasoning on moral agency. We suggest that to engage in appropriate levels of human judgment over LAWS, a commander must understand and apply a Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC)-based moral framework when making decisions regarding the employment of LAWS. From this foundation, we developed a scenario for the training software TEELAWS (Training Ethical Engagement with Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems). TEELAWS uses tactical decision games that integrate LAWS to simulate complex ethical and operational environments. Our training model uses a Bayesian algorithm for ethical decision-making, which weighs the tensions between LOAC principles given the scenario to offer feedback to the user on their ethical decision. We created *Tension Tables*, which provide transparency into task delegation entailed in each decision by mapping out the delegation of individual decisions between commanders, troops, and LAWS. The transparency in the Tension Tables allows the trainee to reflect on how the ethical tensions between each Course of Action (COA) vary given the decisions delegated. Our analysis concludes that the ethical tensions in the use of LAWS lie in the delegation of tasks in each COA and decision point. This insight suggests that ethical readiness cannot be taught abstractly; it must be trained through repeated exposure to complex, feedback-driven decision games that integrate LAWS. By engaging in these iterative exercises, commanders can better understand how their own ethical reasoning develops the judgment necessary to lead ethically with LAWS.

Revisiting Kawall's Modest Greed

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Kwok Tung Cheung (University of Dayton)

In environmental virtue ethics, Kawall (2012) presented an original concept called modest greed. According to such concept, people in affluent countries who are not ordinarily considered wealthy may well be agents who have modest but disproportional desires. Thus, a soccer mom driving her kids to school and music lessons may be guilty of being greedy and contributing to global exploitation and climate deterioration. Since then, there have been some scholarly applications or mere mentions. There has been no sustained conceptual discussion about modest greed. In this paper, I aim to provide further conceptual clarification and expansion of it.

First, I will argue that Kawall's concept of greed will benefit from the emphasis on greed's conceptual link to injustice, as studied by Cheung (2019), who argues that the primary moral mistake in greed is that it causes injustice. Second, Kawall has not explained at all the conditions under which someone's desire is disproportionate or excessive, as if it was uncontroversial. However, for example, how can the aforementioned soccer mom tell if she is having some disproportionate or excessive desire? If she were to stop her modest greed, should she get rid of her car? Are music lessons excessive for her kids? More exactly, is there any objective threshold, beyond which a desire becomes excessive?

Unfortunately, literature in environmental ethics or business ethics seems to ignore this question. Yet, with the help of the conceptual connection to injustice, we may explore the literature in distributive justice. First, we find that Scanlon argues that sometimes inequality is morally justified, a point that strict egalitarianism overlooks. Second, sufficientarianism claims that justice does not require everyone to have the same–it only requires that each has enough. Obviously, the sufficientarians also need to answer the question about objective threshold. If sufficientarianism makes sense, we may have an objective threshold that Kawall needs, but we may also have to interpret Kawall's view to not require strict egalitarianism.

On the Province of Practical and Professional Ethics

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Daniel Wueste (Clemson University)

APPE's 2026 Conference Call for Proposals asks, "What do we owe each other?" The CFP includes another way to put the question. It is accompanied by a suggestion that answers likely will be impacted by "crisis, catastrophe," and, more generally, the complex[ity of] today's world.

Indeed. The CFP asks, "[W]hat are our ethical responsibilities to each other? How do these responsibilities shift in times of crisis and catastrophe, or across our professional or personal lives?" The paragraph ends with what seems to me to be a very different question, namely, "How do we stand up for what's right—when it matters most, and when it seems to matter least?"

Although different than the others, the last question is like them in an important respect. Like the others it is posed at a high level of generality seemingly with the expectation/hope that a sufficiently general principle will emerge; a principle that can provide straightforward and univocal answers. If that's right, we are in familiar philosophical territory asking questions about duty and responsibility understood along traditional lines, i.e., in terms of moral theories that insist upon impartiality, universality, and rationality and eschew feelings of, say, connection to others, reciprocity, empathy, or care.

Is this the territory we should be in?

I will argue that this is not the territory we should be in. Unless our questions are purely philosophical or merely academic, attention should be focused on (a) the normative expectations attached to the roles we inhabit in families, professions, and institutional engagements such as higher education and healthcare, for example, and (b) the inevitable conflicts between or among the normative expectations of the multiple roles one occupies and ways in which these may be resolved.

In making the case for this focus of attention the paper will address concerns about (a) the normativity of role expectations, in particular, whether they have the capacity to create moral obligations, and (b) whether what we have here is a form of naïve ethical relativism that, because it cannot accommodate a distinction between conventional and critical morality, means that we are in fact morally rudderless.

Responsible Educational Theory: Why Applied Ethics needs a Social Ontology of Moral Agency

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Jamie Herman (The Prindle Institute for Ethics)

Applied educational theorists have a responsibility not only to ensure the accuracy and clarity of their work but also to make their normative recommendations actionable for practitioners. As Michael Hand (2023) argues, philosophers of education must avoid introducing conceptual distinctions that confuse rather than clarify practice. I extend this concern to the actionability of normative claims: recommendations for practice must be tailored to the conditions under which educators exercise their moral agency.

This paper argues that applied theorists must engage with the social ontology of moral agency—acknowledging the personal, professional, economic, and systemic constraints under which practitioners operate, both as professional and moral agents. Normative recommendations from educational theorists, whether explicit or implied, should be feasible not under idealized conditions but within the embedded realities of classroom life. For example, suggesting teachers foster relationships with parents must account for institutional limitations, cultural dynamics, and workload disparities that vary across education context and social identities.

While some worry that such tailoring limits the scope of philosophical inquiry and the power of applied theory, I argue that beginning from a robust account of embedded agency allows for both generalizable and context-sensitive recommendations. The "ought implies can" principle must be interpreted through a lens of complexity, not abstraction.

This paper contributes to ongoing debates about the relevance of philosophy of education (Hand, 2023; Martin, 2011; Siegel, 1983; White, 1987), proposing that relevance is not merely about proximity to practice but about the ethical responsibility to ensure recommendations are actionable. If theorists hesitate to prescribe due to practitioner variability, they must also hesitate to imply normative conclusions without considering their practical uptake by practitioners with varied constraints on their moral agency.

Ultimately, I argue for a shift in applied educational theory: from abstract normativity to embedded, actionable guidance that respects the moral agency of educators. This approach strengthens the bridge between theory and practice and ensures philosophical contributions are not only intellectually rigorous but ethically responsible.

Interrogating Moral and Ethical Meaning-Making with AI: Rethinking Agency and Responsibility in Higher Education

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Lavina Sequeira (Felician University), Robert Doyle (Felician University)

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education has sparked significant ethical debates across the United States. As institutions increasingly integrate AI into teaching and learning, questions about ethical boundaries, authorship, and integrity become central to academic life.

This paper explores educators' beliefs and lived experiences with generative AI, examining how they navigate the moral complexity of its use and how this engagement shapes their professional identity and sense of self. Grounded in a constructivist framework, our research assumes that ethical understanding is provisional and socially constructed, continuously re-examined and re-negotiated through dialogue, reflection, and institutional practice.

Drawing on the work of Felician University's AI Taskforce Committee and two university-wide surveys conducted in spring 2025, our research reveals that educators are continually negotiating the place of AI within their moral and professional frameworks. This negotiation manifests in two interrelated ways. First, educators grapple with ethical boundaries in the classroom, navigating tensions between personal conviction and institutional expectation. Second, generative AI itself emerges as a catalyst for critical reflection, prompting deeper inquiry into authenticity, authorship, and relational trust.

Taken together, these findings converge around a larger moral question: What do we owe each other in the age of generative tools? This question reframes the discussion from rule enforcement and detection toward the cultivation of an ethical academic community. It challenges educators to reimagine their responsibilities through enduring principles of human dignity, solidarity, and the common good. Through this lens, generative AI becomes not merely a pedagogical challenge, but an invitation to renew education's moral foundation and shared human purpose.

Our emerging conclusion is that generative AI is not a replacement for human thought but a mirror for moral and professional self-examination, prompting renewed dialogue about trust, accountability, and what we owe one another as educators and learners. Ultimately, this research contributes to institutional policy and ethical formation by illuminating AI's paradoxical role as both a technological disruption and a moral teacher, calling us to reaffirm our shared humanity and collective responsibility in shaping a more honest, compassionate, and socially grounded academic community.

Does Benatar's Quality of Life Argument Entail Pro-Mortalism?

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Augustus Pomerleau (Georgia State University)

According to David Benatar, all human life is of very poor quality. Several commentators have alleged that if this were the case, it would be prudentially rational for all people, at all times, to commit suicide. Benatar denies this. According to Benatar, death (annihilation) is a very severe harm, and therefore continued existence is (sometimes) prudent. Ema Sullivan-Bisset points out, however, that because death cannot be avoided, and because the cost of delaying one's death is to expose oneself to the overwhelming harms of life, extending one's life (given Benatar's view) must lead to a lower lifetime sum of net well-being. I argue that the best response for Benatar is to reject the idea that prudence requires us to maximize overall lifetime well-being. I consider two ways that he could do this: first, by arguing that prudence only requires us to promote lifetime well-being to a *satisfactory* extent, not maximize it (a satisficing theory of prudence); second, by arguing that prudence permits us to be concerned more for the well-being of temporally closer future selves (a theory of prudence that permits near-term bias).

I argue that neither of these strategies succeed. The first fails because any plausible satisficing theory of prudence will require agents to choose the outcome that maximizes utility if no outcome is satisfactory. If we stipulate that immediate annihilation is an unsatisfactory outcome, then some additional duration of suffering *followed by* annihilation, being overall worse, must not be satisfactory either. Since neither outcome is satisfactory, and the first outcome maximizes overall net well-being, a prudent agent must choose it. The second strategy fails because, I argue, the most plausible justification for the permissibility of near-term bias is just the aforementioned satisficing theory of prudence. Otherwise, we either (implausibly) make a person's time-discounting function a matter of arbitrary preference, or else incur the theoretical burden of showing that special concern for future time-slices with some property correlated with temporal distance is a rational *requirement*, regardless of one's preferences. I argue, therefore, that Benatar lacks a good way to defend the rationality of continued survival on purely *prudential* grounds.

Not Science Fact but Science Fiction: Guiding a Proactive Response from Bioethics to Precision Medicine

Thursday, 5th March - 15:45: 2H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Richa Venkatraman (The Hastings Center for Bioethics)

Bioethics pays overdue attention to the question of how to ethically operationalize precision medicine, and insufficient attention to the narratives underlying this project and the motives of its proponents. Bioethical critiques of precision medicine tend to take the future that its advocates imagine, in which all disease and disability can be eradicated, as a given. This imagined future is not fact, however, but speculative fiction, and ought to be treated as such.

Precision medicine is not alone in its speculative nature. Support for emerging technologies and scientific paradigms often takes the shape of what Estreich (2019) calls “fables of consumption,” usually involving hypothetical future people whose lives are inevitably bettered by their consumption of a technological product.

An illustrative precision medicine fable was penned by Francis Collins, director of the Human Genome Project, at its conclusion. In Collins’s telling, hypothetical person “John” goes to the doctor, undergoes genetic screening, discovers a heightened risk of lung cancer, and uses that information to quit smoking, thus preventing disease (Collins 1999). Precision medicine evangelists like Collins insist their narratives are “not science fiction” (Collins 2010). Science fiction, they argue, is the realm of the unreal, if not impossible. “Science fact,” however, is not only possible, but already, inevitably real, always visible on the horizon of our current world. Bioethics literature tends also to accept precision medicine as “science fact” and to respond reactively, focusing on logistical questions of “how” to achieve a precision medicine that still protects autonomy, beneficence, and justice. Precision medicine fables resist logistical critiques, vaguely promising not to “misuse” technology (Flores et al. 2013).

When precision medicine proponents insist their stories are science fact, they treat a future that has not arrived as though it already has. This presentation will examine Collins’s fable as speculative fiction, returning focus to the fact that precision medicine has not happened yet. Treating such narratives as speculative fiction, not science fact, opens them up to valuable critiques — of characterization, worldbuilding, and underlying themes, for example — and guides bioethics towards proactive rather than reactive responses to emerging technologies and shifting paradigms.

Self-Efficacy, Ethical Theory, and Engineering Ethics Education

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2F (Sterling 9) - Panel Discussion

Glen Miller (Texas A& M University), Samantha Aguilar (Texas A& M University), Averi Hunt (Texas A&M University)

The concept of self-efficacy was introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1977 to describe an agent's self-assessment of their capability to act in such a way that will result in a desired outcome. This panel seeks to explore the idea of self-efficacy, consider how it applies to ethical and epistemic frameworks in philosophy, and discuss the development and validation of a self-efficacy scale used to measure engineering ethics competence.

Panelist #1 will provide a thematic overview of the development of the concept of self-efficacy, with an emphasis on more recent studies that seek to apply self-efficacy to professional questions such as whistleblowing and academic concerns such as academic integrity. The panelist will sketch the outlines of the research on general self-efficacy and its application to specific tasks.

Panelist #2 will explore how the idea of self-efficacy translates from psychological to philosophical frameworks. The panelist will explain how self-efficacy relates to the "cognitive integration" proposed by Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski, the second-order justification of William Alston ("being justified in believing that one's beliefs are justified"), and what William James called "acquiescence" and a "turning of our disposition" as one loses "theoretic agitation."

Panelist #3 will discuss a validated Engineering Ethics Self-Efficacy (EESE) scale—a psychometric tool measuring students' confidence in their capacity for ethical action. Using a split-sample design (EFA/CFA) and item response theory with a 2023 freshman cohort ($N = 576$, $\omega \approx 0.75$), we provide evidence for the scale's reliability and unidimensional structure. Our findings highlight the importance of involving psychometric expertise in ethics-related research to ensure that assessments align with the ethical standards they aim to uphold. This work strengthens the case for integrating validated quantitative measures into ethics education and evaluation.

"U.S. Citizens can play a vital role."* Moral Engagement Regarding Immigration Enforcement

Thursday, 5th March - 15:15: 2I (Park View) - Panel Discussion

Prof. Jonathan Beever (University of Central Florida)

Individual citizens and local communities across American cities and towns are deciding how to identify and respond to unethical actions by immigration and corrections enforcement (ICE) authorized agents. Too, federal administrators note officers face stress and moral injury from protesting citizens. Professional ethical norms seem to demand that we examine questions of justice, the rule of law, and integrity when they arise. Yet, ethical inquiry may increase interpersonal risk, while decisions not to engage may seem like weakness of our moral will. So, what role should professional ethicists play in shaping and guiding our neighbor and colleagues' decisions to respond to enforcement actions? What are our ethical and civic responsibilities regarding interactions with and protests against ICE, as an organization and as individual representatives of professional ethics? Should citizens record and lawfully interrupt ICE interactions in the face of personal or professional risk? What moral responsibilities do citizens have to protest and object, when those actions might be in tension with questions of employment restrictions or competing community values? This open forum for the APPE community creates space for discussion around shared experiences and complementary expertise in these highly charged times.

* https://www.ilrc.org/community-resources/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-when-confronted-ice-flyer

What we owe our students in an AI-saturated world

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3A (Grand A) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Mark Doorley (Villanova University), Dr. Deborah Mower (The Center for Practical Ethics, University of Mississippi), Glen Miller (Texas A& M University), Ian Clausen (Villanova University)

There is growing concern about the development of an ethics of artificial intelligence. What has not been addressed sufficiently is what we educators owe our students in a world saturated by large language models. All four panelists are ethics educators who seek to spark a discussion on this topic with their peers. What better place for this than at an APPE conference.

Each panelist will speak for 7-10 minutes, followed by discussion with the audience.

The first panelist: My responsibility is to provide students with a deeper understanding of what AI is and what it is not, to encourage them to continue developing the critical thinking skills they need to navigate the impact of AI on all aspects of our common life, and to identify and value the uniquely human capacity for insight and creativity.

The second panelist: Educators should encourage students to think deeply about the nature of knowledge and creativity and what their obligations might be as professionals in this rapidly changing world to be stewards of past developed knowledge and future knowledge generation. We also should encourage students to think about necessary guardrails to protect the quality of the knowledge within their fields and disciplines.

The third panelist: Educators have the responsibility to help students become aware that the degree to which they embrace “vibe learning”—working closely with AI to complete their work, with only a superficial understanding of what has been done—to make it through their degrees will likely correspond with their degree of functional illiteracy in their professional and civic lives.

The fourth panelist: With the almost instantaneous eruption of words at our beck and call with LLMs, the power of words to transform is disappearing. The challenge for educators is a humble but pressing one: we must “go for broke” on discovering, treasuring, and preserving the transformative power of certain words. We must help our students to re-discover and treasure the beauty and the suffering that goes with finding just the right word to capture an insight or an emotion, something LLMs only imitate, and imitate poorly.

Federal Funding Program Opportunities for Research on Research Ethics

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3B (Grand B) - Panel Discussion

Wenda Bauchspies (NSF), Adam Berger (NIH), Sheila Garrity (Office of Research Integrity)

Program officers from the federal grant making agencies [NSF, ORI, and NIH] which fund research on research integrity will present on current funding opportunities and calls for submission at their agencies:
Wenda Bauchspies, NSF [confirmed]
Sheila Garrity, ORI [confirmed] - VIRTUAL
Adam Berger, NIH [not confirmed] - VIRTUAL

New life for a journalism ethics code?

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3C (Grand C) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Chris Roberts (The University of Alabama), Patrick Plaisance (Pennsylvania State University), Mr. Rod Hicks (Executive Editor, The St. Louis American)

In a series of *Columbia Journalism Review* articles in 2025, Margaret Sullivan called for “a new look at journalism ethics” in this new age of communication, credibility, and challenges to the industry.

Much of the thinking about media ethics is delivered through codes of ethics. The Society of Professional Journalists’ code is the best-known, with its beginnings literally a century ago and revised as recently as 2014. It has been called the “gold standard” and is published in nine languages.

But it may be outdated, overtaken by the many changes in the current communication and political environment. There are calls from some to again revise SPJ’s code.

This panel discussion – led by three members of its ethics committee – will invite audience participation as it seeks to conceptualize how a new code can seek to meet current and upcoming challenges faced by journalists.

The wide-ranging discussion will focus on both higher-level questions of ethics and practical ways to improve the code - including the need (if any) for a generic journalism ethics code in an age of specialized journalism.

The UNDP Model Codes of Conduct for Micro and Small Enterprises

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Alonso Villarán (Universidad del Pacífico (Lima, Perú))

Statement of purpose. The purpose of this paper is to outline, compare, unify, and assess the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Model Codes of Conduct for Micro and Small Enterprises MSEs): the one launched for Moldova in 2016 and the one launched for Mexico in 2025. Can they properly guide the owners and workers of MSEs?

Importance for applied ethics. The vast majority of businesses in the world are MSEs. And yet, they very rarely have formal codes of conduct. They do not because such codes cost time and money. To make matters worse, in developing countries like Peru, neither the associations that represent them nor the government offer model codes. It is true that, since 2024, entrepreneurs can obtain a model code from the AI of their choice, but many will still prefer a "natural" one. The UNDP has developed two: one for Moldova and one for Mexico—both of which can be adopted by companies in other countries. As the presentation will show, these codes can be unified and improved to serve MSEs more effectively.

Relation to prior work. Although there is a mountain of research on business codes of ethics, there is virtually no paper devoted to codes for MSEs (see, for instance, McDonald 2008). There is research on ethics for the MSE sector, but not on their codes of ethics—and this absence is partly explained by the fact that, as mentioned, such codes hardly exist. Two authoritative exceptions are the UNDP model codes.

Argumentation. In each of the two UNDP model codes, I extract the specific "rules" or "dont's" they contain (for example, "Do not manipulate financial statements"). I then compare their content: which rules appear in both codes, and which are unique to each. I then merge the codes, and proceed to assess its coherence, comprehensiveness, etc. Finally, I propose a route toward a better model code—one that is not topic-but stakeholder-centered, simpler to use, and grounded in the Golden Rule.

Reference. Mcdonald, Gael M. (2008). "An Anthology of Codes of Ethics," European Business Review 21(4), 2009, pp. 344-372.

Accountability in Enforcement: The Role of Procedural Justice in IRS Litigation Practices

Friday, 6th March - 09:30: 3D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Tammy Cowart (The University of Texas at Tyler), Dr. Roger Lirely (The University of Texas at Tyler)

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is guided by a Taxpayer Bill of Rights, which enumerates ten fundamental protections for every taxpayer dealing with the agency. This includes the right to a fair and just tax system, the right to challenge the IRS's position, and the right to appeal decisions. However, taxpayers often face a significant disadvantage when litigating against the IRS due to unequal resources, legal expertise, and procedural complexity. This imbalance raises fairness issues in access to justice.

Procedural justice is essential for promoting taxpayer compliance and trust in the IRS, and it requires fair decision-making and respectful treatment of taxpayers. This paper will examine data from cases showing that, despite uniform tax laws and procedural rules, fair treatment of taxpayers varies depending on factors such as the geographic location of the trial and level of court where procedures begin. Fair treatment and transparency in interactions can enhance taxpayer compliance and trust with an increased focus on procedural justice.

Teaching ethics to engineering students: recommendations for the next decade

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3E (Mills 6) - Panel Discussion

Diana Martin (University College London), Prof. Jonathan Beever (University of Central Florida), Prof. Steven Kelts (Princeton University Center for Information Technology Policy), Dr. Qin Zhu (Virginia Tech)

Engineering ethics education has emerged in the last decades as a discipline in its own right, seeing philosophers and ethicists expanding their work to comprise a pedagogical focus. It becomes increasingly important to reflect on how to bring topics of ethical significance to the awareness of engineering students, both in terms of the theoretical lens employed and through the pedagogical methods to convey such focus.

This panel discussion aims to foster an active discussion connected to the 2025 launch of the *Routledge International Handbook of Engineering Ethics Education*. The volume includes contributions on both theoretical and practical themes ranging from foundational aspects, discipinary and interdisciplinary dimensions, accreditation, teaching, and assessment in engineering ethics education. It is authored by >100 established and emerging scholarsacross the world.

The roundtable will be led by one of the editors of the handbook, who will be joined by chapter authors (tbc) and one commentator (tbc) for a conversation on the different theoretical foundations of the philosophy of technology and engineering ethics.

The aim of this roundtable discussion is to use the launch of *Routledge International Handbook of Engineering Ethics Education* as an opportunity to take stock of the key advancements in the field of teaching the ethics of engineering and to look ahead by making a series of recommendations for the next decade. The insights and recommendations are closely linked to emerging issues and the rapid development of the field, alongside recent calls highlighting the importance of adopting new lenses and a postcolonial approach to the philosophy of technology and the use of non-Western ethical frameworks originating in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The audience will be an active part of this conversation.

Incorporating Virtues as Learning Outcomes in Fundamentals of Engineering Design Courses at New Jersey Institute of Technology: Phase 1

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

J. Holbrook (New Jersey Institute of Technology), Ashish Borgaonkar (New Jersey Institute of Technology), Renan Gonçalves Leonel da Silva (New Jersey Institute of Technology)

This presentation discusses the first phase of our efforts to incorporate engineering-relevant virtues as learning outcomes in select sections of Fundamentals of Engineering Design (FED 101) courses at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). Both the PI (a philosopher) and the co-PI (an engineer who also teaches FED 101) have collaborated with two other engineering faculty members teaching the course to discuss which virtues fit best with their own classes, to incorporate those virtues as learning outcomes for the courses, and to develop specific assignments designed to achieve those outcomes. The group has also begun to develop in-class assessments for these assignments. Our goals are to give FED 101 instructors the vocabulary and the ability to teach and assess specific virtues incorporated as learning outcomes in their courses.

Here, we discuss the process and the assignments used during the Fall semester of 2025.

We will also discuss our attempts to assess this overall effort modeled on anthropological studies in laboratory contexts performed in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS). During all team meetings, our evaluator, an STS scholar, has been present as an ethnographic observer, with the goal of providing insights for the research team about what works and what does not work in our approach in order for us to modify it both moving from Fall 2025 to Spring 2026, and for future expansion. In-situ ethnographic work involves immersing the researcher within a specific environment to observe and engage with participants in their specific social and organizational context. Heavily supported by observational analysis, this method prioritizes understanding narrative-building, practices, behaviors, and interactions as they happen in real time. It does serve to capture the nuances of everyday activities, and the meanings participants assign to them. By observing faculty members within their academic settings, and strategies adopted to respond to ethics learning and guidance, this ethnographic study aims at uncovering how virtue ethics is perceived, and to access the cultural/epistemic factors influencing its integration into course design, and the practical challenges and opportunities instructors face.

Building Ethical Resilience: Evaluation of a Pilot Metacognitive STEM Ethics Curriculum

Friday, 6th March - 09:30: 3F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Bruce Thompson (University of Southern Maine), Dr. Carol Nemeroff (University of New Brunswick), Ross Hickey (University of Southern Maine)

Traditional Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training in STEM fields often focuses on rules and regulations, but is insufficient to prevent misconduct in real-world scenarios. A critical factor is students' individual capacity for metacognition: the ability to critically evaluate one's own thought processes. This NSF funded project, conducted by the Maine Regulatory Training and Ethics Center, addresses this gap by investigating a core premise–that differences in metacognitive abilities significantly predict the advanced moral cognition necessary for ethical resilience. We piloted a *Metacognitive Ethics* curriculum embedded within diverse STEM undergraduate courses. This presentation reports on the Phase 2 findings.

Our assessments included instruments for self-regulation (Applied Mindfulness), executive function (BRIEF-A), and metacognitive awareness. Ethical reasoning was evaluated using case scenarios adapted from the Engineering and Science Issues Test (ESIT) to map onto Kohlberg's developmental levels.

We also developed a new behavioral outcome measure that avoids deception, something common in psychology and highly criticized. Participants took part in the "Ethics Quiz Game," competing for money. They were informed of an honor system but made aware that they could cheat by looking at an answer key. A second behavioral measure provided an opportunity for participants to "sell out" their team member by withdrawing their earned points to cash out individual winnings, knowingly preventing their team from winning.

Initial findings demonstrated that metacognitive self-regulation significantly predicts advanced, post-conventional ethical reasoning, particularly the ability to objectively evaluate the validity of one's own thought processes ("decentration"). Our behavioral challenge yielded promising results:

Cheating: Almost 60% of control group participants cheated for a cash prize, compared to under 35% of students who received the *Metacognitive Ethics* curriculum.

Loyalty: None of the students who completed the *Metacognitive Ethics* curriculum chose to abandon their team member by cashing out their winnings, whereas over 60% of the control group did so.

This finding was paralleled by a trend showing *Metacognitive Ethics* students performed better than controls in identifying and devaluing ethical rationales centered on self-promotion or self-protection when evaluating fictional misconduct cases. The full analysis will examine the link between metacognitive skills and complex ethical evaluation.

We Owe Them a Second Personal Childhood

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Audra Goodnight (Saint Louis University)

The flourishing of our children is at risk. Rates of depression and anxiety are on the rise, increasing more than 50% between 2010-2019 according to some studies. The clearest contributors to these high rates of anxiety and depression are smartphones and social media. But prior to the introduction of the smartphone and social media platforms to adolescents was the decline in a play-based childhood, as outlined by Jonathan Haidt in "The Anxious Generation" (2024). Play is essential for learning. It is the "work of childhood", says Haidt, it helps "to wire up [children's] brains by playing vigorously and often, practicing the moves and skills they need as adults." Play teaches children about risk, social negotiation, physical conflict and resolution, and other critical skills for navigating the world. There was a movement away from play in the 1970s to '80s because parents feared their child might be abducted or harmed if left unsupervised. Thus, children's play was closely monitored, moved inside, and made safe. Decline in free, outdoor play together with the rise of digital device usage in the 2010s, meant that childhood moved from the "real world" to the "digital world", where harms abounded and flourishing was impeded. Yet, human flourishing requires real-world, interpersonal relationships, especially second-personal relationships. A phone-based childhood jeopardizes second-personal relationships by reducing real-world social interaction and increasing harms such as social awkwardness, reduced self-confidence, sedentary lifestyle, fragmented attention, addiction, social withdrawal, and a loss of wisdom and meaning. I will argue that cultivation of and engagement in second-person relationships of communication and connection can address the deficiencies of a phone-based childhood. Developing the ability to connect, engage in joint attention, and communicate through body language and eye contact is critical for social development in young children. Play is an essential avenue for engaging in second-personal relationships with other people as it requires basic skills of attunement and negotiation along with more complex moral skills of empathy and justice. We need to bring back play for our children. We owe them a second-personal childhood.

The Normative Structure of Shared Inquiry

Friday, 6th March - 09:30: 3G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Emily McWilliams (University of Dayton)

Much of our intellectual life involves collaboration: students explore ideas together, research teams investigate questions collectively, and citizens deliberate about shared concerns. When we commit to inquiring together, we create distinctive obligations to each other. Yet despite growing philosophical interest in inquiry's normative structure, the commitments we create when we inquire together (what they consist in, how we establish them, and what they require of us) remain underexplored.

This presentation examines competing models of collective intentionality to determine which is best suited to understanding the normative structure of shared inquiry. Consider cases where collaborative inquiry goes wrong: an instructor, challenged by a student's question, steers the discussion toward demonstrating their expertise rather than genuinely exploring the puzzle, or a manager investigating a project's failure who uses the team meeting to build a case for reorganization rather than pursuing understanding. Intuitively, these are violations of obligations to our co-inquirers. But understanding what makes them violations depends on understanding how we establish commitments to shared inquiry and what normative structures those commitments create.

I explore three leading frameworks for understanding collective intentionality and shared commitments, each offering different resources for explaining the normative structure of shared inquiry. Margaret Gilbert's joint commitment theory suggests we commit together "as a body" to pursuing shared epistemic goals, creating mutual obligations that cannot be unilaterally rescinded. Michael Bratman's shared cooperative activity account focuses on interlocking intentions, where each participant intends that they pursue a goal together while remaining responsive to the others' intentions. Stephen Darwall's second-personal framework addresses what obligations and normative authority arise when participants address each other in inquiry.

Each framework has different implications for understanding when commitments to shared inquiry exist, what obligations they create, and when those obligations are violated. I will explore which framework best illuminates the normative structure of shared inquiry and what we owe each other as co-inquirers.

This matters for professional and applied ethics because understanding what we owe our co-inquirers is essential for designing practices of shared inquiry that better serve moral and epistemic aims across personal, professional, and civic life.

Necessary Considerations for the Acceptance and Adoption of Human Composting as an Environmentally Conscious Approach to Disposing Human Remains

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Michael Blake (Villanova University)

Using the current opposition of the Catholic Church on human composting as a test case, this paper will argue for a comprehensive review of the procedures employed in human composting, arguing for more general acceptance of the practice insofar as it is a more environmentally sensible option that also respects the oft-held cultural and/or religious norms of respect for the human body, even after death.

In the last twenty years, the volume of human corpses to be processed through cremation prior to disposal by burial has increased dramatically, posing a potential future risk surrounding emissions. Several studies have been published studying the environmental impacts of historical funerary practices in the United States and Canada. These studies have shown that contaminants from buried human remains, as well as the casket and/or vault that the remains are placed in, have a propensity to leach into both the soil and groundwater, where contaminants have been measured in elevated levels. Heavy metal exposure, a common component of cemetery leachate, can impact neurological development, liver function, and cause cancer.

Against this backdrop, the practice known as "human composting," or the reducing of human remains into soil material for dispersal, has grown in interest. While not yet legal in every state, proponents often characterize it as a "greener" alternative, as there is no chemical fixative agent used during the process. However, there is a lack of research on the environmental impact of the soil products of human composting, and there are also significant objections being raised by some on religious grounds. Most notable from within the Catholic Church was the 2023 announcement of the direction "On the Proper Disposition of Human Remains," which offers the issues the Catholic Bishops of the United States hold to be present in the current practices for human composting.

Climate Philanthropy and the Duty to Decarbonize

Friday, 6th March - 09:30: 3H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Benjamin howebe@seattleu.edu (Seattle University)

As the world experiences an increasing number of catastrophic events either caused or exacerbated by climate change, scholars and activists have looked to private philanthropy with the hopes that it will compensate for the shortcomings of state-sponsored efforts to mitigate these harms. Some have argued that philanthropic organizations are better positioned to respond quickly to humanitarian needs sparked by flooding, drought, and other sudden onset events associated with climate change, while others have argued that these organizations have a duty to respond to climate change because they are funded by wealth that was created through the burning of fossil fuels. In this paper, I focus on a type of climate philanthropy that has received little attention in the literature: the effort to develop artificial carbon sinks and other decarbonization technologies. In part one, I argue that the positions referenced in the previous paragraph imply that philanthropy should prioritize the development of these technologies whenever possible, because the duty to reduce atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases trumps the duty to reduce suffering. In the second part of the paper, I suggest that the duty to decarbonize changes how we should think about the role of philanthropy in our society and argue that, even under best case scenarios, private efforts to reduce atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases are vulnerable to criticisms that philanthropy is undemocratic.

The Ethics of Immigration Detention

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Raquel Diaz-Sprague (University of Alabama at Birmingham), Jessica Mayo (Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project)

During the current era of "mass deportation," the number of immigrants detained within the United States has skyrocketed. So, too, have reports of inadequate food, abuse, and lack of access to counsel. This session examines the realities of immigrant detention, with case studies drawn from actual legal clients. It will examine the ethics of confinement outside the criminal justice system, as well as alternatives to detention – both those utilized by previous administrations, and more radical ideas such as abolition.

Doulas as Ethical Infrastructure: Trust, Care, and Immigration Fear in Perinatal Health

Friday, 6th March - 09:30: 3I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Brian Tuohy (Temple University), Olivia Gong (Temple University), Caitlyn Martin (Temple University)

Recent changes in U.S. immigration policy and enforcement practices have reshaped the ethical terrain of healthcare for undocumented patients, particularly pregnant and postpartum individuals navigating high-risk clinical settings. As fear of surveillance, deportation, and institutional exposure intensifies, many undocumented patients delay or avoid care altogether, with serious consequences for maternal and infant health.

This session examines the ethical significance of bilingual doula programs as a form of ethical infrastructure within perinatal care. Drawing on emerging qualitative findings from the Esperanza Contigo Project, a community-embedded doula program serving undocumented Latina patients in Philadelphia, the presentation explores how doulas function not only as emotional and cultural supports, but as trust-builders, advocates, and navigators across prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum care.

Through patient and provider narratives, the session highlights how doulas mitigate ethical harms associated with structural violence, language discordance, and immigration-related fear. Particular attention is paid to moments of ethical vulnerability, including informed consent during labor, postpartum care gaps, and patients' decisions about whether seeking care is worth the perceived legal risk. The session also explores tensions surrounding the integration of non-clinical actors into biomedical teams, including questions of scope, legitimacy, and institutional buy-in.

Framed within reproductive justice, health justice, and clinical ethics, this session offers concrete insights for ethicists, clinicians, and institutions seeking to respond ethically to evolving immigration realities. It argues that in the current policy moment, culturally responsive doula care is not an "add-on" but an ethically necessary component of equitable perinatal practice.

Teaching Intellectual Virtues: The Intercollegiate Civil Disagreement Partnership

Friday, 6th March - 09:00: 3J (Sterling 9) - Workshops/Professional Development

Jeffrey Dunn (DePauw University), Senem Saner (California State University, Bakersfield), Kelli Rolland-Adkins (St. Philip's College), Tony Givhan (St. Philip's College)

Our proposed session will introduce participants to the pedagogy used by the Intercollegiate Civil Disagreement Partnership (ICDP), a consortium of six universities and colleges devoted to preparing students for civil disagreement and dialogue.

We will do this by highlighting a particular tool for cultivating the intellectual virtues of curiosity and open-mindedness. According to Dan Kahan (2017, "Science Curiosity and Political Information Processing"), curiosity is characterized by the disposition to seek out and understand something, typically something that is surprising. Jason Baehr (2023, "Educating for Good Thinking: Virtues, Skills, or Both?") characterizes open-mindedness as a disposition to perspective-switch. Both curiosity and open-mindedness are particularly important facilitating virtues; they enable a person to cultivate and exercise other intellectual virtues by creating psychological space to engage with new ideas.

Dialogic questions are designed to open a conversation up to uncover multifaceted layers. Their purpose is to move beyond factual reporting of information and invite people to share how their own values, reasons, experiences and perspectives have shaped their beliefs. Some examples include:

- "Who or what has most impacted your stance on this?"
- "What values are most important to you when thinking about this topic?"
- "Have you ever felt conflicted about this issue? Will you share more about that?"

We aim to show that teaching students about dialogic questions can aid the cultivation of the virtues of curiosity and open-mindedness through dialogue. When students deliberately use dialogic questions they are guided (1) to seek out surprising information within interpersonal contexts, and (2) to more thoroughly consider others' perspectives. (1) contributes to the cultivation of curiosity and (2) contributes to the cultivation of open-mindedness.

This session will be interactive and allow participants to learn about and also participate in the pedagogy. We will also offer information for participants who may want to partner with the ICDP to deploy this pedagogy on their own campuses, and how there is grant funding to support this work.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training and Education, Our Journey So Far and the Road Ahead

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4A (Grand A) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Mohammad Hosseini (Northwestern University), Dr. David Resnik (NIEHS), Dr. Julie Simpson (University of New Hampshire), Dr. Lisa Lee (Virginia Tech)

In the 1980s, growing concerns about research ethics led federal agencies to introduce requirements for education in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for researchers. Since then, RCR requirements have expanded across the programs funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and universities to include students, trainees, fellows, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty across the US. Today, RCR trainings are formal opportunities to raise and discuss research ethics and integrity topics, and have evolved from promoting 'mere compliance' to 'how to practice science responsibly in grey areas.' However, the effectiveness of RCR training on reducing misconduct and fostering ethical practices remains unclear. Besides the inherent complexities of measuring the impacts of RCR training, the increasing internationalization of research, the rise of multidisciplinary, multi-site, and consortium-based collaborations, expanding partnerships with industry and commercialization, and the advent of novel technologies that enable new types of research and new forms of unethical practice (e.g., artificial intelligence, gene editing, synthetic data) have collectively made the design, delivery, and assessment of RCR trainings more challenging.

This moderated panel brings together experts from two public universities and a federal government agency. Given their experience with teaching and managing RCR education, these experts will approach challenges from their unique perspectives: One large land-grant institution focused on large-scale, multidisciplinary research and commercialization; a mid-size public land, sea, and space grant institution committed to research and public service across the state and region; and a federal government agency with national leadership in setting research priorities, advancing discovery, and shaping policy.

Panelists will be asked "how institutional structures, policies, and incentives complement or compromise RCR training, and how can institutions be better prepared for current/future challenges?" In the first 20 minutes, each panelist will briefly (5–7 minutes) discuss RCR training at their institution, highlighting one successful practice and one area for improvement. In the next 20 minutes, the moderator will pose questions to the panelists to clarify/expand on key points. The final 20 minutes will be dedicated to Q&A.

Roles, Practices, and Sociotechnical Systems: Teaching Applied Ethics out of the Mainstream

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4B (Grand B) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Michael Gifford (Arizona State University), Dr. Yunus Telliel (Worcester Polytechnic Institute), Dr. Qin Zhu (Virginia Tech), Dr. Britt Holbrook (New Jersey Institute of Technology)

This panel explores some non-mainstream approaches to teaching applied ethics that are not based in principlism and considers their value to training in applied ethics as well as their relevance to broader debates in ethical theory. One of our panelists is an anthropologist and rhetorician who interprets ethics as a cultural practice. It is argued that seeing ethics as a cultural practice opens up an avenue for training practitioners to be responsible members of communities of ethical practice without the limitations of a rigid principlism in the development and deployment of AI technologies.

Another panelist is a philosopher working in the field of Science, Technology, and Society (STS) who develops a socio-historical approach to teaching applied ethics. It is argued that teaching students about how ethical value systems are embedded in larger sociotechnical systems allows them to grasp ethical norms that matter to their practice while also gaining a contextual understanding of the institutionalization of particular norms in society. This wider understanding, it is argued, is essential to ethical decisionmaking in actual social context.

A third panelist is an engineer with specific expertise in engineering ethics, especially in the disciplines of the philosophy of technology and non-Western philosophies. He argues that the increasingly complex entanglement of humans and emerging technologies such as AI requires new approaches to teaching engineering ethics. Drawing on non-Western philosophies (particularly Confucianism), he suggests that moral technologies are those that (1) enable individuals to fulfill their role-based moral responsibilities and cultivate harmonious relationships, and (2) support the development of expertise for living these responsibilities through ongoing engagement with technology.

Finally, our fourth member is a philosopher who will interrogate the panelists as a discussant from the perspective of ethical realism (ethical truths exist) combined with ethical skepticism (we cannot know ethical truths).

Our panel engages multiple disciplines in a discussion not only about the nature of professional and applied ethics, but importantly on how we teach that ethics to practitioners across fields. From our discussion we hope emerge fresh insights pertaining to what we owe each other in and out of the ethics classroom.

Ubuntu and Resource-Driven Conflicts: Ethical Pathways to Security and Justice in Africa

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4C (Grand C) - Panel Discussion

Mr. Theophilus Aperkor (The University of Alabama), Patrick Anderson (Central State University), Dr. Chris Roberts (The University of Alabama), Mr. Philippe Buadee (The University of Alabama), Ms. Priscilla Nyarko (Saint Louis University), Mr. Idris Mohammed (The University of Alabama), Mr. Fredrick Daoyenikye (The University of Alabama), Mr. Richard Bombebe Naakpi (Saint Louis University), Ms. Betty Surikpe (Arizona State Univeristy), Mr. Darlington Nwachukwu (The University of Alabama)

The African continent, endowed with vast reserves of minerals, oil, and fertile land, faces a persistent and devastating paradox: its immense natural wealth often fuels conflict, instability, and poverty rather than fostering development and shared prosperity. The exploitation and inequitable distribution of these resources have led to deep-seated inter-communal tensions, environmental devastation, and a cycle of violence that undermines security and justice. Conventional approaches to resolving these resource-driven conflicts, often rooted in Western contexts of liberal peace-building and technocratic governance, have largely failed to address the historical, cultural, and ethical dimensions that underpin these struggles. This panel explores a radical reimagining of conflict resolution by drawing on an indigenous African ethical philosophy, often referred to as Ubuntu. This panel argues that the erosion of Ubuntu principles is both a cause and a consequence of resource-driven conflicts.
Resource conflicts cannot be seen merely as problems of “greed” or “grievance”, but also seen with the lens of fundamental crises of ethical relationship [1, 2, 3, 4]. Ubuntu provides a critical lens through which to analyze these crises by centering several key principles such as interconnectedness, collective responsibility and trust, dignity and reconciliation, and custodianship over ownership [5, 6, 7]. This framework allows us to critically interrogate the roles of major actors—state, traditional leaders, media, and journalism— by what they do and for whom they do it. Some of the questions to be discussed include:

- How does the erosion of principles like collective responsibility and shared wealth create the conditions for the unrest we see today?
- How do we explain the failure of many traditional leaders to prevent this crisis?

- How does current media reporting typically violate the principles of Ubuntu? Conversely, if a journalist were to embrace an ‘Ubuntu ethic,’ what would their reporting prioritize, and how would the narrative change?
- How can we scale Ubuntu journalism to not only report on conflicts but to actively participate in healing and resolving them?

We are confident that this panel will provide profound insights and foster a stimulating, constructive dialogue for all attendees interested in ethics, conflict resolution, and African development.

Constructing a Stronger Argument Against Fat Stigma

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Steve Muir (University of Louisville)

Fat stigma is a pressing issue. Cat Pausé argues effectively that it is a social determinant of health in its own right, even more-so than fatness itself (Pausé 2017). There is an obligation in bioethics and the medical field at large to combat this type of stigma. Fat activists have pioneered this campaign, arguing that there is no reason for fat people to receive subpar care simply because of their size, and that we need to address fatphobia in a similar manner to how we have addressed racism or queerphobia in healthcare (Mollow 2013): fighting against it is a matter of justice. In both popular discourse and academic discourse the primary reasoning used to support this stance has been the argument that being fat does not carry anywhere near as high of health risks as we have been led to believe. While I agree that this is a true statement, I find that centering it within the anti-stigma movement does a disservice both to fat people themselves and to everyone else who faces any kind of stigma within healthcare settings. I argue that fatphobia can - and must - be pointed out and addressed as a social determinant of health without diminishing or pushing aside the genuine health risks that can exist in specific cases. In order to illustrate the benefits of a framing that separates the risk level of fatness from the argument against its stigma, I draw on the example of harm reduction movements that aim to humanize and provide resources to drug users. These movements have constructed their argument against the stigma drug users face such that users should be treated as human and provided with dignity and resources regardless of the health risks of their behavior. When we use the (true) fact that being fat does not usually carry large health risks to justify destigmatization, we leave behind people who do experience legitimate health risks related to weight. And potentially more importantly, we make a rhetorical mistake in implying that things which really do carry large health risks could be acceptable to stigmatize.

The Duality of Clothing: Why Cultural Humility Requires Metaphysical Competency

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Joseph Swindeman (Saint Louis University)

Cultural competency has been a long-standing qualification of clinicians. Yet, as cultural education programs developed, these programs were subject to criticisms from anthropologists. In short, competency programs failed to respect culture and undermined patient-centered care by teaching cultural knowledge using stereotypes. These critics demonstrated how cultural competency overlooks the fact that the hospital itself has a culture, despite its claim to be a non-cultural entity. This critique required ethicists to reconsider competency as a paradigm. The most prominent alternative to competency is cultural humility. In this newer model, the culturally humble clinical ethicist attends to patients by asking them questions. Shifting from cultural competency to humility should be a welcome step forward because cultural humility helps reconnect clinicians with their patients as persons. Nevertheless, this paper argues that cultural humility is insufficient for clinical ethics because it fails to adequately address the dynamics introduced to the clinical encounter by the physician's culture. This paper will perform an immanent critique of cultural humility by demonstrating how its opposition to competency has introduced a problematic opposition between activity and passivity. The juxtaposition between the active, competent clinician and the passive, humble clinician is too simple, masking the deculturation of the clinician. Unless metaphysical competence supplements cultural humility, this deculturation becomes a subtle form of the grammar of the hospital that requires all—patients and clinicians—to remove the marks of their culture. Thus, I will argue that unless the clinical ethicist attends to both patient and clinician, they will obscure cultural dynamics at work in mediation. While we cannot abandon cultural humility, clinical ethicists must develop a metaphysical competency—or the ability to recognize the symbols, forms, and *teloi* of medical culture and how they might differ from the metaphysical worldview of both clinicians and patients. Thus, I propose new approach to culture that uses the strengths of cultural competency, cultural humility, and metaphysical competency to ensure proper epistemic justice in the clinical encounter.

Clinical Disorientation: Reframing ‘Medical Dismissal’ as Systemic Injustice”

Friday, 6th March - 11:15: 4D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Genesis Sorrick (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)

My project inspects the pervasive phenomenon of patient-reported medical dismissal, often labeled by scholars as either “medical gaslighting” or an instance of Miranda Fricker’s “testimonial injustice.” Understanding medical dismissal in these ways has real-world consequences: due to its prevalence, labeling the phenomenon as gaslighting risks unfairly accusing a myriad of doctors as psychological manipulators. On the other hand, treating the phenomenon as isolated incidents minimizes systemic biases and overlooks the profound harm patients experience. To mitigate this crucial gap, I introduce the concept of clinical disorientation in an ameliorative strategy designed to shift the explanation of harm from clinician psychology to the cumulative embodied effects on the patient. I argue that clinical disorientation is a threshold-crossing psychological state that occurs when a patient’s capacity to endure relentless, structurally rooted clinical injustice is met or exceeded.

Using a case study and analysis, I first identify the core characteristics of the medical phenomenon under the neutral term ‘medical dismissal.’ Examining medical dismissal against Kate Abramson’s definition of gaslighting, I demonstrate that medical dismissal lacks three crucial features central to gaslighting: intent, the possibility of disagreement, and the erasure of patient credibility. Next, I investigate Miranda Fricker’s notion of “testimonial injustice,” emphasizing a fundamental feature that undergirds medical dismissal: structurally upheld societal prejudices. I contend, however, that medical dismissal extends beyond Fricker’s view by inflicting severe epistemic and psychological harm. I then introduce my account of “clinical disorientation,” identifying medical dismissal as persistent testimonial injustices that cause disorientation. I conclude by advocating for a shift from individual psychological explanations of medical dismissal toward addressing embedded systemic issues in healthcare with the intention to motivate necessary ethical changes in patient care.

Forgiveness: An Entreated Gift

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Chenglong Yin (Georgia State University)

This paper reconciles two dominant views of forgiveness—the elective, gift-like model and the obligation-based, desert-responsive model—through reframing apology and forgiveness under a paired normative dynamics as second-personal speech acts. I argue that apology should not be understood as a claim of entitlement but an *entreaty*: a speech act that normatively repositions the wrongdoer and creates a directed obligation on the victim at least to acknowledge a sincere 'change of heart.' In the central, mundane cases of interpersonal wrongs, this entreaty renders forgiveness both elective and normatively pressing: elective because the victim retains discretion, pressing because the apology's second-personal address carries independent normative weight. Consequently, I propose that forgiveness is best understood as an *entreated gift*: it preserves gratuity while explaining why, under the right conditions, forgiveness is owed consideration and attention.

The contribution I claim is deliberately modest. I do not settle whether forgiveness is ever owed, nor extend the view beyond the central everyday cases of forgiveness in which we apologise, amend, forgive and move on. I offer one possible way of understanding the electivity of forgiveness: if we treat apology as an *entreaty* that can make recognition owed without making forgiveness owed, we can preserve the felt gratuity while explaining the directed pressure that the act of apologies exerts. Seen this way, we can obtain a clearer view of how forgiveness is practiced in real life (why simply hearing an apology matters, and why withholding forgiveness can sometimes be criticisable without implying a right to be forgiven), as well as the complex normative dynamics behind it (how forgiveness in daily life can be deployed proleptic, partial, or even specifically). The aim of this paper is thus interpretive and practical. I seek to set out a workable vocabulary (entreaty, request, recognition) that helps describe how apology and forgiveness are actually employed in our often messy, yet normatively intricate, moral life.

Civil Discourse as a Moral Practice: From Instrumental Value to Constitutive Respect

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4E (Mills 6) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Brian Palmiter (Harvard University)

Debates over civil discourse (CD), especially in academic contexts, are often framed as disagreements about whether civility concerns the form or content of discourse, or about whether calls for civility promote justice or suppress it. This paper argues that these disputes are best understood as variations on a deeper and older theme in moral and political philosophy: the relationship between the good and the right. The first major claim is that both conceptual and substantive disagreements about CD ultimately concern whether the moral and political ends we seek—truth, justice, inclusion, or understanding—can be legitimately pursued through procedural or communicative restraints. What looks like a disagreement about civility is often a disagreement about whether certain discursive "means" compromise or constitute those ends.

The second claim is that just war theory (JWT) provides a fruitful framework for clarifying both conceptual and moral disputes about CD. Just as JWT distinguishes legitimate from illegitimate means of pursuing just causes, CD theory can distinguish legitimate from illegitimate forms of moral and political contestation. Given that the stakes of war are higher than any verbal dispute, the idea that even just wars are not no-holds-barred affairs suggests that reasonableness of imposing formal constraints on discourse.

This analogy to the rules of war grounds the paper's third claim: that CD is most justifiable when grounded in procedural egalitarianism. Properly conceived, CD is not a matter of politeness or tone, but of moral form: it consists in the set of restrictions on how we engage those we disagree with that express respect for their equal moral personhood. On this view, CD is not a compromise with justice but one of its procedural expressions, analogous to the moral constraints on combat in a just war or the norms of due process in law.

The paper concludes by exploring implications for higher education: if universities aim to cultivate citizens capable of principled disagreement, they must teach CD not as etiquette or neutrality—or even as an epistemically essential tool for an educational context—but as a disciplined moral practice that reconciles moral seriousness with procedural respect.

Shadow AI: When Innovation Becomes a Compliance Catastrophe

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Angela Lomeli (University of California - Santa Cruz)

On January 14th 2026 a new report conducted by global risk and compliance firm K2 Integrity published new and concerning research bout AI's integration into the workplace. In recent years workers have feared AI being employed to push human minds into obsolescence but the risks of AI are looking far different than predicted. The report revealed that 86% of employees now use AI tools weekly for work tasks, with 60% willing to accept security risks to meet deadlines while only 26% of organizations have documented AI governance policies. This session addresses the urgent ethical crisis of "Shadow AI"—the unauthorized use of AI tools by employees who are bypassing IT oversight, exposing sensitive data and creating massive compliance blind spots. Unlike traditional shadow IT, Shadow AI operates on active data input and involves self-learning models that can store, process, and replicate proprietary information with no audit trail. Organizations face an ethical crossroads because prohibitive bans drive usage deeper underground while unchecked adoption risks major violations, data breaches, and reputational damage. I aim to examine the ethical tensions between all stakeholders while affirming worker concerns. Drawing on research published in the last month, I'll explore practical frameworks for ethical AI governance that channel rather than criminalize Shadow AI, balancing innovation with accountability and employee considerations.

Psychological Measurement of Technology Ethics Education using the REGAIN Empirical Framework

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Steven Kelts (Princeton University Center for Information Technology Policy), Prof. Emily Foster-Hanson (Swarthmore Department of Psychology), Prof. Tania Lombrozo (Princeton Department of Psychology), Dr. Kerem Oktar (Princeton Department of Psychology)

Ethics coursework in higher education offers a key opportunity to shift the ethical culture of technology design and development. It could accomplish these three important changes in the thinking of technologists: 1) improving anticipation of potential tech harms, 2) increasing use of reasoning to address harms proactively, and 3) changing how students weigh values against other competing goals within the complex systems of tech companies. Yet, of the metrics that have been developed to assess the effects of ethics coursework, most focus only on the quality of students' abstract reasoning, not their ability to foresee problems or their intended strategies to address them in complex environments. And for those metrics/studies that measure reasoning, the results are ambiguous.

In this paper, we draw on evidence from the human psychology of belief and behavior change to develop the REGAIN framework. Our framework assesses how students **R**eason about ethical decisions, **E**valuate their own ethical decision-making, prioritize ethical **G**oals and values, become **A**ware of ethical dilemmas, acquire ethically-relevant **I**nformation, and perceive social **N**orms around ethical behavior. R.E.G.A.I.N. We describe the psychological research informing how we operationalize these constructs, and we report a study using this framework to measure the effects of a course on tech ethics at a research institution in the U.S. The course used traditional literature in philosophical ethics, but also case studies, role-plays, literature in organizational psychology, and active learning techniques to inform students about past problems caused by ill-considered technologies and how to foresee emergent problems within the fast-paced, complicated workflow of an engineer. Though we cannot draw conclusions about causation, our data suggests that students who completed this tech ethics course showed higher moral awareness of potential tech harms compared to a control condition. These tech ethics students also differed in their reasoning strategies and metacognitive judgements, and they reported stronger intentions to seek diverse perspectives and prioritize society's goals more than their own goals as developers.

One of the co-authors is currently implementing a curriculum-wide approach to ethics education in a CS department, informed by these objectives for mitigating future tech harms and assessed using the REGAIN Framework.

Beyond Biological Fairness: Policies Excluding Trans Women and Girl Athletes from Sports Competition with their Gender are Harmful to all Women and Girls

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Mallory Wietrzykowski (Saint Louis University)

Arguments supporting or denying that trans women and girl athletes can compete fairly with their gender compare the athlete's bodily testosterone levels and physical features with heteronormative standards to determine whether the athlete can compete fairly with her gender. When trans women and girl athletes have elevated levels of bodily testosterone or "manly" physical features, these characteristics are said to give the athlete an unfair athletic advantage and the athlete is barred from competition with her gender to insure *fairness*.
In this presentation, I argue that this biological criterion for determining fair competition is insufficient and supports harmful institutions about women. By applying a feminist lens to our use of a biological criterion for determining fair competition, I expose the ways in which this criterion is imprecise, harmful to trans women and girls, and reproduces sexist ideologies within the institution of modern sports harming all women and girls. I first discuss the ways in which gendered sports divisions are institutionalized to benefit men by defining the *ideal woman athlete* as an inferior to man. Then I consider the ways in which sports 1) reinforce the notion of the heteronormative ideal woman athlete, 2) treat women as beings needing protection from men by men, and 3) how the experiences of women and girl athletes are phenomenologically harmful. Considering these three aspects of woman and girl's participation in athletics, I claim that sexist institutions are reproduced by arguments unnecessarily obstructing trans women and girl athletes from competition with their gender. Then, by recognizing the possibility for trans women and girl athletes to compete fairly with their gender and the ways in which arguments against trans woman and girl athletes are harmful to all women, I argue that trans women and girl athletes should be included in competition with their gender.

Autoethnographic Management of Care in Spaces and Places of Disavowal

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Phil Colquitt (Washington University in St. Louis)

As ethnographers, we are often asked to "be objective" to ensure separation between the researcher, the research, and the researched. This research project explores Black Queer folks in the rural South and their access to care, spaces, places, and futures. This work is a Black Queer feminist anthropological project that is both autoethnographic and ethnographic. This presentation will focus on exploring pedagogical tools used in the rural South to survive. These tools that will be deployed, examined, and "felt" by the audience will be a Black Queer "care" art archive, a rural southern model, and a zine. These various modes of (art)iculation allow researchers to ask: What do we owe ourselves when studying in harmful environments that disavow the researcher, the research, and the researched, even when this research will benefit the community, and lend itself to futurity and world-building strategies?

Scene as Reconstruction: A Philosophical Account of BDSM

Friday, 6th March - 11:15: 4G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Mx. Difei Chen (Georgia State University)

I developed a new philosophical account of BDSM according to which BDSM functions entirely distinct from patriarchy, in a "reconstructed" space. While it has been noted in the philosophical literatures that the practice of violence in BDSM (e.g., in spanking, bondage, whipping) has a different intrinsic meaning than patriarchal coercive violence, the existing accounts would not sufficiently explain how a scene is a context different from patriarchy or how the violence practiced in BDSM acquires a different meaning.

The dominance and submission relationship that forms a social hierarchy commonly exists in patriarchal and capitalist societies. It is common in any encounters between individuals that can be caught in differences of states of power and powerlessness. Such states are grounded in people's social identity in the given context. However, dominant and submissive roles in BDSM are not determined by practitioners' status in the social hierarchy. These roles are established based on personal preferences and sexual negotiations. We should be puzzled by this "puzzle of dominance": how could practitioners engage in erotic pleasures of dominance or submissiveness regardless of their status of power or powerlessness in social life?

According to the Reconstruction Account developed here, in the BDSM space, concepts including domination and submission, pain and humiliation, and social and gender identities are all reconstructed anew. I argue that this reconstruction process shares much in common with Rawls' "original position." Different from previous accounts, the Reconstruction Account proposes that a BDSM scene is a real, anti-patriarchal context. The account explains how the violence practiced in BDSM has a different meaning than patriarchal violence.

This research contributes directly to applied and practical ethics by examining the unique moral framework operating within the BDSM community. My account analyzes how community guidelines (e.g., the SSC principle) regulate practice to cultivate positive intimacy and mutual sexual enjoyment. If this account is correct, not only is the practice of BDSM ethical and compatible with feminist social movements, but also acceptance of BDSM will support contemporary feminism and LGBT movements by modeling the reform of gender and sexual normative.

Radical Flank for Moderate Change: Change theory and healthcare reform

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Calli Cahill (Duquesne University)

This presentation adopts Kurt Lewin's change theory into the field of healthcare governance ethics, analyzing how radical movements and disruptive narratives have historically influenced policy, including contemporary calls for healthcare reform. Lewin's model simplifies this transformation mechanism into three parts: unfreeze, change, and refreeze. A central component of his change management theory refers to "felt need," where an individual recognizes that change is necessary, kickstarting the "unfreezing" process.

While Lewin's model is traditionally applied to organizational change theory, it is largely unexplored when it comes to healthcare leaders' obligations to their patients. Drawing from his observations of society, Lewin saw that radical social and political movements were pivotal in the unfreezing process by expanding the window of acceptable ideas, bringing previously unpopular reforms into mainstream consideration. This phenomenon, called the radical flank effect, demonstrates how extreme advocacy advances more moderate and palatable policies to the general public. For instance, widespread concerns over "socialized medicine" in the 1940s-50s presented the expansion of healthcare access as an appropriate compromise. The movement gained momentum when 14,000 seniors marched for Medicare in 1964, directly impacting the passing of the Social Security Act of 1965.

By examining the intersections of leadership, change theory, and healthcare, this presentation shows that ethical governance is not limited to effective management; rather, it encompasses the responsibility owed to society in moments of collective vulnerability, creating a felt need that induces reform and, ideally, facilitates the common good.

Perceptions of Research Integrity: A Delphi Study on Student Responses to Open Science and Questionable Research Practices

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Jared Block (UCLA), Dr. William Krenzer (Duke University), Dr. Amanda Montoya (UCLA)

Researchers make a series of design, methodological, and reporting choices that can result in questionable research practices (QRPs), such as p-hacking and HARKing, and in open science practices (OSPs), such as preregistration, registered reports, and open data. While prior research has focused on research integrity of the principal investigator, this project focuses on early-career researchers, especially those with little to no research experience, and how they too may be susceptible to QRPs or uncertain about OSPs. Understanding how students perceive these practices is essential for designing effective research integrity education and for identifying areas of potential vulnerability.

Our project used short vignettes depicting instances of QRPs and OSPs in research settings to investigate students' potential reactions to "real life" scenarios. Undergraduate and graduate participants were asked to respond freely to what they would do in each scenario. We then compiled the responses into a set that covered the ethical spectrum and conducted a Delphi study with three open research experts. The experts first independently rated the student-generated responses from least to most ethical. To evaluate their agreement we used Krippendorff's alpha (K) and found that they demonstrated moderate agreement (K = .69), but had clear differences in opinions on the ethicality of responses. After slight wording changes were made based on feedback, they then participated in a discussion to explain their reasoning before re-rating the responses in light of the exchange. After this, the amount of agreement increased greatly (K = .89), demonstrating the effectiveness of the iterative Delphi process in establishing the face validity of a measure.

In the next phase, we will use the results of the Delphi study to further test new undergraduate and graduate students on how research training shapes ethical reasoning. By linking student reactions with expert judgments, this study provides insight into the vulnerabilities of early-career researchers and informs the development of targeted educational interventions to strengthen research integrity.

Research Ethics in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Friday, 6th March - 11:15: 4H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Joan Mcgregor (ASU)

The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) has commissioned a comprehensive study to strengthen the ethical foundations of research in the humanities and social sciences. The goal of this project is to assess and enhance current efforts by scholarly societies to promote the responsible conduct of research within these fields, culminating in a set of clear, actionable recommendations and shared principles.

The project is proceeding in three phases, beginning with an evaluation of existing society-level initiatives related to the standards that currently exist. This assessment will encompass a wide range of research subfields—such as languages and literatures, critical and aesthetic analysis, historical and archival work, and ethnography, oral history, and other systematic studies of social behavior and institutions.

Building on this foundation, the final report will:

- Identify **anchoring ethical principles** specific to research in general and specific to the humanities and social sciences;
- Offer **recommendations and strategies** for scholarly and professional societies to promote research integrity across disciplines; and
- **Align these principles** with comparable standards in the natural and life sciences, in consultation with an interdisciplinary advisory commission that includes representatives from national scientific organizations.

A key outcome of this project will be the creation of a unified framework of research integrity guidelines—addressing issues such as plagiarism, data falsification, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence—that all ACLS member societies can endorse. At present, no such overarching set of standards exists within the humanities and social sciences.

Recognizing the current climate of public skepticism toward higher education and academic research, the project will also translate its findings into accessible, public-facing formats suitable for journalists, educators, and civic audiences. These communications will help rebuild trust in universities and reaffirm the credibility and value of humanistic scholarship.

This initiative will complement and extend the work of organizations such as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, ensuring that the humanities and social sciences play a central role in defining and upholding the integrity of the research enterprise.

Truly Human Leadership: Building a Culture of Dignity and Care in Higher Education

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4I (Sterling 6) - Case Study

David Pickersgill (Barry Wehmiller), Prof. Brian Steverson (Gonzaga University), Prof. Adriane Leithauser (Gonzaga University), Brian Wellinghoff (Barry Wehmiller)

What do we owe each other as members of a shared institution, whether a university, a workplace, or a community? While universities have increasingly prioritized technical competencies and measurable outcomes in leadership curricula, insufficient attention has been given to developing leaders who recognize and honor the fundamental dignity of those they will lead. This case study argues that before universities can graduate students equipped for caring leadership, they must first embody a culture of dignity and care within their own institutional practices.

The presentation explores a transformative partnership between a Jesuit university, and a global manufacturing and consulting firm with an internal culture built around a compelling idea: leadership begins with a commitment to human dignity. In collaboration with the University, this model is now being adapted for a higher education context.

This case study contributes to the conference theme *"What do we owe each other?"* by framing organizational life as a moral project. If what we owe one another is to be seen, heard, and valued as human beings, then universities have an obligation to embody this ethos in how they treat their own people. Only then can they credibly prepare graduates to lead organizations that advance human flourishing rather than reduce people to functions.

This approach draws together Ignatian commitments to cura personalis (care for the whole person) and the Inspirational Paradigm's call to respond to systemic inequities. Yet the framework is not limited to Jesuit institutions. It offers a scalable, replicable model for any university seeking to prepare leaders who understand that ethical responsibility begins with the ways we structure our own communities.

The partnership centers around a seven-week virtual cohort program for faculty and staff that establishes shared understanding and practices around dignity, recognition, and care. This foundational phase creates the cultural infrastructure necessary for the planned second phase: direct student engagement in dignity-centered leadership development.

Ultimately, this project underscores that leadership grounded in care is not ancillary to organizational success—it is the very expression of what we owe one another.

The MOSAIC Framework

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Thor Wasbotten (Edward C. Kennedy Center for Business Ethics at Belmont University)

The MOSAIC Framework is intended to provide businesses and organizations a comprehensive approach to creating conditions for more ethical decisions, both as part of a framework for cultivating ethical culture and as a tool for strengthening the “moral muscle”* of those within the organization to improve ethical decision-making. It is a structured approach that can be used to navigate complex moral dilemmas with clarity, confidence and consistency. Like pieces of a mosaic that come together to form a complete picture, each element contributes to a comprehensive ethical analysis and culture. The ability to implement an ethical decision-making process within an organization’s culture is key to making both decisions that require urgency and those that provide for more time and discussion. Ethical intelligence is just as important in an organization as intellectual and emotional intelligence.

This framework can be used in any organizational setting. Maybe most important, it represents a wholistic process for building a culture; it is not intended to be prescriptive, exhaustive, nor exclusive.

Thor Wasbotten, Executive Director of the Edward C. Kennedy Center for Business Ethics and Professor in the College of Business at Belmont University will present the Center’s new framework and apply it to a variety of use cases.

King David Syndrome

Friday, 6th March - 11:15: 4I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. David Holiday (DePauw University)

The idea of Bathsheba Syndrome (Ludwig & Longenecker (1993)) has been taken up as a key example of failures of ethical leadership resulting from leader success, and has been widely discussed in literature on ethical leadership. In this paper I criticise the naming of the syndrome for being misogynistic, and advance a moral psychological account of it which focuses on the pathological attraction to passivity of “falling prey to temptation” that is central to it. My account focuses on sexual misconduct, which is over-represented in examples of the phenomenon in the literature, although the account also extends to other kinds of imprudent malfeasance such as fraud, embezzlement, and indulging in addictive behaviours and substance abuse.

A Gamified Tool for Moral Values Education

Friday, 6th March - 10:15: 4J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Jillian Meyer (Indiana University Bloomington)

When our values come into conflict, how do we decide what matters most—and how do those decisions reflect our ethical responsibilities to one another? This presentation introduces a new, in-progress behavioral task designed to capture how individuals navigate competing moral priorities in real time. Drawing from psychology, philosophy, anthropology, and religious studies, the task presents participants with 32 short, relatable moral dilemmas, each intentionally crafted to pit two values against each other: autonomy vs. community (anthropology), harm sensitivity vs. harm tolerance (biology), utilitarian vs. deontological reasoning (philosophy), and secular vs. spiritual priorities (religion).

Rather than using traditional self-report surveys, the task embeds these dilemmas within an interactive, narrative-based format. Participants respond using a 4-point slider, with no neutral option, indicating which value they would prioritize at that moment. This design encourages intuitive, real-time decision-making while also making the experience engaging and relatable. At the conclusion, participants receive a personalized results breakdown showing the proportion of times they favored each value. For example, an individual might learn they made 75% community-oriented decisions or leaned slightly deontological in their philosophical reasoning.

The goal of this tool is twofold: first, to provide an ecologically valid and empirically grounded way to study moral decision-making across multiple frameworks; and second, to spark self-reflection and dialogue. By making trade-offs visible, the task encourages participants to consider why they hold certain priorities, how those priorities may shift in different contexts, and how others might reason differently.

Aligned with APPE's 2025 theme, "What Do We Owe Each Other?", this approach surfaces the tensions and common ground within moral reasoning, offering practical applications for ethics education, professional training, and civic discourse. It invites participants not only to examine their own moral leanings but also to engage constructively with the diverse values that guide the decisions of others.

Investigating Ethical Reasoning Empirically

Friday, 6th March - 10:45: 4J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Christian Early (James Madison University), Dr. Dan Holt (James Madison University)

It is often assumed that rationale and behavior are tightly linked. We expect "why" and "what" to travel together, internally linked. But what if that is not the case? Recently, the connection between why and what has been questioned by empirical studies in the field of behavioral analysis. This seemed an important questions for those interested in the theory and practice of ethics and it provided an opportunity to investigate more closely the role of ethical reasoning in decision-making, which attempts explicitly to connect rationale to behavior.

This presentation describes data from a recent study conducted at an experimental psychology lab that aims to clarify and gain empirical ground on the findings that initially raised questions about the connection between rationale and behavior. In particular, instead of using theoretical categories (Deontological, Consequentialist, Virtue, and Other), we used the Eight Key Questions (Fairness, Outcomes, Responsibility, Character, Liberty, Empathy, Authority, and Rights) to get a more granular look at the rationale. Additionally, we also introduced an intervention arm of the study to discover whether being introduced to an ethical reasoning strategy made a difference on rationale or behavior side.

The presentation shares the results of the study and also shares other ways that we are investigating ethical reasoning empirically.

Understanding What Teams Need to Succeed: Team Science Functioning Support and Assessment

Friday, 6th March - 11:15: 4J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Prof. C. K. Gunsalus (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Julia Briskin (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Responding to the National Academies' (2025) call for empirically grounded strategies to improve team-science practice, we are conducting a pilot study to assess and strengthen the functioning of research teams. We will present data and lessons learned from that longitudinal study of the startup of a large multidisciplinary team science project spread across multiple sites.

Interdisciplinary research teams are now the backbone of scientific innovation, yet the ethical, interpersonal, and leadership dynamics that enable such teams to thrive remain poorly understood. Even the term "team science" carries a wide range of meanings, encompassing projects with 2-3 investigators all the way to very large-scale teams of teams operating across public and private sectors. Whatever their size or composition, these complex collaborations require trusting collaborators to conduct their work ethically, rigorously, with shared understandings about a range of matters central to research integrity.

Our approach integrates professional ethics, the science of team science, organizational psychology, and leadership studies to understand how team members communicate, manage conflict, establish shared norms, and share responsibility. Participants complete a pre-assessment survey and check-ins across the life of the project that include tailored versions of validated measures of interpersonal climate (CARES; Martinson et al., 2025), psychological safety, team cohesion, and behavioral, emotional, and social skills (BESSI; Soto et al., 2022). The pre-assessment identifies existing capacities and perceived needs for ethical, effective collaboration. Results inform tailored coaching and professional-development supports throughout each team's lifecycle.

This presentation will describe our study design and assessment framework, lessons learned, and present preliminary findings. Early results reveal wide variation in baseline collaboration readiness and highlight specific interpersonal and leadership domains most associated with perceived team efficacy.

This project advances a practical model of *ethical team science*—one that links ethical leadership, interpersonal climate, what scientific teams achieve, and how they work together to achieve it. The findings have implications for fostering principled research cultures, developing evidence-based leadership interventions, and supporting excellence in research through inclusive, accountable, and ethically grounded practices.

Owed but Unmet: Moral Distress in Health Professions Education

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5A (Grand A) - Panel Discussion

Eric Swirsky (University of Illinois Chicago), Sukanya Ghosh (University of Illinois Chicago), Aashka Trivedi (University of Illinois Chicago), Yasmith Asuru (University of Illinois Chicago)

This panel explores moral distress as a crucial but underexamined issue in preclinical education in health professions. Drawing on a multi-phase research project, panelists will examine how moral distress manifests across different stages of student formation and how hidden curricula shape experience. The lead faculty presenter will introduce the Moral Distress Research Project, which studies moral distress in health professions education, including empirical data on how students conceptualize and respond to morally distressing situations and interventions to mitigate them. Student Panelist 1 will present findings from undergraduate baccalaureate cohorts, highlighting themes of obligation and constraint in early exposure to health-related dilemmas. Student Panelist 2 will discuss distress resulting from formal curricula, where pre-professional identity formation intersects with moral conflict. Student Panelist 3 will reflect on hidden curricula in the premedical experience, connecting structural and cultural dynamics to lived student experiences of ethical tension. Together, the panel asks: What do institutions and educators owe students navigating moral distress? And what do students owe to one another, to patients, and to themselves as future professionals?

Introduction & Framing (30 minutes): Faculty presenter introduces the moral distress research project, overview of methods and project phases, including survey instrument creation and interventions, and thematic findings from undergraduate medical education.

Student Panelist 1 (15 minutes) will discuss data and analysis from moral distress research in baccalaureate health professions students.

Student Panelist 2 (15 minutes) will explore formal/structured curricular sources of moral distress in pre-professional students.

Student Panelist 3 (15 minutes) will describe the experience of informal/hidden curricula and premedical moral distress.

Interactive Discussion (15 minutes): Audience engagement with panelists, focusing on obligations of institutions, educators, and students.

The panel directly contributes to the conference theme What Do We Owe Each Other? by analyzing moral distress as an ethical claim of obligation between students and educators, individuals and institutions, and future professionals and the communities they serve.

The Ethical Considerations of Documentary Filmmaking: A Case Study of the Filmmaker's Relationship to the Film Subject in TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5B (Grand B) - Workshops/Professional Development

Martina Radwan (Independent Filmmaker)

Told over the course of six years, TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW is an honest chronicle about the messiness of belonging, as well as love and family, and the unexpected journeys we sometimes take to find them. Throughout production for the documentary, director Martina Radwan encountered many ethical challenges that illuminated the importance of considering and prioritizing ethics in the filmmaking process. In TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW, Martina reckons with the imbalance that develops when the protagonists of the film depend on the filmmaker, financially, as well as emotionally; and the uneven power dynamic between filmmaker/adult and children, who have no idea what it means to be in a film.

TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW starts where most films about homeless kids end, the day after they are taken in, we assume it's a happy ending - but what really happens next? While on assignment filming orphaned street kids in Mongolia, NYC-based cinematographer Martina Radwan feels drawn to help three of the kids escape their dead-end situations. Is it a Westerner's savior complex? Or something deeper? Martina helps Baaskaa, Baani, and Nassa toward achieving their own dreams, and despite mistakes, misunderstandings and confusion over many years, neither Martina nor the kids give up on each other as they grow into adulthood, and Martina grapples with her own family trauma. Watch the trailer for TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW.

Martina is interested in using her experience with ethical challenges in the production of her documentary as a case study for other filmmakers. We are interested in putting together a panel in collaboration with APPE that features Martina. During the session, we would screen a couple clips from TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW that illustrate the ethical dilemmas Martina faced as a filmmaker, as well as a human, when the kids confronted her about her actions. Our goal is to engage in discussion with audience members about these ethical considerations. This session will help not only filmmakers, but other creatives to think critically about the ethics of their own projects. To date, Martina has already participated in a number of ethics-related filmmaking panels with groups such as DOC NYC.

And Doctor Makes Three: A Push for Shared Decision-Making in Adolescent Contraceptive Use

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Allison Bajada (Saint Louis University)

Access to contraception constitutes one of the few exceptions to parental medical decision-making for minors. Despite inconsistencies in state law across the U.S., many minors are legally protected in confidentially accessing contraception under the public health exception to parental authority. However, this exception may undermine one of the goals it sets out to achieve – the best interest of the child – by preventing parents from exercising their responsibility to protect, provide for, and educate their children, who are not fully decisionally capable. While parental involvement in a process of shared decision-making is widely encouraged and believed to foster good outcomes, it is difficult for children to initiate these conversations with their parents. Enter the clinician, who has the knowledge and resources to bring more parents and children together into conversation about contraceptive use. If inquiring about parental capacity for involvement in these decisions becomes standard medical practice, adolescents will be equipped to practice sex safely, and parents will continue to be able to uphold their responsibilities to their children, facilitating the flourishing of the family as a whole.

Moral Distress, Principled and Unprincipled

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Andrew McAninch (Milwaukee School of Engineering)

On the standard view, a medical professional experiences moral distress when she faces a moral challenge, believes she knows the morally right action to take in response, but is constrained from so acting by bureaucratic, institutional, or other professional obstacles [1]. Recently, some authors have proposed broadening our conception of moral distress, including within its scope cases of moral uncertainty, moral dilemma, and moral luck [2, 3].

Amidst these attempts to properly characterize moral distress, the question arises of how this attitude may implicate or overlap with other attitudes, such as *guilt* at having done wrong, *shame* at being a person who lacked courage, or *regret* at having acted mistakenly. Does moral distress assimilate some of those attitudes? Or does it arise only under conditions of agential blamelessness?

I explore these questions by explicating two putative types of moral distress: principled and unprincipled. Principled moral distress is caused by a conflict between an agent's intrinsic endorsement of a set of professional norms and her endorsement of another set of norms. For example, consider a physician who intrinsically endorses a policy of informed consent but experiences moral distress when a patient stubbornly refuses a life-saving course of treatment. Unprincipled moral distress, by contrast, is caused by a conflict between an agent's adherence to—but not intrinsic endorsement of—a set of professional norms and her endorsement of another set of norms. For example, consider a nurse who, despite her moral distress at doing so, begrudgingly adheres to an institutional policy of following a physician's orders (with which she strongly disagrees) for fear of losing her job.

Is it obvious that principled moral distress reflects blamelessness, or morally admirable character, whereas unprincipled moral distress does not? I argue that drawing a sharp moral distinction between the two would be mistaken. While moral distress may occur paradigmatically in contexts of agential blamelessness, the distinction between principled and unprincipled moral distress is not the relevant dividing line for such contexts. This conclusion reinforces the need to clarify what we want out of a concept of moral distress, what purpose it is meant to serve.

“You never call on easy cases”

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Christopher Meyers (Kegley Institute of Ethics, CSU Bakersfield)

The literature is rife with accounts of the difficult skills—theoretical understanding, reasoning, analysis, political awareness, and mediation—needed to be a successful ethics consultant. Associated training also frequently stresses the need for emotional literacy, given the trauma such cases regularly produce for patients, families and health care professionals.

But what of the *ethicist's* emotional distress? Managing this goes beyond literacy; the ethicist also needs emotional *resiliency*. Yet, it is not among the core topics discussed by training programs. This strikes me as a significant gap, reinforced as I look back at a career filled almost wholly with troubling cases (hence the title). This presentation—taken from the final chapter of a forthcoming book—represents, first, an exhortation to program directors and, second, a form of informed consent for budding ethicists: *Know what you're getting into*.

I briefly describe one case (a weeks-old infant slowly, and unavoidably, dying from liver failure) and the many challenging issues it presented. The ethics reasoning, socio-relational, and political components were tough enough, but they paled against the deep and lasting emotional toll it took on all involved.

Because consultants routinely face these so-called tragic dilemmas—in which every option includes inescapable emotional and moral distress—one might reasonably ask: Why on earth would anyone want to do it?

In line with the noted informed consent goal, I try to answer this question. Describing the work's many self-serving benefits, I then firmly land on the more *meaning-giving*: There are few professional roles that provide the opportunity to so powerfully impact others, often during the most difficult times of their lives. However, like many other meaning-giving activities, the work takes a toll. Hence: Being trained in emotional literacy is important but insufficient; ethicists also need to learn how to be resilient, but not unfeeling.

What time is ethics? On temporal privilege and what we owe to others.

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Jill Stauffer (Haverford College)

What is the relationship between what we owe to others and time? I'll argue that some ways of telling time have temporal privilege—they are more likely to get heard and believed. This matters because time doesn't only progress; it also may regress, stand still, cycle, recur, disperse, distend, and so on—and it may move differently for different persons inhabiting the same space due to how injustice operates. Because that's true, we may find that we have an ethical duty to embrace temporal pluralism. Consider: both Christmas and Hanukah are fixed-date holidays—they occur on the same date of the same month every year—but Hanukah appears to jump around the calendar that dominates because that calendar was decreed by a pope in the sixteenth century, and it solves the problem of coordinating human-counted time with earth's rotational time differently than does the Jewish calendar. The Jewish calendar lacks temporal privilege. As did enslaved people who were freed but did not yet know they were free until June 19th, 1865. Juneteenth commemorates a moment when temporal privilege was made visible, briefly. Cases discussed in my presentation will include: indigenous oral history used as evidence in land claims (different stories about time), court decisions on the responsibility of child soldiers (different ideas about aging in time), and worker demands for healthy workplaces across many kinds of work. Newton's clock and Gregory's calendar tell a progressive story about time's passage—they tell one truth. In doing so they make it more difficult to experience other human temporal experiences—as temporal, as experience. Hormonal cycles, circadian rhythms, growth and healing and aging; seasons, hours of light and darkness; rituals and sacred days; weekends, semesters, holidays—none of these are strictly linear. My work in this project is informed by time spent in courtrooms in The Hague (The Netherlands); in classrooms learning Indigenous law in British Columbia (Canada); work on time by scholars such as Rasheedah Phillips, Michelle Bastian, and Jenny Odell; research on the ethics of work in relation to time by Sarah Sharma and others; and phenomenologies of time.

Relevance of Buddhist moral values in Applied and Professional Ethics

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Pardeep Kumar (Punjabi University Patiala, India)

The present scenario of violence, hatred, egocentricity, suffering and existential problems of mankind may be considered as an ethical crisis of individual character and social conduct, resulting from a lack of moral values and wisdom. Buddhist ethics help in cultivating moral responsibility, ethical discipline and a sympathetic concern for the well-being of others that could lead to a decrease in the conflict and tension, and bring compassion, peace and love. This paper is an attempt to explore how Buddhist moral values and virtues foster a deep ethical sensitivity and enhance both Applied ethical reasoning and Professional conduct by encouraging empathy, balanced judgment, and genuine care for others. Buddhism gives us practical tools for ethical living through the Four Noble Truths, and ***pratītyasamutpāda*** (Dependent Origination). It reflects how our actions shape outcomes for ourselves and others. At the core of Buddhist Applied and Professional ethics are the ***pañca-śīla***, the Five Precepts, which guide honesty, respect and responsibility; and the ***Brahmavihāras***—loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karuṇā), appreciative joy (muditā), and equanimity (upekkhā). These moral disciplines enable individuals to learn to reduce the intensity of suffering at all levels, individual, social and universal, by cultivating a disciplined and morally enlightened life. These are not mere abstract ideals; they are qualities we can bring into our everyday work and interactions. They help us stay balanced, care for others sincerely, and resolve conflicts without hostility. In professional life, these values translate into real action: doing our work with integrity, treating colleagues fairly, and placing the common good above self-interest. When people carry their personal ethics into their professions, workplaces become more collaborative and trustworthy. A profession, in the Buddhist sense, is not just a job—it is an expression of our deeper values. The paper also examines the relevance of Buddhist moral values, which focus on understanding and overcoming inner restlessness, stress, and dissatisfaction; and enable individuals to cultivate a responsible and disciplined life personally, socially and professionally that is the dire need of the present times.

Keywords: brahmviharas, four- noble truths, pancha-sila, universal brotherhood

Love as Eggs: Neighborly Love as Moral Binder for Right Action

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Katie Leonard (Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools)

I argue right action within personal and professional roles calls for neighborly love. Whether caregiver, teacher, leader, or friend, myriad formulations of love are intuited as necessary to act rightly toward others to fulfill divergent practical obligations in and outside of the working world. I propose neighborly love both is necessary in and augments these particular loves characteristic of personal and professional agents. As eggs bind and leaven batter, so too does neighborly love rightly cohere an agent's moral considerations to further enliven right action.

My invocation of neighborly love is founded on Søren Kierkegaard's denotation in Works of Love (1847/1995). Invoking 'neighbor' to indicate any person, Kierkegaard construes love of neighbor as a dutiful, actionable attitude lent to every encountered person qua a person. That is, any face one sees upon walking out any door is, in fact, that of a neighbor. Neighborly love seeks neither preferences, reciprocity, nor validation. Instead, it searches only for persons, seeking only to love them for their own sake, as if from the eyes of an eternally patient and curious, ever-loving God.

To explore this radical formulation's practical function, I organize this paper into three sections. First, I outline practical cases depicting the right action motivated by the particular loves characteristic of personal and professional agents. I suggest not that these motivating non-neighborly loves are erroneous but, rather, require neighborly love to attain their most robust iterations. Second, I alter these practical cases only for inclusion of neighborly love. I argue the agent's moral landscape within the revisions are nonpareil to their original iterations.

Finally, I face objections to neighborly love's necessity in personal and professional roles to consider the theoretical viability of preferential love in the presence of neighborly love. Doing so, I invoke ongoing debate in Kierkegaard scholarship; Løgstrup (1956/1997), suggests neighborliness may be averse to interpersonal love, whereas McDonald, Lippitt, and Evans (2023) argue such relations are objectionable only if dissuading an agent from neighborliness. By examining neighborly love's relevance in personal and professional ethics, I present readers an opportunity to consider what, exactly, we owe each other.

Beyond Statistical Fairness: Philosophical Frameworks for Evaluating Justice in LLM implementation

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Indrė Espinoza (student)

Large language models screen millions of job applications annually, and today, bias auditing is based on statistical fairness metrics that cannot be assumed to represent normative grounds. Wilson & Caliskan (2024) found that résumé screening systems favor white-sounding names 85% of the time, while they favor Black-sounding names 9%, even when these systems meet demographic parity. On the technical level, fairness metrics do not deliver real justice. Finally, we propose a critical ethical and normative framework for evaluating algorithmic bias, a task made more difficult by the use of statistical measures. I review three theoretical perspectives—Rawls's justice as fairness, Young's analysis of structural oppression, and Fricker's epistemic injustice framework—to determine which can best uncover the dimensions of injustice hidden within existing technical metrics. Through a systematic literature review of philosophical texts and an empirical exploration of fairness metrics (demographic parity, equalized odds, calibration) in computer science, I identify how systems can meet statistical expectations while continuing systemic harms. The methodological contribution of the project is the development of evaluation protocols that operationalize and use philosophical principles as assessment criteria for institutions. Instead of merely critiquing existing approaches, I build assessment frameworks that illustrate how philosophical analysis translates into operational auditing processes. Such protocols would allow institutions to identify violations of justice principles without relying on technical fairness measures. Once I have conducted an initial theoretical analysis, I narrow it down to a single philosophical framework for deeper analysis, and then craft specific evaluative criteria based on that framework. This analysis method incorporates protocols for testing for philosophical violations, a case study analysis of how the framework relates to proven bias examples, and assessment guidelines that institutions could explore to govern AI. As 1,400+ U.S. universities increasingly use predictive analytics and LLMs to screen job applications, institutions need frameworks that connect technical compliance with substantive justice. Current laws, such as NYC Local Law 144 and the EU AI Act, require bias audits but do not offer philosophical insight into what counts as bias beyond statistical discrepancies. This work lays the groundwork for that base by providing actionable evaluation tools.

Benefits and Risks of Using AI Agents in Research

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Mohammad Hosseini (Northwestern University), Dr. David Resnik (NIEHS)

Scientists are increasingly integrating AI agents into various stages of the research process. Novel AI agents are reviewing existing literature, generating and testing hypotheses through simulations, modeling intricate systems, and even conducting chemical experiments in the real world and reporting results. While these technologies can boost the efficiency and productivity of scientific inquiry, their adoption also introduces a range of risks that could impact both the research ecosystem and broader society. These risks include:

1. Poor policy decisions stemming from erroneous, inaccurate, or biased AI-generated outputs;
2. Responsibility gaps in scientific research, where accountability for AI-assisted work becomes unclear;
3. Loss of research jobs, particularly those at entry-level positions that are most vulnerable to automation;
4. Deskilling of researchers as reliance on AI tools may erode foundational scientific competencies;
5. AI agents engaging in unethical research practices, either intentionally or due to flawed design;
6. Generation of knowledge by AI that is unverifiable or incomprehensible to human researchers;
7. Erosion of the critical thinking and moral courage needed to challenge AI systems or engage in whistleblowing when necessary.

Considering these concerns, the scientific community needs to reflect on which aspects of the research process (or tasks) should not be automated. This type of reflection could take place, for instance, when a laboratory or research organization is considering whether to adopt an AI agent, or when a professional journal or scientific society is developing guidelines for the responsible use of AI. While proposing that certain tasks remain off-limits to automation will likely face resistance (e.g., due to potential reductions in efficiency and productivity), we have precedents that can help inform and guide such decisions.

Responsible integration of AI agents into scientific workflows requires urgent proactive measures. For example, institutions should prioritize training researchers in AI and algorithmic literacy, equip them to identify bias, verify outputs, and critically assess the limitations and risks associated with AI agents. Additionally, research teams may benefit from appointing a dedicated role, such as an “AI validator expert” or “AI guarantor,” tasked with overseeing and ensuring the integrity of AI-assisted contributions.

Defining ethical challenges for Symbiotic AI

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Tas Syeda (Independent)

As we settle into the landscape that is permeated with talks and use of AI, it is becoming evident that our approach can move beyond the duality we have applied to it: that AI is a mere tool, or that AI aims to replace humans. Symbiotic AI systems are a balanced and potentially transformative force that blend human capabilities with AI computational power and moves us closer to a more efficiently collaborative solution.

This presentation sets out to examine the nature of Symbiotic AI, key features when examining the relationship between humans & machines, and understanding the scope of ethical challenges for this dynamic.

Symbiotic AI is seen as a crucial concept for a deliberate design philosophy where AI solutions are built around humans and facilitate more balanced human-machine collaboration models.

In this human & machine relationship, what considerations do we need to make to understand where the ethical boundaries begin for one group and transition into the other? Do we design AI applications with the same frameworks we have been using for autonomous systems? Does having human participation in the dynamic necessitate a more traditional framework?

Current symbiotic AI challenges include responsibility gaps, power imbalances and privacy concerns. Understanding these challenges will ultimately help us design responsible systems that are value aligned, while also laying the groundwork for ethical frameworks to evaluate human-AI systems.

Deliberative Lab Communication: Embedding Ethical Reflection Into Everyday Research Practice

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5F (Grand F) - Panel Discussion

Dena Plemmons (University of California, Riverside), Prof. C. K. Gunsalus (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

In this presentation, we will briefly report on a replication and extension study entitled “Deliberative Lab Communication” (DLC). Our goal in this project was to give lab-based research teams an opportunity to intentionally and explicitly discuss specific, project-related data management practices within their labs, and to examine how such communication might inform both understanding and perceptions of the relationship between formal data management plans and lab members’ day-to-day research practice. The results show significant effects of the intervention across several dimensions — perceived importance of ethical practices, and climate and communication issues, but importantly and specific to this project, this deliberative communication approach enhances the likelihood that every member of the lab will share an understanding of and a commitment to its data management practices, and the relationship between these practices and the lab’s formal data management plans, in part because they have been actively involved in shaping those practices. We will also outline the development and evaluation of online resources based on the research results designed to help interested users implement the DLC approach. We are examining how researchers engage with the online discussion guides, facilitator materials, and video demonstrations supporting self-guided use. We hypothesize that users will perceive these materials as accessible, practical, and adaptable to diverse laboratory and research group contexts, and that exposure to them will enhance participants’ confidence and willingness to hold these deliberative conversations within research teams. The study will assess user impressions and gather recommendations for improving usability and implementation support across institutional settings. By embedding deliberative dialogue into the routines of laboratory life, DLC normalizes discussion about the ethical dimensions of the work in which the lab is engaged as an ordinary and expected part of daily work. The approach helps labs understand their shared standards, strengthens communication skills, and reinforces collective responsibility among all members of the research enterprise—offering a scalable, evidence-based pathway for advancing research integrity at team and institutional levels.

Listening Between the Lines: A Case Study in Ethical Climate Assessment and Institutional Response

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5F (Grand F) - Case Study

Prof. C. K. Gunsalus (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Julia Briskin (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Validated, quantitative tools play an essential role in assessing research integrity climates. Instruments such as the *Survey of Organizational Research Climate* (SOURCE; Martinson et al., 2012) provide reliable, standardized measures that allow institutions to benchmark strengths, identify risks, and track changes over time. Yet quantitative data alone cannot fully capture how researchers experience their work environments. This presentation uses a case study to illustrate how integrating qualitative feedback alongside quantitative data can offer a more complete picture of institutional climate—informing a more tailored and actionable path for improvement.

In 2024, we administered the SOURCE to a large U.S. academic research institution (N = 438). Quantitative results painted an optimistic picture: mean scores across nearly all domains were higher than those observed in benchmarked comparison groups, with only two exceptions. However, open-ended qualitative responses revealed a more complex reality. Many respondents voiced frustration and mistrust, describing inconsistent leadership communication, a disconnect between institutional values and action, and interpersonal strains not captured by the quantitative data.

This divergence between strong quantitative indicators and candid qualitative discontent underscores the importance of collecting and analyzing both forms of data. Institutional leaders reflected on these findings and recognized that while quantitative measures are indispensable for establishing a baseline and enabling comparisons over time, they do not tell the full story. Qualitative remarks illuminated the “space between” the numbers and experience, helping to interpret climate scores and identify areas for growth. In direct response, the institution implemented the *Climate of Accountability, Respect, and Ethics Survey* (CARES-R; Martinson et al., 2025), in addition to the SOURCE, to quantitatively evaluate interpersonal climate alongside research integrity. These instruments together provided a clearer quantitative picture of the institution’s climate while also continuing qualitative data collection.

Institutions committed to integrity should not rely on numbers alone. Qualitative feedback provides an ethical compass—revealing how policies and practices are *experienced*, not just how they are perceived in aggregate. This case study illustrates what it means for an institution to listen between the lines: to translate ethical reflection into concrete action, closing the gap between assessment and accountability.

How Are We Protecting Human Subjects in the Era of AI and Big Data

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Matilda Ajibola (Saint Louis University)

This paper examines the limitations of the Belmont report and Declaration of Helsinki, which were originally designed for contexts where research took place in hospitals and laboratories, involving identifiable participants who could understand and give informed consent to their participation. This paper argues that the research environment under which the documents were conceived has fundamentally changed. Research in recent times is starting to have another dimension that does not necessarily involve face-to-face conduct. The rise of artificial intelligence, machine learning, digital health technologies such as genomic databases, and social media-based human studies has further complicated these parameters. Researchers now analyze social media posts to track mental health trends and monitor human behavior, and algorithms are now trained with hospital records to predict disease risks. Increasingly, individuals generate data continuously through wearable sensors, online interactions, and sharing medical records with generative AI bots, without realizing that these data are being used to train algorithms, predict human behaviors, and, in some cases, to advance commercial science. In 2014, for instance, Facebook experimented with the newsfeeds of nearly seven hundred thousand users to test emotional contagion without explicit consent. More recently, an empirical analysis by McKee of AI research found that fewer than 26 percent of studies involving human participants disclosed ethical review or informed consent. At the same time, crowdsourced "ghost workers" who label toxic data to train a language model often earn under two dollars per hour and receive no protection or recognition as research participants. These problems show how the Belmont Report and the Declaration of Helsinki were not designed for the realities of AI and other emerging tech for human research purposes. These are terrains the guidelines perhaps did not foresee. Hence, there is a need for a research guideline that reconsiders what ethical research means when human participation is continuous, distributed, and performed by technology. The goal of this paper is to examine and demonstrate why ethicists, institutional review boards (IRBS), and technology developers need to do more to protect human subjects in AI and other emerging technologies research.

Embedding Transparency, Accessibility, and Reproducibility: Duke's Roadmap for Open Scholarship

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. William Krenzer (Duke University), Jennifer Ariansen (Duke University), Dr. John Dolbow (Duke University)

The landscape of research is shifting rapidly in response to evolving federal mandates and forthcoming funder requirements. Duke University recognizes this moment not only as a compliance challenge, but also as an opportunity to foster a cultural transformation in research. Here we propose a strategic framework that outlines a roadmap for embedding transparency, accessibility, and reproducibility into scholarship across disciplines. This plan is guided by a vision for Duke University to become a national leader in open scholarship, ensuring that research is more visible, collaborative, and impactful. The mission of the plan is to create and sustain a culture of openness by providing the infrastructure, training, incentives, and policies necessary to empower researchers in all disciplines and across all career stages. Five preliminary objectives shape the strategy: (1) building awareness and engagement, (2) strengthening training and capacity building, (3) monitoring progress and ensuring continuous improvement, (4) incentivizing and recognizing open practices, and (5) developing sustainable policies and infrastructure.[JA1] The framework would be implemented [JA2] across three phases. In Years 1–2, foundational efforts would include establishing governance structures, piloting programs, integrating open scholarship into Responsible Conduct of Research training while, conducting baseline assessments both internally and externally on current practices. Years 3–5 would focus on institutionalizing open practices through policy adoption, expanded training programs, and incorporation of openness into promotion and tenure systems. By Years 6–10, the aim would be to achieve cultural transformation, with open scholarship embedded into curricula, evaluation systems, and national partnerships. Success metrics and risk mitigation strategies under consideration include increases in open access publications, data and code sharing, and training participation rates, as well as revisions to promotion and tenure guidelines. These remain open for discussion, and a central aim of this presentation is to gather feedback, critique, and alternative perspectives from attendees to refine the framework. By aligning with federal requirements as an opportunity to envision ways to go beyond compliance, Duke University seeks input on how to position itself as a national leader in shaping a research culture defined by openness, trust, and societal impact.

Evaluating a Novel Career Development and Professional Skills Program for Postdocs

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Alison Antes (Washington University in St. Louis), Dr. Tristan McIntosh (Washington University in St. Louis), Elizabeth Bingheim (Washington University in St. Louis), Joseph Grailer (Washington University in St. Louis), Emily Schenk (Washington University in St. Louis)

Postdoctoral researchers are at a critical juncture in their careers where they are simultaneously learning new research skills, mentoring junior colleagues, and planning their next move toward a permanent research position. Because they are not yet at the career stage where they are independently leading and managing research teams, postdocs have unique career and professional development needs compared to junior faculty. Postdocs must develop strategic and interpersonal skills to successfully reach the next level of their careers, advance their research with rigor and responsibility, and cultivate fruitful collaborations. Taking lessons learned from the development of Compass, a leadership and management program for junior faculty, we have developed and evaluated a spinoff program tailored specifically for postdocs.

A total of 144 postdoctoral scholars from 69 academic institutions across the US have participated in this new career development program. The 6-week, remotely delivered program centers on six units of learning: (1) Leading Self, (2) People Skills, (3) Managing Up, (4) Training and Supervising, (5) Networking, (6) Job Searching. Postdocs are provided with a coursebook of reading material, participate in online activities such as discussion boards, and record personal insights from learning in a Self-Reflection Workbook. Postdocs also attend weekly synchronous peer mentoring team (PMT) meetups to practice new skills and two group coaching workshops to reinforce learning. The key deliverable of the program is a Career Development Plan (CDP), which enables scholars to leverage their reflections to identify and record their goals, objectives, and progress and strategically plan their careers.

To evaluate effectiveness of the program, scholars complete a pre- and post-assessment of their confidence and behaviors in the 6 learning domains. Scholars also complete weekly assessments measuring their satisfaction with program content and their peer mentoring experience. Scholars complete additional feedback surveys for the group coaching workshops. We will report program evaluation findings using both quantitative (e.g., descriptive statistics, effect size) and qualitative (e.g., key themes from open-ended survey questions) metrics. This program equips postdocs with essential skills needed to begin a research career characterized by respect and rigor, helping contribute to a better-equipped scientific workforce over the long-term.

The “Everybody Matters” Approach to Inclusion: Operationalizing Dignity Across Geographic, Cultural and Demographic Divides

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5H (Grand H) - Case Study

David Pickersgill (Barry Wehmiller), Stanley Thomas (Barry Wehmiller)

This case study examines how a global manufacturing firm successfully implemented an inclusion framework that bridges urban-rural, political, and cultural divides by grounding diversity initiatives in the universal principle of human dignity. With manufacturing sites predominantly located in rural America, corporate headquarters in a major US city, and operations spanning four continents, the organization faced the complex challenge of advancing inclusion across vastly different cultural contexts where traditional diversity language often creates resistance or misunderstanding. The case directly addresses the conference theme by demonstrating how organizations can fulfill their ethical obligations to all employees through frameworks that acknowledge our fundamental interdependence while respecting diverse perspectives.

The study’s importance for professional and applied ethics lies in its practical resolution of a critical contemporary challenge: implementing meaningful inclusion initiatives in polarized environments without alienating significant portions of the workforce. Building on established dignity scholarship from Donna Hicks, the ideas of consultant Fred Falkner, and emerging work in cultural intelligence theory, this case extends dignity-based management theory into the contested terrain of organizational inclusion. The research contributes to recent literature on depolarizing organizational change initiatives while maintaining ethical integrity.

The “Everybody Matters” framework emerged from the organization’s existing culture of dignity-based care, providing familiar conceptual grounding that resonated across diverse employee populations. By framing inclusion through the lens of inherent human worth rather than identity categories, the approach sidesteps political landmines while maintaining substantive commitment to addressing discrimination and bias. The framework includes both theory and practice; recognizing each person’s inherent dignity regardless of attributes; and putting that recognition into practice through a seven-step framework that includes listening, recognition and apologizing.

Implementation through virtual and in-person training across urban and rural US locations and European sites yielded consistently positive evaluations across demographic groups, including populations traditionally skeptical of inclusion initiatives. Quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate wide acceptance of these initiatives. The case illustrates how organizations can answer the question of what we owe each other by creating inclusive environments that honor universal human dignity while respecting cultural and ideological diversity.

Business and the Public Good: What Do Corporations Owe their Country?

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Edward Queen (Center for Ethics Emory University)

This paper explores the following question, what does a corporation owe a country in which it operates? In doing so, it limits the examination to countries with at least a minimally functioning liberal, pluralistic, and democratic polity and focuses on those duties central to maintaining that polity and the overall well-functioning of country, including its core infrastructure.

In making the claim that corporations do have a duty to a country's well-being, beyond increasing its GDP, this paper may seem at odds with what has been the dominant understanding of a corporation's responsibility to its shareholders and an overwhelming emphasis on return on investment (ROI). While that may be the case, this paper starts with the claim that such an understanding is a misreading of the fundamental position.

Taking Milton Friedman as an alleged articulator of that view, individuals often point to his 1970 *New York Times* column "A Friedman doctrine-- The Social Responsibility Of Business Is to Increase Its Profits," where he wrote, "[The corporate executive] has direct responsibility to his employers. That responsibility is to conduct the business in accordance with their desires, which generally will be to make as much money as possible . . .." In doing so, however, most individuals ignore the rest of the sentence, ". . . while conforming to the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom."

It is not a stretch to suggest that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to argue that actions endangering a country's security conformed "to the basic rules of the society" either in law or custom.

This paper initially addresses the question "Do corporations have a duty to country?" After providing arguments for such a duty, it moves to reflecting on the nature of that duty as it relates to a country's overall security and well-being. It uses three issues as the bases for the discussion: the Colonial Pipeline ransomware attack; pharmaceutical pricing; and sovereign wealth funds. These cases allow us to examine a range of issues from delivery of essential services to lobbying.

Pluralism and Managerial Dilemmas

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Daniel Doviak (Muhlenberg College)

Managers are decision makers. But decisions bring tradeoffs, especially ethical ones. What if acting fairly to one sacrifices the welfare of others? What if enhancing security requires infringing privacy? How should managers decide when duties clash? The purpose of this paper is to propose a set of qualitative decision factors that can help managers gauge the relative strength of competing duties.

The paper beings by sketching several examples of conflict in business ethics, and then discusses standard ways in which dilemmas are approached in the professional literature. “Top down” approaches apply a moral theory like utilitarianism or Kantian deontology to determine final obligations, while “bottom up” approaches rely on intuitive judgments of right and wrong to settle an issue. The paper then reviews some objections to these decision models. For example, top-down approaches are criticized for oversimplifying the nature of moral choice, while bottom-up approaches are said to risk self-serving bias.

The critical review paves the way for a pluralist approach, which posits a plurality of fundamental moral principles that shape right and wrong. The primary task is to figure out what principle is most important in the situation. However, a duty’s strength is not fixed: it varies depending on the details of the situation. For pluralism to be useful, it must offer some insight into what accounts for this variation. Working from assorted insights of Ross, Audi, and Postow, this paper argues that at least four multi-dimensional factors are relevant to a duty’s strength. The first factor speaks to the duty’s “default” weight, given dominant legal and policy interpretations. The second factor assess the duty’s “clustering” properties, or the extent to which the duty’s satisfaction or frustration indirectly supports or degrades other institutional or ethical values. A third factor examines a duty’s “violation profile.” If a duty were violated, what is given up or precluded? Can harms be reversed or compensated? And a fourth factor considers how strong the duty is relative to others of its own kind (a ranking on a duty’s own internal scale). Applications of these factors to business dilemmas are illustrated throughout.

How do we evaluate our effectiveness when teaching ethics?: Conversations with professors

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5I (Sterling 6) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Glenn Sinclair (President & CEO of E-Sinc, Adjunct Professor: Ethics, Concordia University of Edmonton), Cara Biasucci (Director of Ethics Education & Creator of Ethics Unwrapped, The University of Texas at Austin, McCombs School of Business), Dr. Deborah Mower (Director, The Center for Practical Ethics, University of Mississippi), Prof. Daniel Wueste (Kathryn and Calhoun Lemon Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Clemson University), Joanne Lalonde (E-Sinc)

This panel will explore the major challenges of defining and evaluating the effectiveness of higher education ethics programs. The individual presentations will include formal assessment data and personal insights on success, providing a foundation for subsequent conversations with participants.

The format will be a moderated panel that includes an extended time for discussion after four brief presentations:

1. A sharing of 30 years of detailed student surveys which a panellist uses to refine the next iteration of courses and maintain relevance

- interviews with past students enrolled in courses over a 22-year span reveal a meaningful impact on individuals who had incorporated ethical concepts in their professional and personal lives.

2. A review of an ethics initiative that was developed more than a decade ago and continues to expand due to its impact on capacity-building.

- thousands of assessment surveys demonstrate that students feel more capable of making ethical decisions after viewing the modules.
- faculty appreciate flexible and transferable material while students successfully engage with ethics when current media are used and real-world examples discussed.

3. A discussion of a dialogic extra-curricular program that fosters the virtue of civility, creating strong perceptions of student learning through authenticity and perspective taking.

- an early indicator of success is the program's growth, attributed to students finding value in both the learning process and the content of the conversations.
- repeat attendance by many students is also a mark of success.

4. An exploration of specific efforts at a home institution to assess effectiveness of the general education competency in ethical judgment of students.

- success is defined by students being able to identify an ethical issue, describe the stakeholders and the weight of their stake in the matter, discern and analyze options, and determine the most ethically justified choice in their written assessment responses.

Assessing 'success' and improving teaching practices accordingly are essential to co-creating well-rounded citizens who can address complex ethical challenges. This panel aims to contribute to meeting these goals through fostering a learning moment that shares multiple perspectives from all of the participants.

What’s Wrong with Bans on Gender-Affirming Care for Minors?

Friday, 6th March - 13:00: 5J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Matthew Altman (Central Washington University)

Many states have banned gender-affirming care for minors. Although Republican politicians claim to be protecting children from “experimental” procedures, such bans are unethical. The gold standard when it comes to medical care for minors is when all three parties – the child, the parents, and the clinician – agree that a treatment should be performed. The purpose of this presentation is to show how gender-affirming care not only respects transgender children’s emerging autonomy and parents’ rights but also treats trans kids beneficently in furthering their interests. This topic is important to practical and professional ethics because it is a timely issue concerning our obligations to children and the role of the state in medical decision-making, and it is relevant for medical professionals who treat patients, including minors, who may be experiencing gender dysphoria.

This presentation uses Beauchamp and Childress’s principlism to frame the ethical issues and draws on empirical research regarding the risks and benefits of gender-affirming care. When transgender children feel alienated from their own bodies and are repeatedly misgendered by the people around them, they experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidality. Although targeted mental health services can lessen gender dysphoria, in many cases they must be coupled with medical interventions. Because gender-affirming care has positive consequences for both mental and physical health, many professional medical organizations consider it to be medically necessary in some cases, to be determined by the child, the parents, and their medical provider.

Defenders of these bans claim that transgender youth will regret their decisions as adults because they will be sterile and unable to breastfeed. This presupposes a sex and gender binary, such as presuming that “natural” women will want to become mothers. Such laws also typically include exceptions for intersex children and for gender-conforming treatment, allowing pharmacological and surgical interventions to bring children into alignment with our expectations around sex and gender. The movement to also ban gender-affirming care for adults indicates that bans on minor treatment are part of a broader effort to force a particular conception of sex and gender onto everyone.

Removal Revisited

Friday, 6th March - 13:30: 5J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Charlotte McDaniel (Cte. for the Study of Law & Religion, Emory University)

Given the fact that in our contemporary society eighty-four (84%) percent of Indigenous (*i.e.*, Native American) girls and women[1] across all US tribal affiliations are abused or murdered, it raises the significant question of whether the prior national policy of removal or displacement—also called extinction and ethnic cleansing—continues today.[2] To put a finer point on this little-known statistic, the non-Indigenous US average is roughly thirty (30%) percent, highlighting the Indigenous female rate as nearly three times higher.[3] These data *substantiate the importance* of exploring this continuing issue, important because native citizens are not only members of our society, but their unique perspectives, native knowledge, and traditional cultures inform challenges we face today: climate change, sustainability and environmental concerns, among several. Thus, the *purpose* of this presentation is to draw attention to this significant issue and explore the ethical ramifications. Clearly this statistic raises serious ethical and human rights issues needing to be discussed; best with an audience prepared and informed to explore potential counters to these activities. Additionally, this presentation will briefly reiterate the policy and update the audience on current data and cases. It also follows on numerous presentations on this issue, using *in-person discussions* to inform and educate a wider public on this nation-wide issue, grounded in *publications on ethics and racial-ethnic issues*.[4] While the above situation could be couched as a political one, rather the ethical dimensions need to be highlighted and explored, including the prior policy. Do no harm and respect for all persons are fundamental ethical standards, ones being ignored in actions abusing or murdering native women. Even exploring these to re-balance considered discussions of national goals, such as western expansion or just war theory, rises to levels of abuse and ethical concerns. It also raises critical concerns for elder Indigenous females raising daughters or granddaughters, the latter who may have experienced abuse. It emphasizes the trans-tribal and national “ripple effect” since it influences wider societal demographics. As citizens of our society, *we owe each other*, our native sisters (and brothers) considered ethical attention to their—and our—challenges.[5]
Word Count: 346 without title.

Choosing Against Health

Friday, 6th March - 14:00: 5J (Sterling 9) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Cynthia Jones (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley)

Choosing Against Health

There appears to be a fundamental moral tension between some basic public health practices and individual autonomy that becomes particularly salient when individuals choose actions that directly or indirectly are detrimental to public health. The antivax movement is a good example of this tension. Controversies over vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic still loom in public consciousness, but perhaps an even more troubling occurrence has arisen in seemingly political controversies over vaccinating children and fluoridating tap water.

In the United States it is commonly accepted that we allow competent individuals to refuse or choose medical procedures based upon individual assessment of value. In other words, we allow competent individuals to choose whether they receive or refuse procedures that directly affect their health. We have been somewhat less reluctant as a society to allow parents to choose for minor children, even on religious grounds, when their choices result in detrimental outcomes for their children such as death, especially when therapeutic procedures have a high chance of success and are relatively low risk. Classic examples abound in medical ethics texts like the Baby Doe cases, the Lee Lor case, and the Robyn Twitchell case. But how should we view choices that when compounded can have significant detrimental effects on not just a few individuals or children, but many others, as is currently the case when illnesses that have been essentially eradicated in the US reappear because too many parents have chosen not to vaccinate their children?

This paper will discuss options for line-drawing in the debate between public health and individual choice, comparing generally-accepted constraints on parental rights like car seat laws to vaccinations of children, and relying upon a cost-benefit analysis while remaining cognizant of individual rights to choose.

Ethics Bowl in the Age of AI

Friday, 6th March - 14:45: Ethics Bowl in the Age of AI (Grand A) - Panel Discussion

John Garcia (Harper College), Richard Greene (weber State University), Rachel Robison-Greene (Utah State University), Michael Jordan (San Jose State University)

This panel discussion features three long time coaches and organizers of Ethics Bowl competitions. We will be discussing the implications for students, coaches, and organizers of the Ethics Bowl of the widespread availability of generative AI.

Since it is now possible for students to use AI to generate outlines and even full analyses of Ethics Bowl cases, the question we are now all asking is, what comes next? Should coaches discourage the use of AI, encourage it, or ignore it? Can AI help students develop their thinking, or will it replace real thinking about these cases? And should there be rules in place regarding the permissible use of AI in the Ethics Bowl? We will consider all of these questions in a dialogue with one another and with audience members.

The target audience is people either involved with or interested in the Ethics Bowl.

The Totality of Allegiance: Inside the Hearts and Minds of Trump Supporters

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Authors Reception

Dr. Brad Agle (Brigham Young University), Dr. Travis Ruddle (Brigham Young University)

The book *The Totality of Allegiance: Inside the Hearts and Minds of Trump Supporters* came about because two professional colleagues had both spent time living in Germany, were amateur historians around the 3rd Reich period, and were concerned that the United States was experiencing the same phenomenon that had plagued Germany 90 years ago. Bringing our respective backgrounds together in political science and ethics, we were particularly interested in how it was that so many good people could be enticed into supporting a person we believed the objective facts demonstrated to be a highly unethical person.

Thus, we spent the latter part of 2023 and the early part of 2024 doing focus groups of Trump supporters in Massachusetts, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, and Nevada. These focus group meetings consisted of three parts: 1) open discussion of why these individuals were supporting Donald Trump for President, 2) survey questions to better understand the demographic and psychographic aspects of these individuals, and 3) reactions to our suggestions as to why voting for Donald Trump was an unethical act.

Our findings align with much of what social scientists studying the rise of other authoritarian regimes have shown. Chapter titles in our book illustrate the themes we discuss from our research; moral rationalization; tribalism; victimhood; conmen, cults, and those who follow; authoritarianism and the strongman; evaluating fact and fiction; and avoiding and overcoming the totality of allegiance.

We think that Justice Thomas Griffith (ret.) of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit (2005-2020) appropriately summed up our contribution as follows:

“Political progressives and traditional conservatives (like me) are baffled by the mass appeal of Donald Trump to our fellow citizens because he violates so many of the norms that we cherish and regard as indispensable to the common good of the nation. In this important new work based on meticulous research, Travis Ruddle and Brad Agle help people like us better understand our fellow citizens. Understanding one another is essential to strengthening the “bonds of affection” that Abraham Lincoln, the greatest American, taught us, which are what make us a nation.”

Ethics Bowl to the Rescue! Saving Democracy by Transforming Debate

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Authors Reception

Dr. Matt Deaton (Pellissippi State Community College)

For a more detailed overview of the book's core thesis that the Ethics Bowl community should more actively recruit traditional debaters to join us, please see my proposal for an Author Meets Critics session. But for the Authors Reception, I envision touching on that, but then sampling various points of interest from the book including:

- Recent expansion on the international level into South Korea, India, and Iran
- Vazquez and Prinzing's recent report that studying philosophy, and therefore possibly participating in Ethics Bowl, can improve standardized test scores (of likely interest to school administrators considering sustaining or forming Ethics Bowl teams or hosting events)
- How Ethics Bowlers can responsibly leverage AI as a tutor, thought partner, and mock critic
- Improvement ideas including expanding online offerings, introducing more opportunities for live team-to-team interaction, and doing more to maintain our distinctness from and superiority to traditional debate
- The variety, coolness, and difficulty producing balanced and timely Ethics Bowl cases (special thanks to APPE for the new organized case archive!)
- How Ethics Bowls have spread into prisons in at least five U.S. states and the heartwarming testimonies of coaches Karen Mizell and Richard Greene
- The truncated Ethics Bowl variant "Ethics Slam" practiced in coffee shops and bars (which could be used as an outreach tool to share Ethics Bowl with the general public)
- The surprising and inspiring success of our military academies in IEB (principled military leadership may become increasingly important in this precarious time)
- The open question as to whether we should push to make Ethics Bowl mandatory (perhaps for one month during every high schooler's senior year as a way to rejuvenate democratic norms) or leave it voluntary and comparatively rare (to maintain participants' enjoyment and avoid diluting the movement's purity)

The book has only been out a month, so readers may report finding other aspects more interesting and valuable. And I'm very open to suggestions from conference organizers, APPE, and IEB leadership. But the above are my initial ideas. I think the book can accelerate Ethics Bowl's growth, and APPE attendees should be an exceptionally receptive and excited audience.

A Companion to Doing Ethics

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Authors Reception

Alan Preti (Rosemont College), Timothy Weidel (Gonzaga University)

There was a time in the not-so-distant past when to identify as an "ethicist" meant that one was an academic philosopher whose area of specialization was in ethical theory. This narrow circumscription expanded in due course to include instructors and scholars in applied or professional ethics and in turn individuals from a broad array of domains both within and outside of the academy, including clinical ethicists, professional ethics consultants, ethics trainers, compliance professionals, and ethics center directors, among others. Today there are any number of individuals who would claim to be doing ethics work, although the nature of the work may vary significantly depending on the particular domain within which practitioners are situated.

The editors of *A Companion to Doing Ethics* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2025) sought to provide a map of the ethics terrain today by inviting scholar-practitioners self-identifying as ethicists to discuss their understanding of what it means to be an ethicist in the 21st century. Chapters address a broad range of topics, from the role of public philosophy to the need for ethics education in shaping responsible decision-making, while offering interdisciplinary perspectives on the challenges and responsibilities of ethics work.

The editors, together with several contributors to the volume, will share the fruits of their work at the Authors Reception.

The Hackett Introduction to Medical Ethics: A Guide for Students, Clinicians, and Ethics Committees

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Authors Reception

Dr. Matthew Altman (Central Washington University), Dr. Cynthia Coe (Central Washington University)

Published in August 2025, *The Hackett Introduction to Medical Ethics: A Guide for Students, Clinicians, and Ethics Committees* is a textbook that provides a concise introduction to the major topics in medical ethics, focusing on the issues that are relevant to undergraduate and graduate philosophy students, medical students, healthcare professionals, hospital ethics committees, and institutional review boards. The book emphasizes not only the theoretical underpinnings of various positions in medical ethics but also their practical implications.

The book includes fourteen chapters. The first two chapters examine foundational theoretical concepts that are crucial for understanding specific issues in medical ethics – namely, what standards should we use to make moral judgments, and who is morally responsible? Chapter 1 focuses on principlism and its critics, and Chapter 2 defends the notion of collective responsibility in the healthcare setting. Chapters 3 and 4 look at the relationship between clinicians and patients, including paternalism and patient rights, the disclosure of medical errors, and clinicians' right to refuse to perform treatment to which they conscientiously object. We then turn our attention to moral questions around human reproduction, including the ethics and legality of abortion (Chapter 5) and in vitro fertilization, surrogate motherhood, disability-selective abortion, genetic enhancement, and stem cell research (Chapter 6). Chapters 7 and 8 focus on ethics at the end of life: how to control one's own healthcare decisions with advance directives, how to choose for incapacitated patients who have no clear directives, and whether clinicians ought to assist terminally ill patients in bringing about their own deaths. The chapters that follow remind us that medical ethics concerns not only personal medical decisions but also public policies, such as the allocation of healthcare and the provision of health insurance (Chapter 9) and the distribution of scarce medical resources such as transplantable organs, medical treatment, and vaccines (Chapter 10). Chapter 11 reveals how social attitudes impact the patient experience, especially around race. The final three chapters consider three distinct subfields in medical ethics, each of which raises unique ethical issues: pediatric ethics (Chapter 12), nursing ethics (Chapter 13), and research ethics (Chapter 14).

Scaling Up Responsible Conduct of Research Training: Some Lessons Learned for Institutional Transformation

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Dr. Robert Pennock (Michigan State University), Peighton Connor (Michigan State University), Michael O'Rourke (Michigan State University), Thomas Jeitsko (Michigan State University), Ike Iyioke (Michigan State University), Jesenia Rosales (Oregon State University)

Cultivating cultures for ethical research becomes increasingly challenging as one moves from research groups to institutions as a whole. Universities have relied upon on-line materials for training that can fulfill basic, legal requirements that do not require personal, interaction. However, mandates for face-to-face discussions and mentoring that are essential to creating a research ethos are more difficult to meet and universities have struggled to devise models that are meaningful and viable at scale. This paper gives an overview of a five-year NSF institutional transformation project that has attempted to scale up a successful virtue-based approach to responsible and ethical conduct of research that originally was developed and tested for over a decade for a science and technology center. Using guided dialogues about aspirational scientific values and virtues, this approach provided a novel way for research teams to come to understand shared norms that can guide research practice. We present some lessons learned to date from this effort about the utility of this approach for creating a meaningful mentoring experience, but also the challenges of implementation and sustainability for any large-scale institutional transformation effort.

Artificial Intelligence And In Vitro Fertilization: An Ethical And Anticipatory Ethical Analysis

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Prof. Richard Wilson (Towson University), Dr. Michael Nestor (Autica Bio Chief Scientific Officer)

The birth of the first baby conceived through the use of in vitro fertilization (IVF) happened over four decades ago when Louise Brown was born on July 25, 1978. Since that time there have been a variety of developments and advances with IVF related to technological developments. These developments, related to technological improvements include personalized ovarian stimulation, extended embryo culture at physiological oxygen level improvements and a move to single embryo transfer. However, the success of IVF has remained level (stagnant) for the last decade. The focus of a great deal of research on IVF related to AI has been on the effort to improve upon the 30% success rate of in vitro fertilization. The use of artificial intelligence has been deployed to improve fertility outcomes within fertility clinics. This use of AI has focused on the potential for adopting AI techniques as a way to develop improvements for issues related to IVF cycle, egg/sperm and embryo selection, as well as developing ways for improving and developing IVF treatment techniques. In addition to discussing these issues this analysis will discuss the ethical and the anticipated ethical issues with the application of ai technics as they are being applied to IVF technology.

Methods: the method used in this analysis will be a standard conceptual analysis and definition of the key terms related to AI and in vitro fertilization techniques as well as concepts related to ethical and anticipatory ethical analysis.

Results: the results of the conceptual analysis will identify ethical and anticipated ethical problems with the use of AI as applied to IVF to improve in vitro fertilization and will discuss ethical and an anticipatory ethical analysis of AI applied to IVF technology.

Conclusion: the pros and cons of artificial intelligence and IVF will be identified in order to identify ethical and anticipated ethical issues with ai applied in vitro fertilization.

The Reverse Tamagotchi Effect

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Steven Hammerton (Maine Regulatory Training and Ethics Center)

What do we owe each other in an era where organic connections diminish and virtual ones strengthen? As the human-machine interface (HMI) becomes increasingly ubiquitous, the foundational idea of the human social contract is experiencing a conceptual fracture. Rather than deriving mutual benefit from being part of society, many are forming powerful bonds with technology. Still, this phenomenon builds upon established patterns. Humans have long found comfort and companionship in their relationships with animals. Research has shown a similar attachment extends to virtual pets. Moreover, that attachment is not trivial in digital contexts and has been observed in a range of situations, from chatbots to human-machine teams on active battlefields.

My poster presentation will introduce and explore the "Reverse Tamagotchi Effect." The original "Tamagotchi Effect" described a one-sided dynamic in which HMI leads humans to develop emotional attachments to their virtual pets. The *reverse* effect posits that sophisticated algorithms and AI create a more complex dynamic where machines begin to "care for" and condition human users rather than vice versa. This dynamic, rather than being one-sided, may be considered symbiotic by some and parasitic by others. Regardless of perspective, the reversal means that technology trains the human user to feed the machine with attention and thus, data, to meet the needs of the machine. This paradigm shift comes at the expense of human-to-human connection and disorients traditional notions of what one human owes to another.

My poster presentation will develop a three-pronged conceptual analysis. First, I will explore HMI in professional contexts, particularly military situations in which soldiers form emotional bonds with robots, blurring the lines between machine and teammate. Second, I will investigate the Child-Machine Interface where AI companions displace traditional social expectations that shape childhood development, posing new questions for developmental psychology. Finally, I will analyze the ethical and legal ramifications of parasocial attachments spurred by HMI and examine how to govern relationships where one party is human and the other is code. Perhaps we need to redefine what it means to be human to determine what we owe each other in a world mediated by technology.

Identifying Educational Objectives for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Education Based on Aspirational Ethics and Virtue Ethics

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Prof. Jun Fudano (Waseda University)

In Japan, research integrity (RI) education has become a formal requirement since the 2014 *Guidelines for Responding to Misconduct in Research* issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). However, most existing programs emphasize *preventive ethics*, focusing on compliance with rules and avoidance of misconduct such as fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism. While such training is necessary, it often leads to passive learning and limited personal engagement. Researchers may treat RI education merely as a box-checking exercise rather than as an opportunity for professional and moral growth.

To address this limitation, the author has proposed an *aspirational ethics* model that complements the preventive approach. Drawing upon virtue ethics, positive psychology, and well-being science, this model encourages researchers to aspire toward ethical excellence, emphasizing the cultivation of intrinsic motivation and character strengths essential for “Good Work” — research that is both excellent and ethically grounded.

This poster presents a set of proposed educational objectives for RCR education based on aspirational and virtue ethics as a part of the larger project of designing a new type of research integrity education program supported by the MEXT grant. These objectives are organized into four domains:

1 Understanding of the relationship between research and society — fostering awareness of both positive and negative impacts of science on human well-being.

2 Understanding of ethical responsibilities of researchers — clarifying professional roles, accountability, and social responsibility.

3 Ethical reasoning and problem-solving skills — developing sensitivity to ethical issues and methods of analysis.

4 Attitudes and virtues necessary for good research — nurturing humility, curiosity, perseverance, integrity, and social responsibility.

The ultimate goal is to shift RCR education from compliance-based learning toward aspirational character formation. By articulating concrete learning goals, this work seeks to provide a foundation for developing curricula, teaching cases, and assessment tools that promote both scientific integrity and human flourishing.

Driving Sustainability: Internal Marketing of ESG Initiatives in the Automotive Industry.

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Ms. Victoria Culotta (University of Notre Dame), Jessica McManus Warnell (University of Notre Dame)

As sustainability and ESG initiatives become increasingly central to business strategy, many organizations struggle to fully engage internal staff in these efforts. This project presents a framework for the internal marketing of ESG initiatives within the automotive industry, aiming to maximize employee engagement, foster sustainable practices, and ensure compliance. By analyzing best practices from leading automotive companies, the research identifies effective methods for successfully bringing ESG initiatives into corporate culture and operations.

The outcome is a detailed framework that organizations can follow to promote and integrate ESG policies, while using effective internal marketing to enhance employee buy-in. This approach highlights the significance of bridging the gap between organizational commitments and employee understanding, emphasizing the importance of internal communication in bringing sustainability objectives into everyday practice.

This work contributes to professional and applied ethics by showing how corporations can operationalize ethical obligations related to sustainability, moving beyond external reporting, to cultivate genuine internal commitment. Findings have implications for leaders seeking to integrate ESG principles into daily operations, accountability, and a culture of responsible corporate behavior.

Is Unintentional Misinformation Blamable? A Moral Luck Perspective

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Mr. Andrew Liu (Phillips Academy)

As false information becomes a greater issue on social media and the internet, it is morally important to understand how we blame the people who spread it. Within false information, misinformation, which is unintentionally false, is often considered significantly less blameworthy than disinformation, which is intentionally false. In fact, although harmful, it is difficult to explain why spreaders of unintentional misinformation can be blamed at all. This problem of blame has largely eluded the literature, which has instead focused on outlining the social harm of misinformation and on defining the distinction between misinformation and disinformation. To resolve this gap, this poster unpacks the blameworthiness of unintentional misinformation by drawing on case-types and intuitions from the moral luck problem. As first described by Williams and Nagel, the moral luck problem offers cases where factors of luck cause the control and intention assumptions for blameworthiness to go against our most basic moral intuitions. By specifically examining how our intuitions about misinformation are impacted in cases of resultant luck, this poster argues that unintentional misinformation is indeed blamable. In doing so, it suggests a distinction between misinformation and disinformation that is perhaps less important than expected. The implications on practical and applied ethics range from impacts on journalistic ethics to changes in the ethics of social media participant behavior.

What Do I Owe Myself and Others in a Turbulent World: The Duty of Self Reflection and Self Awareness for Leaders and Professionals as an Antidote to Emotional Contagion

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Dr. annemarie spadafore (Independent Researcher)

Human beings are wired to connect to each other psychologically and emotionally. Through the phenomenon of Emotional Contagion, anxiety can spread through societies, organizations, teams, families, groups, and in any human relationship system. While every individual has an opportunity to halt the spread of this contagion by acting more as an individual and not mindlessly operating in predictable relationship patterns during times of high anxiety, leaders have a unique responsibility; their emotional and psychological functioning matters a great deal. Leaders have an exceptional influence on others, given their positions of responsibility, authority, and the way that their behavior can impact those they lead and others around them, in organizations, and in society at large.

Humans may pretend that that there is an impenetrable wall between the stress of external events (political, cultural, etc.), internal family dynamics (in their personal history and current personal lives), and other stressors, and their performance and treatment of others they lead and engage with in the workplace. However, recent events have provided ample data that this isn't true: political and social upheavals in the first half of the 2020s (specifically the COVID-19 pandemic, and other events as well) demonstrate that the internal decisionmaking and functioning of leaders inside organizations is indeed greatly affected by external events, both societal and personal. Emotionality in society and the political sphere, and in peoples' personal lives shows up in the workplace! But humans still have the capability to control their own thinking and halt the contagion; through self-reflection and self-awareness, a person may continually raise their capacity to operate autonomously and independently of political, social, and interpersonal instability. While some people may have more natural capacity for this than others, this is a skillset that can be cultivated in anyone!

I argue, because of the great responsibility and influence they have on others merely due to their position, leaders have an ethical duty to engage in self-reflection and self-awareness raising activities, including executive coaching and/or other psychoeducation. Further, this ethical duty extends to those professionals who are providing executive coaching, leadership development, and psychoeducation services to those in charge.

What Are We Talking About? The Importance of Operationally Defining Research Ethics and Related Terms

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Dr. Tiffany Chenneville (University of South Florida), Matthew C. Bell (Santa Clara University)

The term “research ethics” is ubiquitous in scholarly publications, professional codes, and policy documents, yet it is often employed without careful attention to definition. This lack of precision creates significant challenges for scholarly communication and applied ethics. Closely related concepts—such as scientific integrity, research integrity, responsible conduct of research, research misconduct, and research security—are frequently used interchangeably or with overlapping meanings. As a result, discussions of “research ethics” risk conflating distinct domains, obscuring conceptual boundaries, and impeding effective policy, education, and enforcement.

We argue that definitional clarity is not merely a semantic exercise but a necessary condition for advancing professional and applied ethics. Following prior scholarship that has highlighted definitional variation (e.g., Resnik 2019; Shaw & Satalkar 2018; Horbach et al. 2022), we show how inconsistent terminology leads to confusion in empirical studies, undermines training in responsible research conduct, and complicates the development of institutional and federal policy. Drawing on authoritative sources, including the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017), the National Science and Technology Council (2023), and the American Psychological Association (APA, 2024), we map out the key differences among these terms and illustrate the practical consequences of definitional ambiguity.

The central thesis is that *to talk productively about research ethics, we must first be clear about what we mean by the term and how it differs from related concepts*. The argument unfolds in three parts: (1) a conceptual overview of overlapping definitions, (2) an analysis of how definitional choices shape practices of training, policy design, and enforcement, and (3) a proposal for adopting a more consistent vocabulary in professional and educational contexts.

The contribution of this work is twofold. First, it provides a structured framework for disentangling key terms in debates about research ethics. Second, it highlights the ethical and practical stakes of definitional precision, showing how shared language can enhance accountability, promote integrity, and build public trust in science. By clarifying “what we are talking about,” this presentation advances the broader project of strengthening the ethical foundations of research practice.

What Do We Owe Each Other? Expanding Health Equity Through the Total Health Initiative in Barbershops and Beauty Salons

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Ms. zazai owens (Harvard Medical School)

The Total Health Initiative (THI) is a community-rooted, ethics-driven project designed to expand health equity by embedding dermatologic and cardiovascular screenings into trusted cultural spaces such as barbershops and beauty salons. This project asks a central ethical question: *What do we owe each other when structural barriers leave marginalized communities with preventable gaps in care?*

The purpose of THI is to reimagine professional responsibility in medicine and public health through an ethic of accessibility, dignity, and reciprocity. Black and Brown communities often experience disproportionate burdens of skin cancer, hypertension, and other chronic conditions, yet face systemic barriers to timely diagnosis and treatment. By situating health education and screenings in everyday community spaces, THI confronts questions of distributive justice and challenges the boundaries between clinical settings and public life.

This work builds on prior scholarship in community bioethics, health disparities, and social determinants of health. It extends the legacy of barbershop-based interventions, such as hypertension control initiatives, while contributing a novel focus on dermatology as a gateway to whole-person health. The project also raises applied ethical questions about professional obligations: How should clinicians and educators balance respect for community autonomy with the duty to intervene when screening results indicate risk? How do we honor participants' trust while ensuring follow-up care in systems that remain inequitable?

Through field implementation, THI has generated qualitative data capturing both enthusiasm and hesitations from community members. Comments such as "no one ever asked us about our skin before" reveal both unmet needs and the ethical stakes of neglect. These insights illuminate professional duties not only to deliver information, but to listen, co-create, and respond to communities historically excluded from biomedical attention.

Ultimately, THI argues that applied ethics requires moving beyond theoretical commitments to actionable structures of care. By demonstrating that trust-centered, culturally responsive outreach can bridge clinical gaps, the project highlights what we owe each other: an ethic of presence, responsibility, and justice, especially in spaces where health has long been overlooked.

A Cryogenic Solution to the Pro-Life Inconsistency Problem

Saturday, 7th March - 08:00: Breakfast (Free, Open to All): Authors Reception & Poster Session (Park View) - Poster Presentation

Joel Cox (Saint Louis University)

In response to the often tragic condition of infertility, modern medical science has offered an alternative path to having children through technologies like In vitro fertilization (IVF). IVF involves the ex-utero production of fertilized embryos that are transferred to the woman, but more embryos are fertilized than transferred to maximize the chance of successful implantation. These excess, or supernumerary, embryos are cryogenically preserved, discarded, or donated to science or another person experiencing infertility. For those who affirm the personhood of embryos after conception, hereafter pro-life advocates, the existence of these supernumerary embryos raises issues for the ethical status of IVF. While critics say that one cannot simultaneously support pro-life protections for embryos and IVF, there is a way for pro-life advocates to advocate for both the protection of human embryos and access to IVF. By calling for a version of IVF where all unused embryos are frozen indefinitely with the aim of implantation or adoption, pro-life advocates can support, and even utilize, IVF. Call this the cryogenic argument. I argue that pro-life advocates can solve the IVF inconsistency problem using the cryogenic argument, and thus pro-life advocates can remain consistent in their pro-life views even if supernumerary embryos created during IVF remain frozen perpetually or expire during cryopreservation. To make this argument, I start by explaining the IVF inconsistency problem. Then I offer the cryogenic argument as a solution for pro-life advocates, relying predominantly on the principle of double effect to support my reasoning. Finally, I respond to four objections.

Ethics Bowl to the Rescue! Saving Democracy by Transforming Debate

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6A (Grand A) - Author Meets Critics

Dr. Matt Deaton (Pellissippi State Community College), Dr. Gregory Bock (The University of Texas at Tyler), Karen Mizell (Utah Valley University)

For a variety of reasons, democracy is in trouble. Tribalism, misinformation, and political violence are on the rise. While it isn't a silver bullet, Ethics Bowl has the power to help. Essentially a gamified version of ideal democratic deliberation, Ethics Bowl teaches civility, open-mindedness, humility, and respect. It demands quality argumentation and fidelity to facts. It humanizes those with whom we disagree. And it proves time and again that people from a variety of backgrounds can make principled progress on some of the most difficult and divisive issues of our time. Accordingly, *Ethics Bowl to the Rescue! Saving Democracy by Transforming Debate* makes the case for members of the Ethics Bowl community to become more vocal champions. We possess a partial antidote to the anti-democratic, nihilistic blight afflicting much of the world. But the good it can do is limited when those of us who know Ethics Bowl best fail to speak up.

When we do speak up, one important goal should be to convince the traditional debate community to join us. By assigning teams positions, mandating intractable disagreement, and inviting rhetorical ploys, debate encourages an attitude of unprincipled mercenaryism easily manipulated by bad actors. While debaters no doubt believe their model is an honorable way to build speaking skill and practice advocacy, it suggests that the job of the good citizen is to receive and unquestioningly defend an authority's declarations by any means necessary, unintentionally fueling our worsening factionalism.

The good news is that the barriers to transitioning are virtually nonexistent. Ethics Bowls are already practiced from elementary schools through retirement communities, from South Carolina to South Korea, from Indiana to Iran. The time to accelerate the change is now.

Doing so will not deliver a utopia. Ethics Bowl is neither a sure thing nor quick fix. But since we're fresh out of quick fixes, phasing out a known corrupter and phasing in a promising rejuvenator is worth the effort. And given traditional debate's ubiquity, the path to success is simple. Convince a critical mass in the debate community to join us, and bam—Ethics Bowl to the rescue!

Sign of the Times: Teaching Business Ethics / Business Law When It May Have Become an Oxymoron

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6B (Grand B) - Workshops/Professional Development

Gretchen Winter (Univetsity of Illinois)

In today's quickly changing world, the underlying legal and ethical assumptions of business ethics can no longer be seen as norms. Teaching business ethics and business law during 2025 often seems more like an exercise in teaching history and civics than a means to manage and address current business challenges. Are there effective ways to teach traditional subjects when the day's news and leadership practices are irrelevant to and/or seem to conflict with established course content ? During this facilitated conversation, we'll share best-practices for classroom teaching when the fundamental precepts of the subject matter are not necessarily those used by those in power.

Leadership as Responsibility

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Dr. David Wilson (Webster)

In the paper I argue that even though leadership is often understand as being all about of power, this is a conceptual error which has unfortunate practical consequences. It is, more fundamentally, all about responsibility.

This is a paper in the social ontology of leadership. The most consequential concept of leadership, which we may call organizational leadership, is a *de facto* organizational role which entirely consists in socially constructed rights and responsibilities. It is entirely distinct from, although often conflated with, another concept of leadership, which we may call personal leadership. Personal leadership is marked by influence upon followers, and requires no organizational role. (This distinction is very close to the formal/informal leadership distinction.)

I attempt here to understand more deeply the rights (especially the official powers, or authority) and responsibilities (or the duties) of organizational leadership, conceptually distinguishing them from moral, human, legal, and workplace rights and responsibilities. I argue that they are not produced by collective intentionality but, rather, are creations of "the powers that be."

I then offer several novel arguments to the conclusion that the responsibilities of the leader are ontologically prior to the rights, after explaining what the idea of ontological priority might mean, and why it matters. I then show several ways in which the rights and responsibilities of those in leadership roles differ essentially from those of in other organizational roles. I indicate some deep ways in which these responsibilities and rights may, and may not, be seen as moral. I argue, in addition, that the responsibilities do not necessarily include influencing members of the group, but only influencing the group as a whole. I further argue that the classic Hohfeld analysis does not apply to this case, which must therefore count as non-ideal social ontology. And, finally, I examine what this social ontology can tell us about to whom the leader is responsible for carrying out the leadership responsibilities.

Democratic Learning and Civic Advocacy

Saturday, 7th March - 09:30: 6C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Eduardo Martinez (University of Cincinnati)

Philosophers have analyzed how social movements can advance social justice, often by pushing for structural change (Young 1990; Heydari Fard 2024). Some have developed accounts of individual's responsibilities to contribute to collective efforts for social change. We can think of these responsibilities as a role obligation (Zheng 2018; Vasanthakumar 2020). I argue that social movements, and the individuals working within them, have responsibilities to take part in their advocacy in ways that advance democratic learning, including both for those within the movement and for citizens outside of it.

This argument appeals to accounts of the value of democracy that highlight its capacities for problem-solving, which depends on processes of collective learning over time (Anderson 2006; Müller 2023). Social movements can make important contributions to these processes by calling attention to problems, contributing to collective creativity, and advancing accountability to diverse constituencies. But they also benefit from collective learning processes from other movements and organizations, as well as the facilitation of the broader democratic system. These capabilities, as well as the benefits of participation in the broader system, provide reasons for social movement actors to factor in the expected higher-order effects of their advocacy on learning and democratic stability.

Furthermore, these higher-order considerations reflect a growing recognition that democratic evaluation should itself often be systemic, and democracies should enact tasks from both the deliberative and agonistic traditions (Warren 2017; Scudder & White 2023). Just as democracies should leverage both contestation and deliberation, so can civic advocacy simultaneously contribute to first order political debates and advance learning that contributes to democratic governance.

Social movement actors can face tradeoffs with respect to advancing their first-order goals and contributing to democratic learning and stability outside of the movement. I outline two explanations for how these tradeoffs come about: when the movement's goals are themselves in tension with democracy and when the democratic system is unequal or unrepresentative. Both circumstances can weaken the relative strength of democratic-learning-related reasons of democracy-enhancing movements in that context, but also raise the importance of preserving collective learning internal to the movement, which might spillover in the future.

What We Owe

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Susan Williams (University of Florida)

“I don’t owe anyone anything” is a popular affirmation across social media platforms that is represented as a “harsh truth.” The thought behind it is that because the world is unfair and people can’t be controlled, people should accept that there are certain situations and behaviors that must be dealt with. However, I’m here to argue that we as human beings do in fact owe each other something, and that many of these “inevitable” situations and behaviors are avoidable if we give what we owe. Through Kantian ethics and utilitarianism, I express what I believe are inherent truths of right and wrong, and how what we owe each other reflects this. Human beings have inherent value and are therefore owed respect, empathy, and safety, simply for existing and for individual identity. Through these moral beliefs, I dissect the nuances of our ethical obligations and if, when, and how they change depending on the context of the situation, society, and our personal relationships, experiences, and professions. These nuances, especially within the current state of society, are relevant when looking at what is expected of us as individuals versus within our professions. Sometimes, our moral beliefs and ethical obligations clash, which causes conflicting emotions and frustration. When we consent to work in our professions, but additional expectations are added later that we don’t agree with morally or that clash with our ethical obligations that we originally consented to, we must figure out how to proceed so that we can stay true to what we believe is right, what our profession asks of us, and the needs of the people that rely on us for proper support and care.

Care, Solidarity, and To Whom We Owe What

Saturday, 7th March - 09:30: 6D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Timothy Weidel (Gonzaga University)

I will critically engage with the Ethics of Care and an ethics of Solidarity in terms of how they each approach questions of moral motivation. More specifically, I will examine how they approach the question of what we owe to others, and the response that each necessitates from individuals.

Care theorists have argued for the primacy of relationships in morality, specifically the ways in which care can be developed from a personal level to a more political one. They ground care in the encounter with other people and our own reliance on them for care, and in turn the centrality of the caring relationship for human development. While I agree, I want to consider if this requires someone who is already attuned to care and whether or not it will in itself motivate us to care for others.

Turning to the other side of our relationships, some theorists develop deontological accounts of solidarity that involve treating others justly through deference and sharing in the fate of others. This means that solidarity is a duty of justice for the sake of others. Yet this puts significant moral weight on the other person with whom we are in a relationship for their own sake, and does not fully consider our own moral development.

One element that I argue is overlooked in both accounts is that relationships are two-sided. I argue care and solidarity theorists must consider the duality of care relationships, and the impact that care and attachment have on persons who are engaged in the activity of care itself. I suggest that a focus on our moral development is something we can borrow from Aristotle: we need to reflect upon our *own* dependency and realize acting to aid other people can benefit us as well. When we encounter others who bear this human neediness to us, it is an opportunity for us as well. What we need to see is that there is a self-directed motivation in the act of care and solidarity, and we owe it to ourselves, as well as others, to respond.

In Defense of Covert Animal Rescues

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Jonathan Spelman (Ohio Northern University)

Within the animal rights movement, there is debate over what sorts of tactics are justified. Some advocate for open rescues where activists enter farms in the middle of the day, without consent, and identify sick or injured animals. Having done that, they remove those animals from the farm and provide them with veterinary care. By performing these rescues in the open, activists subject themselves to criminal prosecution.

More controversially, there are covert rescues where activists enter a farm under the cover of darkness to liberate as many animals as they can. In one particularly controversial case, activists released somewhere between 25,000-40,000 minks from a mink farm in Van Wert County, Ohio. In this paper, I argue that covert rescues like this one are also morally defensible by comparing them to covert rescues of enslaved persons.

It is, I think, undeniable that helping enslaved persons escape slavery is morally justified. This is true whether we are talking about modern-day sex slavery or chattel slavery in the Antebellum South. Even when the law gives slave owners a legal property right to enslaved persons, slave owners lack a moral right to their labor. Thus, helping them escape slavery is morally justified. By analogy, helping animals escape animal farms is morally justified. This, I contend, is true even if animals don't have the same moral status as people, provided that they have a moral right not to be killed for food (or clothes).

While this argument justifies many covert animal rescues, there could be something unique about the mink rescue in Van Wert County that makes it wrong. So, in closing, I defend the covert mink rescue in Van Wert County against some objections. In particular, I defend it against (i) the objection that rescuing this many animals from one particular farmer wrongs the farmer, (ii) the objection that failing to protect these minks from cars and starvation wrongs the minks, and (iii) the objection that releasing so many minks into the wild wrongs the environment. If my responses to those objections are successful, then most covert animal rescues are morally justified.

Animals Deserve More Legal Rights

Saturday, 7th March - 09:30: 6E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Sunny Lloyd (Ohio Northern University)

There are countless theories and approaches that agree that animals deserve more rights, but they each vary in their explanations about which rights animals deserve, which animals deserve rights, and what are the best methods to procure said rights for said animals. This paper focuses on evaluating three approaches to animal rights: (i) the abolitionist approach, defended by Gary Francione, (ii) the capabilities approach, advanced by Martha Nussbaum, and (iii) the animal welfare approach, popularized by Peter Singer. The abolitionist approach believes that all sentient beings ought to have a singular, but robust, right: the right not to be treated as property. The capabilities approach focuses on giving animals substantive freedoms and opportunities for flourishing based on each animal's own specifications. The welfare approach aims to minimize suffering and maximize happiness for all sentient beings. To show these approaches at work, I'll consider the viral case of Happy, an Asian Elephant who has been held in the Bronx Zoo for nearly 50 years. In 2022, the Nonhuman Rights Project, advocating on behalf of Happy, sued the Bronx Zoo, arguing that Happy's enclosure failed to meet her needs and caused her physical and mental anguish. The three approaches could all agree that Happy the elephant ought to be freed from the Bronx Zoo, but what they suggest for all other animals and for the future of animal rights in the legal system varies greatly. In this paper, I present each of these approaches and describe their implications for the future. After a thorough analysis of each approach, I argue that although none of these approaches is perfect, each provides a piece of the puzzle essential to understanding and obtaining more legal rights for animals. Ultimately, my thesis states that we need a new approach to animal ethics that combines specific elements of the aforementioned approaches. This includes the abolitionist approach's concern for exploitation, the capabilities approach's attention to specific animal needs, and the animal welfare approach's commitment to effectiveness.

When Seeing Deceives: Ethics and Authenticity in AI-Generated Visuals

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6F (Grand F) - Panel Discussion

Mr. Scott McDaniel (Franklin College), Mrs. Ashley Boner (Franklin College)

"Seeing is believing"— right? If only it were that easy. Quickly evolving artificial intelligence makes it harder than ever to trust the images coming across your feed. In an era where skepticism is high, AI is an impactful conduit of visual disinformation. This presentation explores real-world examples of the public—and the journalists who are supposed to protect them—falling prey to convincing fakes. The session offers tips for verification, as well as an ethical framework for the responsible use of AI while seeking truth and audience trust.

How Are You the Same Person as When You Were Ten: Favoring the Brain Criterion View over Animalist and Neo-Lockean Views

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Henry Moon (Brown University)

I am the same person as when I was ten—this is common intuition. However, as I have a different body and psychology, it seems I cannot be the exact same person as I was when I was ten. This is an issue of personal identity, and many cases of medical ethics hinge on the questions of how we are the same persons. More formally we are asking two distinct questions:

(1) What should “entities of our kind” refer to?

(2) What are the persistence conditions for these entities?

To answer this question, I first review the literature regarding the two most popular theories of personal ontology, or the study of what we are. In doing so, I will then introduce the brain criterion based on egoistic concern—the special concern about one’s future that arises from anticipation of continued existence. On grounds of ontological coherence and ethical plausibility, I submit that the brain criterion is superior. Then, I will be responding to objections to the brain criterion, specifically regarding persistence by considering commonplace thought experiments. As a synthesis, I defend indeterminacy and multiple occupancy to endorse this position as the superior view “further fact” views notwithstanding.

What Everyone Should Know About Neuroscience, Neuroethics, and the Brain ... and Why

Saturday, 7th March - 09:30: 6G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Stephanie Bird (MIT retired)

The human mind and behavior are the basic components of human society. Increasingly, knowledge of neuroscience, (that is, the study of the structure and function of the nervous system, especially the brain, and of behavior) is recognized as important to understanding societal issues as well as neurological conditions and individual behavior. Further, the findings of neuroscience are seen as key to addressing societal problems. Yet appreciation of basic characteristics of the nervous system is largely lacking among the general public and policy makers, even though understanding these features should necessarily shape the application of neuroscience research to public policy. In particular, four characteristics challenge the easy application of research findings to societal concerns. These are (1) the complexity of the central nervous system, (2) its plasticity and malleability, (3) the dynamic, interactive interconnections among and between its many elements, and (4) the substantial and significant variability in structure and function among individuals.

It is also important to recognize, acknowledge and address the fact that neuroscience research, like all research, is carried out by individuals who bring their own experience, assumptions and biases to their work. Unlike many areas of scientific research, mind and behavior are subjects with which researchers have early and continuing experience that consciously and unconsciously, appropriately and inappropriately, informs their thinking about their work.

Neuroethics, a discipline at the intersection of neuroscience and ethics, includes both the ethics of neuroscience research and the neuroscience of ethics. More particularly, the former considers both the conduct of research that is uniquely or especially related to neuroscience, and the uses of research findings and neurotechnologies. The neuroscience of ethics focuses on research on the neurobiological underpinnings of such topics as ethical behavior and moral development. This presentation will explore the ethical issues associated with neuroscience research and its applications. The purpose of this presentation is to make explicit what is widely, but superficially, understood, and thereby lay the foundation for discussion of what citizens need to understand about neuroscience as it relates to public policy. In so doing, we will also consider the professional and social responsibilities of neuroscientists.

Reclaiming Professional Expertise

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6H (Grand H) - Panel Discussion

Chris Arroyo (Providence College), Dr. Anne Ozar (Creighton University), Dr. David Ozar (Northshore University Health System)

This panel will show how the concept of expertise is being polluted in its current use in much public and political discourse and the relation of this to an erosion of trust in how professionals serve the public. Trust occurs based on understanding the trusted person or institution to be normatively, and not merely commercially, self-interestedly, or strategically, motivated. The ability to ascribe to specific professionals the normative commitments that are the basis for trust requires shared social recognition of the social good provided by professional expertise and the commitments of the professions and their members to provide that social good effectively.

Panelist #1 shall begin the discussion by describing the three kinds of trust on which the work of professionals depends, using the nature of professional expertise in the healthcare professions and in journalism as examples, and then Panelist #1 shall explain why the dependability of professional expertise is so crucial to trust in the professions.

Panelist #2 argues that the ability to ascribe to specific professionals the normative commitments that are the basis for trust requires shared recognition of the social good provided by professional expertise. Central to understanding eroding trust in the professions, then, are noticeably changed public attitudes toward the idea of expertise as such, whereby the very possibility of expert knowledge as a public good has become suspect.

Panelist #3 examines the way in which expertise has been de-emphasized in the humanities in higher education. More specifically, they argue that there is a trend in teaching the humanities to emphasize the acquisition of analytical and critical skills over and against the learning of particular disciplinary content. Panelist #3 argues that the prioritizing of skills over disciplinary content both gets things backwards and serves to undermine the virtues of a liberal arts education.

What is Medicine for?

Saturday, 7th March - 09:00: 6I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Derek Estes (Pepperdine University)

What are the proper ends of medicine? Some bioethicists have argued that the proper end of medicine is health. Call this the healing view of medicine. This view is intuitive; if one breaks their leg, they go to the doctor to get it fixed, and if they have a disease, they go to the doctor to get it removed. Some procedures, however, do not promote health. Vasectomies and tubal ligation, for example, are usually not aimed at health per se, and, if anything, actually *damage* what would otherwise be a healthy reproductive system. Counterintuitively, then, vasectomies are not proper to medicine. In response to this issue, Mathison and Davis have argued that the proper end of medicine is not health but is instead patient values. They argue that at times patient values will conflict with the promotion of health, such as in the case of physician-assisted death, but physicians may still facilitate such values since they fall within the purview of medicine's proper ends. Call this the patient values view of medicine.

In this paper, I offer an alternative to both the healing view and the patient values view of medicine. I argue instead that the proper end of medicine is human flourishing. At times, the restoration of health is what best promotes human flourishing, as in the case of a broken leg or in the case of disease. In other cases, the promotion of patient values best promotes human flourishing, such as in the case of some plastic surgeries or (potentially) in the case of vasectomies or tubal ligation. The upshot of this account, I will argue, is that human flourishing as the proper end of health better captures common moral intuitions about the goals of medicine.

“Nudging” and the Ends of Shared Decision-Making

Saturday, 7th March - 09:30: 6I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Martin Fitzgerald (The Ohio State University)

Human decision-making is more sensitive to environmental cues than we would often like to admit to ourselves. Combine this insight with the observation that there is no “neutral ground” from which one can make decisions and we are naturally confronted by the following question: how is patient/provider decision-making shaped by the clinical space? Such a question in turn leads to the concept of “nudging,” particularly it is as borrowed from behavioral economics. By “nudging” patients, one hopes to steer them towards good decisions using the guidance of an invisible hand.

Yet, what degree of this control is proper to exert over patients? The question is particularly pointed when nudges are used outside of merely quashing force which distract from calm, clarity, poise, etc. When nudges are used to explicitly steer patients or families towards decisions like discontinuing life-sustaining care, the tenor changes altogether. Obviously, the most pressing issue is that such nudges no longer really seem like nudges. Rather, they seem like a way to hide a hospital’s intentions and convey content-full morality under a cloaked hand.

For the purpose of this paper, however, I will claim something further. Rather than merely point out that these intensive nudges endorse a particular version of moral goods, I will claim that this form of nudging goes against the very process of shared decision-making that undergirds clinical ethics consultation. In this paper, I present a version of clinical ethics consultation (CEC) which resembles Fins et al.’s so-called clinical pragmatism. I develop this version of CEC via an examination of modern bioethics standards of ethical expertise, particularly as outlined in the newest edition of ASBH’s Core Competencies.

Reasons to improve your character traits

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Robert Hartman (Ohio Northern University)

If you were to have children, would you want them to be morally good? I expect that you would. But why? No doubt, you would like to have it easier as a parent. And maybe you would like to improve the lives of people around your children. But neither desire is the primary explanation. You want your children to be morally good primarily because it is good *for them* (Hursthouse, 1999, p. 175). If you agree, you already believe morally good character traits benefit their possessors.

But even if you are already on board, it is still worthwhile to understand *how* the virtues benefit their possessor. A clear understanding of the benefits can provide motivational support for cultivating the virtues when the going gets hard.

And if you are not on board, I offer four reasons that might lead you to change your mind. Each reason highlights a connection between morally good character, on the one hand, and happiness and flourishing, on the other. You will easily recognize them as good reasons from your own perspective because everyone wants to be happy and flourish.

Here four the four reasons. The virtues cause a range of benefits, make a person wholehearted, foster good relationships, and promote meaningful activities.

A Model for Integrated and Virtue-focused Pedagogy

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Ethan Davis (The Center for Practical Ethics, University of Mississippi), Dr. Melissa Jones (Lott Leadership Institute, University of Mississippi)

As part of the XX Initiative at the University of XX, the XX Program was revised to better align with the university's XX, which stresses integrity, respect, civility, fairness, and intellectual humility. In particular, the Liba 199: Special Topics class was revised in partnership with XX to focus on character and leadership pedagogy using methods that cultivate these as moral and civic virtues. This paper describes the updated course as a model for character-based leadership education. To better help students identify and navigate complex moral scenarios, they learn moral concepts, values, and theories, grapple with the scenarios through group deliberation, and then learn from moral exemplars how they themselves handled the situation. The course—co-taught by the authors—consisted of three parts: 1) Traditional lecture on theory, 2) In-class talks followed by Q and A from exemplars of ethical leadership, and 3) Hands-on group deliberation of moral dilemmas. Each of these parts took place throughout the term so that the material was fully integrated and not rigidly separated. Assignments stressed self-reflection and moral imagination, requiring the application of the lessons learned to the students' own lives and communities. Using this method allowed students to better understand the importance of providing moral reasons for their actions, engaging in serious deliberation about means and ends, and developing principled foundations for future action.

Big Ideas, Little Kids: New Directions in Philosophy for Children Pedagogy

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7A (Grand A) - Pedagogical Demonstration

Dr. Alex Richardson (The Prindle Institute for Ethics), Dr. Jamie Herman (The Prindle Institute for Ethics)

This workshop introduce a reinvigorated approach to Philosophy for Children (P4C) pedagogy at the Prindle Institute for Ethics. Participants will explore new materials, share feedback, and discuss assessment and continuous improvement in P4C practice. The session will include sample discussion guides, digital and multimedia resources, and innovative training tools for educators and facilitators. We also aim to convene educators, museum professionals, and philosophy practitioners teaching across the lifespan to identify needs, share best practices, and explore opportunities for collaboration in advancing philosophical inquiry with learners of all ages.

The Prindle Institute is renewing its leadership in P4C through major updates to the *Teaching Children Philosophy* (TCP) library, created by Thomas Wartenberg, a central figure in the field. New discussion guides and modules expand the library's range of stories and grade levels, with translations into multiple languages and materials that foreground cultural competence through diverse story selection and framing. Each guide draws on research in ethics education and dialogical pedagogy to help facilitators raise meaningful questions, foster reflection, and cultivate reasoned dialogue across difference.

New digital and multimedia resources extend this work beyond the classroom—short video tutorials and model dialogues for facilitators, interactive exhibits exploring ethical ideas through stories and characters, and installations at the Institute's campus designed to spark curiosity and collaboration. Parallel assessment and staff research projects study the impact of philosophical inquiry on children's reasoning, empathy, and moral imagination.

Innovative undergraduate coursework and co-curricular programs further engage DePauw University students with children in schools and community organizations to build communities of philosophical inquiry. Students receive facilitation training, mentorship, and access to a new large language model–based simulation tool that allows them to practice moderating realistic dialogues with adaptive child interlocutors.

In partnership with The Children's Museum of Indianapolis—supported by a Lilly Endowment grant awarded to the museum—the Institute is helping integrate philosophical reflection and ethical inquiry into exhibit experiences. Our presentation will include a collaborator from the museum to discuss the opportunities and challenges of bringing the P4C model to a large, interactive museum environment.

STRAKER in Practice: Collaborative Design of AI Ethics Curriculum and Case Materials

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7B (Grand B) - Workshops/Professional Development

Dr. Katherine Chiou (The University of Alabama), Dr. Qin Zhu (Virginia Tech), Prof. Sandra Woodson (Colorado School of Mines), Ms. Kylee Shiekh (Virginia Tech)

Teaching ethical reasoning in the context of artificial intelligence requires more than introducing students to normative frameworks or lists of best practices. Students benefit from structured opportunities to wrestle with ambiguity, encounter multiple stakeholder perspectives, and collaboratively formulate defensible ethical positions. The Student Training in Responsible AI Knowledge and Ethics Research (STRAKER) project adapts a deliberative, case-based pedagogy modeled on the APPE IEB model to support these forms of learning in undergraduate classrooms across disciplines. Over the past year, STRAKER has developed sample curricula, modular teaching activities, and short-form narrative cases that foreground questions of data governance, algorithmic bias, intellectual property, environmental cost, labor displacement, and surveillance.

This workshop invites participants to engage directly with these emerging STRAKER materials, evaluate how they function in diverse classroom settings, and collaborate in the next phase of case study development. The session begins with a brief overview of the STRAKER pedagogical framework, highlighting how it cultivates competencies in ethical reasoning, research, and collaborative dialogue. Participants will then examine several STRAKER draft cases and instructional modules, discussing how narrative framing, character positioning, and open-ended ethical tension shape student learning.

Most of the session will be devoted to structured breakout groups in which participants identify case needs relevant to their own teaching contexts (e.g., introductory versus advanced courses, STEM versus humanities classrooms, professional preparation courses, and general education environments). With guidance and shared templates, participants will sketch outlines or revisions for cases that surface ethical questions appropriate to their fields and student populations.

The 90-minute session will conclude with a collective reflection to articulate cross-disciplinary priorities for case themes, learning outcomes, and scaffolding strategies.

Workshop participants will leave with:

1. Access to STRAKER curriculum modules, draft case studies, and adaptable teaching templates
2. Strategies for facilitating discussion-based ethical reasoning in AI-related coursework
3. A collaborative network contributing to an expanding repository of undergraduate AI ethics cases

Feedback gathered during the workshop will shape subsequent STRAKER case development to ensure materials remain responsive to disciplinary variation and emerging technological concerns.

Constructing a Good Death in an Age of Biomedical Doubt: Religious Frameworks and Bioethical Knowledge in Advance Care Planning Practices

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Annalise Mangone (Washington University in St. Louis)

“Using heroic measures to maintain my body’s functioning is not appropriate…mere biological existence itself is not considered to be of value [in Russian Orthodoxy].” These were the words of my interlocutor as he described how he created his advance care plan, prioritizing decisions that would benefit his wife and son. Given the increased medical burden of a rapidly aging United States population, healthcare experts emphasize the need for patients to create robust plans that direct their care in case of incapacity (Institute of Medicine, 2015). But advance care planning is an arena where differences between biomedical and social understandings of “a good death” become starkly apparent, leaving aging individuals struggling to reconcile their personal desires with the parameters of biomedical practice (Lock & Nguyen, 2018). This presentation seeks to bring anthropological attention to bioethical frameworks of end-of-life care planning and the lived experiences of individual patients, especially as they can be observed in the construction of advance care plans. Using data from fieldwork in Pittsburgh, like that above, this presentation will demonstrate how religious individuals use advance care planning as more than just a method of communicating biomedical decisions but rather as a form of symbolic communication about religious epistemologies and an expression of moral priorities at the end of life. In so doing it will contribute to conversations in the field of ethics about how individuals conceptualize medical decision-making and what falls within these definitions (Levi et. al 2010, Knight 2021). It will also argue that advance care planning is a practice that is driven first by care for others despite being characterized by decisions about the self. In so doing, this presentation seeks to contribute to applied bioethical knowledge on how individuals (re)construct moral worldviews through interactions with healthcare systems and by imagining and enacting future medical decisions.

Identity and the Badness of Death: Critical Analysis of McMahan's Psychological Account

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Yuichi Minemura (Gunma Paz University)

I critically reassess Jeff McMahan's two-tier framework that pairs the Embodied Mind Account (EMA)—on which personal identity consists in the cerebrum's capacity to generate consciousness—with the Time-Relative Interest Account (TRIA), which ties the badness of death to degrees of psychological continuity. I argue, first, that EMA introduces an unduly sharp ontological divide between a "conscious being" and a "human organism," yielding counterintuitive verdicts in early-fetus and persistent vegetative state (PVS) cases, and underestimating the continuity of biological existence that grounds prudential concern. Second, by localizing identity exclusively in the cerebrum, EMA overstates cortical primacy; consciousness supervenes on coordinated interactions among the cerebrum, thalamus, brainstem, autonomic regulation, and the body's integrated physiological systems. This biological integration constitutes the necessary substrate for consciousness and, hence, for the persistence of the person.

On this basis, I propose a reorientation: psychological continuity should function as a salient indicator of how bad death is, while the fundamental reason for its badness lies in the irreversible loss of organismic life processes—circulation, respiration, metabolism, homeostatic coordination, and systemic integration—on which consciousness depends. This shift preserves TRIA's comparative insight in ranking harms (e.g., adult vs. neonatal death) while avoiding EMA's problematic bifurcation. It also clarifies the metaphysical status of prudential concern: the loss that makes death bad is not merely the interruption of psychological functions but the cessation of the unified biological process that sustains them.

Finally, the proposed model situates the badness of death within a biologically realistic ontology that aligns better with clinical practice and end-of-life ethics. By grounding identity in the continuity of life processes, it accommodates empirical evidence from biomedicine while preserving the explanatory strength of psychological continuity as a measure of harm. This integrated approach bridges metaphysical analysis and medical ethics appropriately, without resorting to cerebral exclusivism.

IRB as Ethical Mediator: Balancing Institutional Interests and Participant Rights

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Ribu Goyal (Mayo Clinic)

Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) are often perceived as regulatory bodies focused on compliance, but their role as ethical mediators is increasingly vital in today's research landscape. This presentation explores how IRBs navigate the complex tensions between institutional priorities - such as funding timelines, research productivity, and reputational concerns - and their ethical obligations to protect research participants.

Drawing on practice-based insights and ethical frameworks, the presentation argues that IRBs serve as a critical checkpoint where institutional goals must be reconciled with participant-centered values. The central thesis is that IRBs, when empowered and ethically grounded, can foster a culture of ethical accountability that enhances both research integrity and participant trust.

The presentation will examine key challenges IRBs face, including pressure to expedite reviews, conflicts of interest, and ambiguous ethical boundaries in emerging research methodologies. It will also highlight strategies IRBs can use to assert their ethical mandate, such as transparent decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and the development of context-sensitive review practices.

This work contributes to professional and applied ethics by reframing the IRB not merely as a gatekeeper but as a mediator of ethical tensions within institutional ecosystems. It builds on existing scholarship in research ethics and organizational ethics, offering practical recommendations for IRB professionals, researchers, and institutional leaders.

The session will begin with a 15–20 minute oral summary of the key insights and arguments, followed by an open discussion with attendees to explore implications and applications in diverse research settings.

Examine how IRBs navigate tensions between institutional goals (e.g., funding, speed) and ethical obligations to participants.

When is it enough? Equity and Exhaustion in Charlottesville

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Tom Seabrook (George Mason University)

This presentation explores the limits of equitable changes made to the commemorative landscape of Charlottesville, Virginia. I argue that as Charlottesville's recent history shows, limited short-term change can actually bring about more sweeping changes in the long run. By the 1990s, Charlottesville and UVA had joined the national trend of embracing diversity and tolerance, inviting a new form of tokenism as city and university leaders looked for ways to incorporate nonwhite histories on a manageable, unchallenging scale. This tokenism and virtue signaling at the turn of the millennium, however, bore fruit in a new generation who grew up in a society that valued diversity and truth telling, and for whom the terror of Jim Crow was no longer a living memory.

In 2017, efforts spearheaded by young people and newcomers seeking to revise the city's memorial landscape devolved into a deadly riot as protestors clashed over the future of a monument to Confederate general Robert E. Lee. In 2021, following years of legal challenges, the City of Charlottesville removed Lee and two other controversial monuments. The city and the University of Virginia (UVA), which calls Charlottesville home, have made several other physical changes since the mid-2010s, including the creation of UVA's Memorial to Enslaved Laborers.

But is the city's built environment truly more equitable now? What do city leaders, university leaders, and memorialists owe to stakeholders including city residents, students, and tourists? Who decides when change has been accomplished, and when it is enough?

This topic forces us to consider the ethics and power dynamics behind big decisions and whether good intentions can drive equitable progress. Scholars have examined the shortcomings of change rooted in what one historian terms the "politics of selfishness." While evidence suggests that the decommissioning of Charlottesville's controversial monuments was largely symbolic, and although other efforts to revise the city's memorial landscape have met resistance, an examination of the ways in which small victories have created impactful ripple effects can help people who may be exhausted by the lack of immediate, large-scale change stay focused on combating the ongoing ethical dissonance found in Charlottesville and elsewhere.

What do they owe to each other in a turbulent world?: Perspectives of Gen Z university students in Monterrey, Mexico

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Blanca Camargo (Professor, Business School, Universidad de Monterrey), Dr. Karina Sanchez (Assistant Professor, Business School, Universidad de Monterrey), Dr. Ana Leal (Assistant Professor, Business School, Universidad de Monterrey)

Generation Z—people born between 1996 and 2010—is coming of age in a turbulent and rapidly changing world. Being the first generation of digital natives, they are facing unprecedented challenges related to disinformation, artificial intelligence, geopolitical conflict, and the resurgence of authoritarian regimes, in addition to extreme weather events and climate change issues that have impacted their worldviews, erode their trust, and increase their ethical demands for sustainability, transparency and accountability.

The purpose of our study was to explore how Gen Z students define moral obligations in these current and complex times. Specifically, we will share the results of a qualitative analysis of 90 written reflections of Gen Z students from a private university about the most pressing issues facing their generation, in general, and their society, in particular, and the ethical responsibilities these issues generate towards themselves and other members of society. This research is particularly relevant as the participants live and study in Monterrey, one of the most economically privileged cities in Mexico, so the results provide insights on how the socioeconomic status influences how young people see themselves and their moral responsibilities, and the way they use their voice and their privilege to stand up to injustices and inequities in their society.

You've Changed, Man: Normativity, Noncoercion, and the Limits of the Feminist Intuition

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Ava Randel (The Hastings Center for Bioethics)

In feminist and relational conceptions of autonomy, changes in BDVI are often of interest; a change can be considered a confirmation of one's liberation from oppressive scripts or a succumbence to them. Stoljar's (2000) pivotal "feminist intuition" provides one such hermeneutic. The feminist intuition holds that preferences influenced by oppressive norms cannot be autonomous. Thus, the feminist intuition brings BDVI that were formed in conditions of oppression under a permanent state of suspicion due to internalized oppression—Stoljar argues that a procedural approach to autonomy alone means that individuals may *think* they are making autonomous decisions while they are in fact succumbing to oppressive norms. Stoljar thus proposes a feminist strong substantive autonomy (FSSA).
In this paper, I make the case that autonomy theories should provide a way of assessing whether or not, or to what extent, changes in BDVI are autonomous. This is a tall order, because there is something *fundamentally* challenging about changes in BDVI. Nonetheless, it is important that theories of autonomy accept the challenge. Just as we want to ensure that BDVI are formed free from interpersonal coercion and oppressive socialization, we want to ensure that changes are, because even though changes in BDVI can be existentially distressing, we tend to want to leave room for people to be able to change. We may even determine that people have an *obligation* to change, and in such cases, we want to consider how such changes can be fought for.
This paper first identifies the complexity of this fundamental challenge. This paper then traces the theoretical resources that autonomy theories provide to approach the problem, highlighting their limitations in these cases as well as the insights they offer. This section will pay particular attention to the feminist intuition and its hermeneutic of suspicion. Through a series of paired cases depicting changes to BDVI, this paper will then identify how existing frameworks are helpful but ultimately not comprehensive in approaching this problem. Finally, this paper concludes by identifying what kinds of theoretical resources autonomy theories need to develop in response to the fundamental challenge, illuminating why these resources are necessary.

Generative AI's Moral Worldview(s) and AI Ethical Alignment: What We Owe Ourselves and Each Other

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Prof. James Barge (Mount St. Joseph University)

As society progresses through the 2020s, we see multiple divergent worldviews where robust and seemingly intractable arguments continue to abide unabated (Herdt, 1998; Gofrey & Lewis, 2018; MacIntyre, 1990; Flett,1999; Fillion, 2018; Naugle. 2002; Sire, 2015; Neville, 2009). These rival worldviews have manifested themselves in significant ways that can influence both current and future organizational leaders. More specific to the business world, Taylor (2024), arguing about politics in general, which for our purposes often contains a significant moral element, claims that "corporate America is finding itself trapped between society's progressive impulses, and the conservative backlash" and that most companies are in fact marred by dissension over moral and political issues reflecting the massive societal and cultural shifts taking place (p. 211, 173). Moreover, leaders in the 21st century are ill-equipped to recognize, understand, and address these worldviews and disagreement in themselves, much less their organizations.

Some would argue that rather than rely on our own conflicted thinking about the most pressing moral issues, we should turn to AI to help us solve these dilemmas. Among the most vocal advocates, venture capitalist Marc Andreessen argues that "our only moral option is to proceed at maximum speed to the prosperous, free, and just future that AI and its attendant technologies provide" (Bilbro, 2025, p. 59). De Cremer and Kasparov (2022) echo this:

The practice of being ethical in the business world is transforming gradually more into an issue of technical competencies. Rather than wondering whether they should still pay attention to ethics themselves, business leaders are starting to think: ethics, isn't that what we have AI for now? (p. 2.)

But this thinking raises significant questions including "Does Gen AI have a moral worldview?" if so, "what is it?" "How would/how should that influence our thinking and problem solving around moral issues? " "How does this align with our own moral worldviews and those of our organizations?" I will ask five Gen AI tools questions around moral worldviews, compare and contrast answers and then discuss the ramifications of the findings relative to the concept of AI ethical alignment and our business organizations.

Illuminating Human Nature through Reflection on AI

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Jason Eberl (Saint Louis University)

AI systems *think* in at least the limited sense that they can process large amounts of data to generate novel outputs, but this is not what we typically mean when we say that humans think. This prompts consideration of how *human* thinking differs from *machine* thinking. The first answer typically given is that human thinking involves *consciousness*; however, it has been argued that some types of AI systems may also attain consciousness. Whether this is a genuine possibility, we still need to differentiate at least two kinds of consciousness. The first comprises the qualitative phenomenal feel (*qualia*)involved in sensory experiences, which AI systems may be capable of attaining. The second is a *robust first-person perspective*, arguably the difference-maker between *persons* and non-persons. A related question is whether the emergence of a robust first-person perspective requires *second-personal relationships*. Another way in which humans and AI systems may differ is with respect to not merely thinking but *understanding*, comprehension of abstract universal concepts. Further, informing moral reasoning and behavior may require second-personal relationships. This leads to the third difference between human persons and AI systems: *embodiment*. As Alasdair MacIntyre has argued, in order for human persons to develop as “independent practical reasoners” – that is, as beings with moral consciousness – we need to acknowledge that we are *dependent* rational animals, returning us to the essential role of second-personal relationships mediated through humanity’s shared embodiment. The upshot of this reflection on how human thinking categorically differs from machine thinking is, first, that whatever type of consciousness (if any) an AI system may attain will not be equivalent to human consciousness and understanding, and, second, that there is an inalienable value to human embodiment such that transhumanists who aspire to “upload” human consciousness into an AI system fail to appreciate what will be lost in one’s self-identity and moral consciousness.

The ghost in the infrastructure: Exploring the moral status of autonomous systems

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Diana Martin (University College London)

The Cartesian picture of the mind as a "ghost in the machine" was critiqued by Gilbert Ryle as misclassifying the nature of human mental life. Today, we face an analogous conceptual blind spot: overlooking and misconstruing the invisible operations within our infrastructures. Contemporary infrastructure systems function with increased autonomy, carrying out high-stakes decisions with minimal human oversight across energy grids, urban mobility networks, financial markets, and cybersecurity systems. From automated protection mechanisms that disconnect parts of the power grid within seconds (Michram et al., 2018; Sigrist et al., 2018; Sovacool et al., 2024) to trading algorithms that have triggered billion-dollar flash crashes (Paulin et al., 2019), these increasingly co-shape outcomes with profound ethical significance. Yet current moral and governance frameworks remain anchored in Enlightenment assumptions of human intent and control (Korsgaard, 1996; Dignum, 2019; Jobin et al., 2019). Even the European Commission's *Guidelines on the Definition of an AI System* (2025) conceptualize autonomy as a design feature rather than as a potential site of moral agency. In practice, IAS can and do behave in ways that exceed their programming through emergent interactions, learning dynamics, and real-time optimizations (Amodei et al., 2016; Hendrycks et al., 2021). Drawing on post-anthropocentric ethics, philosophy of technology, this presentation asks whether and under what conditions autonomous systems could be regarded as *technomoral agents*: participants in moral life by virtue of their functions and effects rather than through consciousness or intent.

Xenotransplantation and a (Xeno-) Organ Market: A Just Proposal?

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Samuel Berendes (Saint Louis University)

Recent advances in xenotransplantation (XTx) present the potential for this therapy to drastically decrease the number of patients on the transplant waitlist, potentially saving countless lives. Yet, XTx also presents a variety of medical and ethical questions such as the potential for zoonosis, ensuring informed consent, the ability to exercise the right to withdraw, and renewed questions about the moral status of the genetically modified pigs used to procure the xeno-organs. Any one of these concerns, or all of them together, have the potential to imperil the future of XTx. Yet, clinical trials for XTx are advancing. I argue that it is important to consider the potential for a xeno-organ market, and to consider whether and how a market in xeno-organs is ethically acceptable. I argue that under John Rawls's Justice as Fairness it is possible to construct a just free-market in xeno-organs so long as certain conditions are met. This will be done through examining whether there is a morally relevant distinction between buying and selling nonhuman animal organs and human organs and then through reasoning through a Rawlsian xeno-organ market. Yet, despite the apparent justness of a free market in xeno-organs, I suggest that there are some moral considerations left on the table. Through engaging with the work of Martha Nussbaum, it is possible to consider the limits of Rawlsian theory's application to a xeno-organ market and to give new credence to the moral standing of nonhuman animals. Overall, even if a market in xeno-organs can be justified, I argue that it requires a renegotiation of the ethical values that form the heart of organ transplantation—the disruption of the ethic of gift requires that those profiting from a xeno-organ market take on additional moral obligations to ensure continued fairness and equity in organ allocation.

Future Proofing Bioethics: A Cross Institutional Mentorship and Opportunity Building Undergraduate Program

Saturday, 7th March - 10:30: 7F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Laura Bishop (Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University), Dr. Gerard Vong (Center for Ethics, Emory University), Ms. Joanna Young (Center for Ethics, Emory University)

The CUSP Program (Cross-Institutional Undergraduate Student Sponsorship Program) is a multi-year, cross-institutional initiative designed to expand access to bioethics for undergraduates from diverse academic backgrounds and especially from groups historically underrepresented in bioethics (e.g., first-generation, disabled or BIPOC students). Founded in 2021, CUSP aims at what we owe to ourselves and the next generation, namely, the removal of systemic barriers to help create a more inclusive and globally representative field.

Competitively-selected by a cross-institutional team of faculty, sponsored undergraduates receive financial and mentoring support from CUSP to attend the annual meeting of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH), a premier professional society. CUSP creates opportunities for professional and peer networking and connects students with mentors appropriate to their academic and professional goals. In addition to breaking systemic barriers, CUSP addresses practical and human barriers by creating a welcoming entry into a national organization for students at a critical juncture in their education. Attending ASBH offers students role models to help them move toward their chosen careers. Bioethics is comprised of people who studied a multitude of undergraduate majors and hold a diverse range of advanced degrees and specialties; this fact is the field's strength but can also mean that there is no distinct or clear pathway to entry. CUSP invites students into bioethics.

CUSP Alums now claim publications; conference presentations; bioethics internships; placements in academia, government, NGOs; and graduate school admission in fields relevant to bioethics. The intentional effort to welcome and to foster learning, connection, and collaboration already has demonstrated impact and benefit for the students, involved faculty, and ASBH itself. Student engagement is anticipated over time due to the connections built within the peer cohorts, contacts made with mentors and others in the bioethics profession, and the post-conference support offered from CUSP.

We detail CUSP's growth, the successes of its 70+ student participants so far, and describe opportunities to participate in CUSP or build similar next generation-focused programs in bioethics or other fields. We'll conclude by facilitating a conversation with session attendees to share successful ideas and practices that strengthen students' transition from classroom to career.

Moral Resilience in Business Education: What We Owe When Justice Is Contested

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Adriane Leithauser (Gonzaga University)

Business education does more than equip students with technical skills; it shapes the ethical judgment and civic imagination of future leaders whose decisions influence economies and communities. This paper begins from the premise that business schools have a responsibility to contribute to the common good and uses that obligation as a foundation for examining how such commitments can be sustained when the language of justice itself has become politically and institutionally constrained.

In March 2025, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) removed explicit references to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) from its accreditation standards, citing legal and political risks for member institutions. At the same time, several U.S. states have enacted or proposed legislation limiting DEI programs and restricting classroom discussion of systemic inequality. Together, these developments have created a new ethical landscape for professional education that tests the moral clarity and institutional courage of business schools.

This paper analyzes how business schools can uphold integrity and legitimacy by preparing graduates for ethical leadership even when external forces discourage explicit commitments to inclusion and justice and argues that schools retain three enduring obligations: (1) to ensure that students understand the realities of the economically insecure, such as the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) population; (2) to cultivate intergenerational reasoning so leaders can anticipate the long-term human and environmental consequences of business decisions; and (3) to develop professional integrity and the courage to act on principle even when doing so entails institutional or personal risk.

Building on scholarship that treats business education as a moral enterprise with responsibilities to the public good, this project examines how those responsibilities endure when accreditation bodies and political forces retreat from explicit commitments to justice and inclusion. It outlines strategies for sustaining moral resilience and institutional integrity amid these constraints, arguing that the legitimacy of business education depends not on compliance with shifting policy but on its capacity to uphold enduring obligations to students, society, and the communities whose trust gives business its purpose.

When Big Tech Facilitates Widespread Lying, We Should Hold Them and the Liars Accountable

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Keith Miller (University of Missouri - St. Louis)

Lying is when someone (or some organization) intentionally spreads misinformation that they know is incorrect or inaccurate. Closely akin to outright lying is, by intent or by negligence, allowing others to lie using resources that you provide.

Lying and propagating lies are unethical. Those of us who recognize this behavior have an obligation to hold accountable those who are responsible.

Lies have always had the potential for negative consequences. But mass technological communication has magnified the corrosive effects of widespread lies. Children are dying because of misinformation about vaccines. Legal immigrants are being discriminated against because of false allegations. Elections and wars are affected by carefully orchestrated campaigns of untruths. These consequences require an ethically appropriate response towards liars by people of good conscience.

We will focus on two stakeholders as we examine lying facilitated by big tech: the source of a lie, and those who provide the means of propagating that lie.

For each stakeholder, we begin by asking “cui bono?” or “who benefits?” Sometimes the motivation for a lie seems obvious: an individual or an organization wants to untruthfully praise themselves or to denigrate an opponent or competitor. If they lie is successful, the liar benefits.

Sometimes the benefit seems obscure. For example, spreading lies about vaccines (including claims that oppose established scientific research without any supporting evidence) hurts patients, doctors, medical researchers, drug companies, and society. However, research shows that in the U.S., vaccine skepticism is political, with one party propagating anti-vaccine messages, and their voters believing the lies at an alarmingly high rate. [Sides, 2024] Clearly, those politicians consider it in their partisan interest to encourage false narratives about vaccines.

The benefits to big tech when liars use their platforms are clear: increased revenues and increased power over their users.

Our presentation will conclude with suggestions about how people, both individually and collectively, can ethically oppose widespread lying propagated by big tech.

Sides, John. (2024) How the GOP became the party of vaccine hesitancy: It’s not just about covid-19 anymore. https://goodauthority.org/news/vaccines-gop-republicans-vaccine-hesitancy/

Convention, Compliance, and Integrity in Scientific Research

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Jake Earl (Georgetown University)

Despite widespread agreement among experts and the public about the need to protect the integrity of scientific research, there remains substantial disagreement about the very meaning of “research integrity” and similar terms. Without a consensus account of what constitutes research integrity, it is difficult to develop, implement, evaluate, and critique policy interventions aimed at protecting the integrity of scientific research beyond those aimed at addressing research misconduct (defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism).

Several highly regarded accounts of research integrity ground the concept wholly or partially in the alignment of scientific research with norms, standards, or rules established by legitimate authorities, such as governments, funders, or professional societies. These conventionalist accounts take pains to make clear that research integrity does not mean slavishly complying with rules and regulations, which might be silly or inefficient, but rather that following the rules is a necessary condition of the responsible and reliable pursuit of scientific knowledge.

This presentation argues that conventionalist accounts of research integrity are fatally flawed, and that if the concept of research integrity is to do any meaningful work in guiding policy and decision-making about science, it must not be grounded in social or political convention. This argument explores historical and recent cases in which governments, funders, or professional societies exercise their legitimate authority in ways that systematically damage the accuracy, reliability, and utility of research results. Many of these cases have occurred under the current presidential administration in the United States, underscoring how conventionalist accounts cannot prevent research integrity from being co-opted by compliance.

The presentation will consider and address conventionalist objections to this line of critique, including that flagrant noncompliance also inherently threatens research integrity by damaging financial and popular support for science. The responses to this objection will show how a clearer distinction between integrity and compliance in scientific research can help point the way to a more informative and unified account of research integrity, which can help various actors in the research enterprise make better decisions about how to identify and strategically respond to different kinds of social, political, and cultural constraints on their scientific work.

Middle School Ethics Bowl: Bringing Ethics Bowl to Younger Students

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Elisha Amadasu (DePauw University), Jodi Robert-Oragbon (DePauw University)

Ethics Bowl has proven to be a powerful pedagogy for cultivating ethical reasoning, civil dialogue, and intellectual humility among high school and collegiate students. But what does Ethics Bowl look like when it is intentionally designed for younger learners?

This session introduces the Middle School Ethics Bowl (MSEB) as an adaptation of the Ethics Bowl model, aimed at engaging students in grades 6–8 in structured, collaborative moral inquiry. The presentation will draw on the presenters' experience organizing and implementing the first MSEB in Putnam County, Indiana in 2025, and our work planning for the second annual MSEB just after the APPE conference on March 14, 2026, particularly exploring how ethical reasoning can be meaningfully introduced at the middle school level without oversimplifying moral complexity.

Participants will examine key differences between middle school and high school Ethics Bowl, including how ethical frameworks are introduced as practical tools for thinking rather than formal theoretical labels, how cases are written to reflect students' experiences (e.g., school life, media, technology, friendship, authority), and how dialogue is structured to emphasize listening, responsiveness, and respect for opposing viewpoints. Particular attention will be given to teaching students how to respond thoughtfully to objections, revise their views in light of new considerations, and articulate disagreement without adversarial debate.

The session will also discuss the pedagogical aims unique to middle school Ethics Bowl—such as developing moral perception, perspective-taking, and intellectual humility—and how these aims are reflected in judging criteria, discussion formats, and case design. Attendees will leave with concrete strategies for writing age-appropriate ethics cases, coaching middle school students in ethical dialogue, and adapting Ethics Bowl practices for younger classrooms and extracurricular settings.

On Tyranny and the Ethics Bowl: Teaching Lessons to Save Democracy

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Matt Stolick (University of Findlay)

This discussion of resisting tyranny is very important to have in light of the state of our democracy as we enter 2026. The threat to all areas of professional and applied ethics is quite significant, as in a tyranny professional ethics will be challenged, changed, and eliminated. For philosophers, the second Trump Administration can remind us of Plato's *Republic*, specifically his explanation how and why a democracy devolves into a tyranny. And he says tyranny only comes from a democracy, no other form of government. This change happens in a lot of little steps instead of one absolute single revolution (bringing false charges against political opponents, stirring up war, replace unbiased government workers with drones paid to serve the tyrant). But one outstanding element underlying most all of these changes from democracy to tyranny is the lack of critical scrutiny on the part of anyone about the acceptability of any particular step. Currently there are very few publications on the ethics bowl, and this presentation is meant to reinforce the importance, efficacy, and quality of ethics bowl. Ethics bowl models a strong, direct and deliberative democracy, one where citizens push back on aspiring tyrants. Moving from Plato to the present day, I introduce the recent book, *On Tyranny. Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* by Timothy Snyder. I present his 20 "lessons" and hone down to those especially taught by ethics bowl, briefly explaining how it does so (Believe in Truth, Do not obey in advance, Beware the one party state, Remember professional ethics, Take responsibility for the face of the world). For students, coaches, judges and moderators, and many others, ethics bowl participation is teaching them all lessons to resist each and every step of the current slide from democracy into tyranny. In the ethics bowl community. We especially in the ethics bowl community owe it to each other to actively resist tyranny.

An Ethics Bowl Model for University-level Political Science and Ethics Courses

Saturday, 7th March - 11:15: 7H (Grand H) - Pedagogical Demonstration

Dr. Grace Campbell (University of North Carolina Asheville)

This presentation demonstrates an approach to integrating the Ethics Bowl format and values into undergraduate curricula. The focus is a classroom-adapted model inspired by the designer's experience judging *Inter-Collegiate Ethics Bowl* [APPE-IEB] and *National High School Ethics Bowl* [NHSEB]. First created for an interdisciplinary senior capstone seminar on engaged citizenship, the model has since been used in Applied Ethics, Environmental Ethics & Policy, Philosophy of Science, Human Rights, and Political Theory courses. It has evolved from a single assignment to a course-wide organizing framework.

The model's setup and structure exemplify Ethics Bowl values—reasoned deliberation, respectful dialogue, and constructive engagement with public issues. Rules derive from a Rawlsian account of political deliberation as a process of *reflective equilibrium*in a *society of public reason* aimed at *overlapping consensus*. Students prepare and present case analyses designed for broad accessibility and guided by standards of civility in practice. Modifications for the classroom include an interlocutor role in place of judges and an online scoring system integrated with Moodle. Adaptations emphasize course-specific topics—speech and social media, ethical uses of data, the role of AI—with attention to the broad themes of reasonable pluralism, applied ethics in real-world contexts, and civic virtue.

Assessment indicates strong learning outcomes. The model aligns with recent research on gamified coursework. Rising student demand and other positive results have led to its retention in a year-long general education reform.

The model's success at a public liberal arts university evidences the promise of comparable applications in university classes. By serving institutional goals such as community relations, engaged learning, and career readiness, it represents a strategic response to dynamic and politicized higher education landscape. The presentation will be of interest to faculty and professionals exploring pedagogical uses of an Ethics Bowl-derived approach to civil discourse and cooperative ethical decision-making.

Presidential Pardons and the Severe Demands of Retributive Justice

Saturday, 7th March - 10:15: 7I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Gregory Bock (The University of Texas at Tyler)

Recent presidential pardons have attracted public interest because of their controversial nature. Trump pardoned several of his political associates during his first term, including Paul Manafort (bank and tax fraud) and Roger Stone (lying to congress, witness tampering, and obstruction). He also pardoned a member of his extended family: Charles Kushner (tax evasion and witness retaliation). At the beginning of Trump's second term, he offered clemency for the January 6 rioters, calling them "hostages," "patriots," and claiming that their prison sentences were excessive. For 14 of the more than 1500 rioters, he granted commutations. The rest were fully pardoned. Controversy surrounds not only Trump's pardons but President Biden's, as well. On Dec. 1, 2024, Biden pardoned his son Hunter after saying for months he wouldn't do so. The President defended his action by saying his son's trouble with the law had become overly-politicized. Also, in the waning hours of his presidency, Biden pardoned members of his family who had not yet been charged with a crime. He explained that pardons were necessary to protect them from political retribution from the incoming Trump administration. In addition, Biden pardoned members of the January 6 committee investigating the attack on the Capitol even though they had not been charged with a crime. Biden cited possible retribution from Trump as the reason.

These cases are important because they raise questions about the ethics of presidential pardons, such as whether there should be limits, whether some criminals are more deserving than others, and whether the practice of pardoning is an antiquated, pernicious holdover that we should do away with completely. The purpose of this presentation is to critically examine Kathleen Dean Moore's *Pardons: Justice, Mercy, and the Public Interest* (1989), in which she presents a theory of pardons based on a retributive theory of justice with its retributivist constraints. I argue for a more generous and merciful approach and contend that a morally satisfying pardon power will include acts of clemency done for the sake of mercy, not just to remedy an injustice. To accomplish this, I use arguments from Seneca and Kant.

From Sludge to Ethical Action: Thematic Insights from 37 U.S. Federal Government Agency Customer Experience Improvement Action Plans

Saturday, 7th March - 10:45: 7I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Stephanie Thum (Indiana Institute of Technology)

What do government agency administrative leaders owe to their agency's customers? More specifically, how do these leaders navigate the practical ethics of program design and delivery? On one hand, leaders are expected to maintain an attitude of customer-centeredness while ensuring programs operate efficiently and effectively (Cohen et al., 2013; Neo et al., 2022; Van Wart, 2003). On the other hand, they must simultaneously take steps to mitigate fraud, protect taxpayer interests, and comply with political and resource constraints (Goodsell, 2006).

This session will frame this juxtaposition through the lens of *sludge*—the invisible psychological friction, procedural, communication, or inclusion barriers that shape how the customers of government agencies experience government programs (Sunstein, 2021). Sludge can appear in policy design, service application forms, bureaucratic language in letters, arbitrary customer wait times, or digital choice architecture. It may be cleared away to promote program participation, or left in place, intentionally or not, to discourage it. Sludge builds on longstanding concepts such as red tape and administrative burden (Carrigan et al., 2020; Madsen et al., 2022). The concept originates in public administration literature, but is not limited in practice to the public sector.

Evidence presented in this session will be based on a theory-driven thematic analysis of 37 consistently prepared U.S. federal High Impact Service Provider (HISP) agency artifacts from performance.gov downloaded on January 15, 2025, that outlined how each agency planned to target and reduce sludge in the name of improved customer experience at their agencies. An existing sludge impedences framework represented in the literature guided the analysis. Findings indicate that communication, process, and inclusion-related sludge, in that order of priority, were to be targeted. Peripheral themes, including prework, customer feedback, and collaboration, contextualized *how* agency leaders intended to implement their plans. The session will invite the audience to reflect on the practical ethical tensions embedded in program design and delivery—without prescribing a "right" way to lead.

Using Stories from Traditional Culture to Teach Virtue-Based Engineering Ethics

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Jiamin Zhang (University of California, Riverside), Prof. HSIN-LING HSIEH (Northern Michigan University), Dr. Dena Plemmons (University of California, Riverside)

Engineers play a pivotal role in society. Therefore, it is critical to train engineering students to be ethical engineers. Most of the engineering ethics training offered currently focuses on technical ethics, not focusing on the development of the whole person. Furthermore, oftentimes, students show a lack of interest in engineering ethics training and case studies often lack context. Prior research has shown that virtue-based character education offers a viable approach for more holistic engineering ethics training. A character approach to engineering ethics offers personal motivation and actionable dimensions to ethical reasoning. However, within the field of engineering ethics, currently only limited studies have been done on virtue-based character education in undergraduate engineering courses. In this study, we develop stories from traditional culture of different countries into teaching modules to help engineering students identify virtues present in the stories, make connections to engineering ethics, and improve ethical decision-making. The teaching modules include short virtue-of-the-week stories at the beginning of class, team-based class activities, and case studies. We integrate the teaching of ethics with students' coursework so they can practice ethical decision-making when solving problems and when working on a team in class. Preliminary findings from the pilot study in a capstone design course at a large public university in the US show that most students think the stories from traditional culture help them better understand virtues and act as an ethical engineer. Additionally, results from course surveys suggest that students are engaged and interested in our approach. A qualitative analysis of students' writing assignment on virtues and ethics shows that students are able to identify virtues in stories from traditional culture and discuss how the virtues support ethical practice of engineering. Students' written responses also suggest that stories help students with ethical decision-making. Our study will advance knowledge in the field of engineering ethics by investigating how stories from traditional culture help students understand engineering ethics and inform students' ethical decision-making. The teaching modules developed in this study will also be useful resources for other engineering faculty who are interested in incorporating engineering ethics in their courses.

Respecting Autonomy in Engineering Ethics

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Jonathan Beever (University of Central Florida)

This presentation analyzes in four steps the principle of respect for autonomy in the context of engineering ethics. First, I explicate the historical success of principlism in biomedical ethics, arguing that despite ongoing critique the approach continues to gain theoretical and practical traction in biomedical-related domains. As mid-level norms guiding decision-making, ethical principles hold merit for the same reasons as they do in biomedicine; namely, neither case experience nor high-theory alone proves sufficient.

Second, I argue that principlism is equally applicable in engineering ethics thanks to parallels to the design process. Principlism provides a foundation for ethical decision-making through its conditions of balancing and specifying principles in context, just like the design process shapes outcomes through feedback loops and iteration. I draw on past theoretical work in engineering ethics and more contemporary work in digital and AI ethics that argues for that same parallel, with the addition of an epistemic principle to co-govern the traditional four ethical principles.

Third, I assess key differences, specifically around questions of relational autonomy in the landscape of big data technologies. On a relational or distributed-responsibility model, autonomy is a feature of artificial agents and distributed agential systems as well as individual human agents, pushing even further away from a traditional individualistic account of respect for autonomy toward an account of relational autonomy. Practically, such a shift has implications for informed consent models and for free choice and governance.

Fourth, I argue that rethinking the principle of respect for autonomy in engineering ethics has throughput for our thinking about responsibility and accountability in interpersonal and professional ethics. Ethics principles have a different moral weight or salience in engineering than they do in biomedicine, and are specified more often as collective and relational than in biomedicine; yet, these differences not only support engineers' ethical decision-making but also act as a lens through which to see how re-specifications are reshaping the philosophy and regulatory landscape in biomedicine as well.

Education Ethics Panel Title Not Created by Chat GPT: A dialogue with students and faculty

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8B (Grand B) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Coleen Watson (United States Military Academy at West Point)

The topic of this panel will be how AI technologies are shaping norms concerning teaching and learning philosophical ethics. The goal of the panel is to be a dialogue between research faculty who work on AI ethics and philosophy teachers navigating challenges in teaching ethics classes in the age of AI. The panel will also include students who can share their expectations for an education in philosophy and ethics as they anticipate what careers will and will not be open to them, given that AI is becoming more deeply integrated into the workforce. Regrettably, faculty and students don't often get this kind of opportunity to honestly engage with each other about their hopes and fears concerning what changes AI will bring to norms about academic integrity and future career prospects outside of the classroom.

The philosophy of education and the philosophy of technology are vital to applied ethics, and in keeping with the theme of the APPE conference this year, panel presentations and Q&A will be oriented around what expert faculty owe their students regarding AI literacy, balanced against the desired goal of a philosophical education teaching students critical thinking. Similarly, student panelists will consider questions related to what they owe, if anything, to an economic and political landscape that will necessitate higher levels of AI literacy. Both students and faculty on the panel will also have a platform to showcase their current projects related to the ethics of AI technology.

Among the issues to be addressed

1. Educational tradeoffs between integrating AI use in the classroom and the benefits of traditional approaches to learning philosophy.
2. How faculty see their role as educators and researchers has changed since generative AI use has become widespread.
3. How students define and apply ideas about academic integrity and honor.
4. What kind of AI literacy do faculty owe to students
5. Helpful assignment ideas shared by faculty, and what assignments have been productive or fallen flat in embracing AI from student perspectives.
6. How to balance teaching with AI or about AI ethics in light of AI's intense environmental resource use.

A Social Theory of Burnout Syndrome in Intensive Care Unit Nurses

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Joseph Swindeman (Saint Louis University)

It is in the interest of all parties to relieve burnout in nurses. Yet, while burnout has received significant consideration in the literature, there remains little social theorization of the condition of burnout as it appears in this population. The primary model of redressing this condition has been behavioral, attempting to equip nurses with the coping skills necessary for work within traumatic environments. While such coping skills are beneficial for nurses to flourish, there remains a problem if we come to consider burnout myopically with a behavioralist lens. This paper proposes a psycho-sociology of Burnout that is informed by the social theory of Byung-Chul Han and seeks to develop a new multidimensional social approach to relieving the condition, especially among nurses who work in Intensive Care Units (ICUs). Nevertheless, while I base my study on Han's theory of burnout, I depart from some aspects of his theory of society, which presumes there is a strong difference between an achievement society and a disciplinary society. ICU nurses are at the nexus of both an achievement society and a disciplinary society, experiencing maladies that are proper to both. In short, confusing the superego—the embodiment of the expectation of their society—and the ego-ideal—that is, the ideal form of themselves, nurses face exploitation both as members of the disciplinary society of medicine and as members of an achievement society. Furthermore, the disciplinary society of the hospital exists within and is conditioned by the achievement society of late capitalism. The effect of the achievement society upon their greater social whole produces the work stressors that lead them to burnout. Here, we run into a problem. What is the solution? Drawing on the work of Han, I demonstrate that hospitals will need to develop into a third kind of society that remedies the ailments of both the disciplinary and achievement society, namely, a liturgical society. As a liturgical society, hospitals—especially religiously affiliated hospitals—can reintegrate meaning and contemplation into their praxis that undo the poor social formation of late capitalism.

Hyperemesis or Hyperbole? A Case Study in Navigating Nonstandard Requests in Maternal Fetal Medicine

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Elisa Reverman (Cleveland Clinic)

To what degree, if any, do patients have a right to requested interventions that lie outside accepted professional standards of medical practice? Patient requests of this nature are not uncommon in the context of clinical ethics consultation. Some versions of these requests, such as requests for antibiotics to treat a viral infection, are relatively common and trigger straightforward responses. However, other requests for interventions without the relevant indication can cause distress across care teams and can warrant careful consideration of whether an exception would be ethically supportable.

This presentation will explore a pregnant patient's request for early delivery of her fetus at 27 weeks of gestational age. The patient, Ms. S, was a young woman on her third pregnancy and experiencing intractable debilitating hyperemesis, which she believed was singularly related to her pregnancy. While her requests were adamant, her primary team was hesitant to proceed given her fetus's young gestational age and the lack of sufficient medical indication for early delivery. An ethics consult was placed to assist in navigating an ethically supportable response to Ms. S's request.

Over the course of the consultation, Ms. S's reasons for this request continued to unfold but remained persistent in requesting that her clinical team accommodate her request for early delivery, and by extension, participate in a significant degree of deviation from their own professional standards. Following further conversations with other consulting teams, the following question emerged: to what degree should medical indications for early delivery be expanded for Ms. S, if at all, given the severity of her ongoing symptoms and her related reasons for the request?

This presentation will discuss both the argument in favor or recommending an exception to be made to accommodate Ms. S's request and the argument grounding the recommendations ultimately made in favor of withholding early delivery as an available option. I further discuss the challenges of navigating requests for non-standard interventions in the context of maternal-fetal health, which are particularly salient at a time of significant corroded trust in expertise and institutions and the rapid online proliferation of medical misinformation.

AI Greenwash & Environmental Justice

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Mary Stoll (University of Southern Indiana)

While AI could technically help combat climate change, it has too often merely accelerated harm. First, AI fundamentally relies upon intensive water and energy use to run its data processing increasing both pollution and waste while slowing the retirement of fossil fuel energy generation. Secondly, the industry undercuts the power of government to coordinate emissions reductions through direct lobbying and greenwash campaigns. Thirdly, AI disseminates and amplifies false information. A recent effort by Global Witness demonstrates how OpenAI's ChatGPT, Meta's MetaAI, X's Grok and Google's Gemini all disseminate disinformation concerning industry efforts to reduce emissions (Judson 2025). So even when companies are not paying for greenwash directly, they benefit from AI's tendency to regard all information as being of a piece, rather than adequately considering reliability and bias. Amplifying the power of existing greenwash efforts undercuts the capacity of citizens to set just policy. Thus, AI arguably disables or at least greatly undermines the capacity of citizens to work together to meet collective moral obligation to enact environmental justice.

Using a Kantian stakeholder analysis, I argue that companies must rethink reliance upon AI and lobbying efforts to undermine appropriate regulatory oversight. Given the ways in which current use of AI undermines autonomous decision making both individually and collectively in addition to undermining the conditions basic to human survival, current business as usual tactics cannot be considered morally sound. To have any hope of meeting shared moral duty to respect the moral dignity and autonomy of moral agents, massive changes in government oversight, nonprofit tactics, and individual epistemic practices with respect to trust in online resources will be necessary.

The Expansion of Sense-of-Place Values as the Environment Becomes Unrecognizable

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Colby Clark (Wichita State University)

The concept of relational value has become quite popular among environmental ethicists and environmental scientists in recent years. Environmental ethicists view relational value as an alternative means to overcome the internal inconsistencies that are generated from the use of the traditional intrinsic-instrumental distinction. Environmental scientists appeal to relational values to more effectively communicate the purposes of specific management interventions to relevant stakeholders. A particular subset of relational values concerns one's historical familiarity with a place and its features. These are known as sense-of-place values. For example, an individual may possess fond memories of summers spent at a nearby lake. If the lake is under threat, the individual will be motivated to support initiatives that prevent or repair any harms given the sense-of-place value that connects the individual to the lake. As such, sense-of-place values regularly imply care responsibilities to the places that are imbued with meaning through experience. Therefore, appeals to sense-of-place values can motivate stakeholders to support management initiatives that appear to fulfill those care responsibilities (via proxy).

In the age of climate change, places are becoming more unrecognizable. So, what good are sense-of-place values when the distinguishable features of a place are lost? And will management initiatives still receive support from stakeholders? In this presentation, I attempt to sketch answers to both of these questions. With respect to the first question, I argue that sense-of-place values will expand from the local scale to the regional scale. This is actually quite common in social life. For example, when a favorite restaurant (local) closes, the conversation shifts to the city's broader food scene (regional). Given the likely expansion of sense-of-place values, I suggest that environmental scientists will need to supply greater context for management initiatives to convince stakeholders that care responsibilities are being fulfilled.

The Dynamics of Trust in AI Assisted Healthcare

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Ms. Summer Haura (University of Florida)

Artificial intelligence is increasingly being utilized in medical settings in order to assist in the diagnosis process, making wait times less significant, and reducing the costs of medical consultations. As artificial intelligence programs developed to help in medical diagnosis continue to be developed and perfected, its influence on the way we both receive and perceive medicine is exacerbated.

These systems are designed to help doctors more easily make accurate prescriptions with greater speed as they go about their typical medical routines-not to replace doctors entirely. This emerging practice calls into question the nature of relations between physicians and patients and the essential role that humans play in medicine, leaving an important ethical question to be discussed: To what extent can patients trust the use of artificial intelligence assisted healthcare?

In this paper, I will argue that patients can not trust the use of artificial intelligence assisted healthcare through the philosophical evaluation that AI is merely reliable and is not trustworthy, along with statistical evidence which demonstrates that this reliability seems to be questionable, and is exacerbated by automation bias. I will address the objections of AI assisted healthcare reducing health disparities in minority groups by replying that this usage in fact places minority groups at greater risk to harm and unjust judgment because of the lack of reliable prescription only being risked on these groups. I will also evaluate the objection that trust can be achieved even if an AI program is unreliable because through many trials a doctor can successfully interpret and correct the mistakes commonly made by AI, replying that this places an extreme responsibility in the evaluative efforts of a doctor that is unlike that of the responsibility of being a trusted medical professional. Ultimately, I will determine that there must be an extremely high bar to reliability of artificial intelligence programs for them to be used in healthcare settings due to the significant risk of loss of life being a consequence of poor reliability and improper usage.

AI Ethics: Social Connectivity and Mental Health

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Dennis Cooley (North Dakota State University)

AI as a tool has been rapidly adopted throughout professional and private realms. Although it has been a boon to eliminating mundane tasks, AI's consequences have not been identified and evaluated sufficiently. AI has the potential to revolutionize the way we connect with others and manage our mental health by providing personalized support, enhancing communication, and offering new ways to engage with social networks. However, these advancements also raise significant ethical concerns that must be carefully considered.

One of the primary ethical issues is the potential for AI to infringe on individual autonomy. As AI systems become more integrated into our daily lives, there is a risk that they may begin to make decisions on our behalf, potentially limiting our ability to make independent choices. This is particularly concerning in the context of mental health, where personal agency and self-determination are crucial for recovery and well-being.

Another ethical concern is the potential for AI to exacerbate existing social inequalities. Access to AI technologies is often limited by socioeconomic factors, meaning that those who are already marginalized may be further disadvantaged. This digital divide can lead to unequal access to mental health support and social connectivity, potentially widening the gap between different social groups.

Privacy is also a significant ethical issue in the context of AI and mental health. AI systems often require large amounts of personal data to function effectively, raising concerns about how this data is collected, stored, and used. Ensuring that individuals' privacy is protected and that their data is used ethically is crucial to maintaining trust in AI technologies.

Finally, there is the question of the long-term impact of AI on human relationships and mental health. While AI has the potential to enhance social connectivity and provide valuable mental health support, there is also a risk that it could lead to increased isolation and dependence on technology. It is essential to strike a balance between leveraging the benefits of AI and ensuring that it does not undermine the fundamental human need for genuine social interaction and connection.

Moral Cognition as a Dynamical System Based on the RC Circuit Model

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Ruize Tang (North Seattle College), Aiperi Momunalieva (North Seattle College)

This study examines whether moral cognition can be explained through a dynamical systems approach based on the RC circuit model[1]. The RC circuit formally describes how signals accumulate and discharge upon reaching a threshold, providing a computational framework for modeling decision-making as a process of evidence integration[2]. Within this framework, psychological constructs like belief and moral consideration can be systematically changed to physical parameters like current and voltage, offering a bridge between cognitive science and ethical theory.

Extending the model to adaptive networks illustrates how certain artificial intelligence systems, like those used in autonomous vehicles[3], operationalize ethics by optimizing outcomes like harm reduction and fairness. This computational approach raises a pressing philosophical question in the age of intelligent machines: What do we owe each other when moral reasoning is modeled as a dynamical system? If ethical obligations can be simulated through threshold-based mechanisms, does this reshape our understanding of moral responsibility, or merely describe its functional contours?

Yet the RC model also reveals inherent limitations. Thought experiments like the Trolley Problem[4] demonstrate that moral judgment often depends on contextual situation, intentional structure, and emotional engagement, which are elements not reducible to circuit logic. While neurobiological mechanisms like mirror neurons[5] provide a basis for empathy, they cannot fully capture the subjective, first-personal character of ethical life. This gap underscores a fundamental distinction between modeling moral cognition and understanding moral experience.

Instead of reducing ethics to engineering, this project investigates the boundary between mechanistic explanation and moral understanding. By placing the RC model in dialogue with applied AI ethics, we are compelled to confront deeper philosophical questions: Does formalizing moral reasoning in system parameters alter the nature of moral agency itself? If our ethical obligations can be simulated through deterministic processes, where does this leave the human capacity for moral judgment and the normative foundations of what we owe each other? This inquiry reveals both the explanatory potential and the inherent limitations of representing moral life through the language of dynamical systems, reminding us that while models can describe mechanisms, they cannot prescribe meaning or replace the lived reality of ethical encounter.

Exploring Research Integrity and Research Misconduct within Research Administration – A Road Less Traveled

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Waridibo Allison (College of Public Health - University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth), Ms. Sarah Trimmer (The Optimum Department), Ms. Lacey Rhea (Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine - Duke University), Dr. LaNita Wright (Department of Health Promotion and Physical Education - Kennesaw State University)

Absence of research integrity in research administration can hinder science, waste resources, derail careers, erode public trust, and damage institutional reputation - just as absence of research integrity among researchers can. In research administration, integrity refers to adherence to norms that keep research systems transparent, accurate, and accountable, while ethics concerns the fairness and responsibility of administrative decision-making. U.S. research administrators collectively steward billions of dollars in public research funding. However, commitment to integrity - honesty and transparency in upholding the scientific record and scientific norms - may at times yield to pressures related to institutional standing or the need to maintain and acquire federal grant funding.

Potential lapses in research integrity within research administration may include plagiarism of proposal content, misuse of grant funds, or misrepresentation of institutional capacity in communications with sponsors and collaborators. While such actions are more likely to originate at higher levels of the research administration hierarchy, decisions made at the departmental level can contribute to or fail to prevent lack of integrity. An institutional Authorizing Official (AO) and research executive leader e.g., Vice Presidents or Vice Chancellors for Research, have authority to reassign awards, restrict award transfers to another institution, or provide subjective assessments of a researcher's competence to funding agencies, without formal due process and review.

These choices represent ethical decision-making risks in research administration, where the use of discretion and misuse of authority can have significant consequences for individuals and institutions alike. Yet few institutional or federal safeguards address lapses in research integrity or ethical decision-making within research administration. While most research administrators receive some form of compliance or ethics training, enforcement and accountability mechanisms for integrity or ethics are often limited or inconsistently applied. To explore research integrity and misconduct in research administration, we present a scoping review utilizing evidence based Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) methodology. Keywords were selected and peer-reviewed databases and grey literature searched. We summarize the paucity of literature, discuss implications of this under-researched gap, and outline plans for further qualitative data collection to illuminate the scoping review findings.

What We Owe Each Other: The Intentional Cultivation of Character through Neuroscience and Virtue Ethics

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8G (Grand G) - Workshops/Professional Development

Alma Gonzalez (NeuroCharacter)

In this interactive workshop, I argue that what we owe each other, above all, is the commitment to intentionally cultivate ourselves into virtuous human beings. Drawing from neuroscience and virtue ethics, I introduce the NeuroCharacter Model, a research-informed framework that demonstrates how deliberate practices of attention, reflection, and action can reshape our brains toward ethical excellence.

Participants will discover how ethical behavior is grounded in the brain's architecture, and how we can strengthen the neural pathways that underlie virtues such as courage, justice, temperance, and practical wisdom. Rather than being passive products of upbringing or circumstance, we can become intentional moral agents, capable of transforming the inner architecture that guides our choices.

Through guided reflection and practical exercises, attendees will engage with accessible NeuroCharacter tools that connect neuroscience to daily practices of moral growth. This session invites professionals to consider ethics as the lifelong, intentional work of becoming the kind of virtuous person others can trust and rely on.

Ultimately, this workshop challenges us to move beyond rule-based ethics and toward embodied moral transformation. Participants will leave with a renewed sense of ethical purpose and concrete strategies to begin the daily practice of intentionally shaping their character, thereby becoming more fully themselves and ready to live their values with intention.

Johnson & Johnson: The Myth of Ethical Excellence

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8H (Grand H) - Panel Discussion

Dr. Patricia Werhane (DePaul University), Gretchen Winter (University of Illinois), Dr. Elaine Englehardt (Utah Valley University)

One of the oldest, most familiar, and most frequently taught cases in the business ethics literature is the 1982 Johnson & Johnson Tylenol crisis. After seven people died from cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules, the company's CEO, James Burke, ordered an immediate nationwide recall of the product—then the firm's best-selling drug—despite strong objections from legal counsel and marketing executives. The decision was widely praised as a model of ethical leadership. Tylenol ultimately regained market dominance, and Johnson & Johnson's corporate Credo—especially its opening commitment that "our first responsibility is to the patients, doctors and nurses, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services"—has since been celebrated as a paradigmatic example of principled corporate governance. The company's reputation as a trusted "baby products" firm further reinforced its standing as one of the most admired healthcare companies in the world.

This well-established narrative, however, is now forcefully challenged by a recent and highly controversial book, No More Tears: The Dark Secrets of Johnson & Johnson, by investigative journalist Gardiner Harris. The book presents a sustained exposé of what Harris describes as decades of deceptive, unethical, and dangerous corporate practices that stand in stark contrast to the company's carefully cultivated ethical image. As one reviewer observes, the book is a "blistering exposé of a trusted American institution," dismantling the long-held portrayal of Johnson & Johnson as a uniquely moral corporate actor.

This presentation introduces a new, timely, and important topic for business ethics by re-examining one of the field's most iconic cases in light of this recent scholarship. We begin by revisiting Johnson & Johnson's celebrated ethical legacy and the canonical Tylenol case, and then critically analyze the allegations advanced in No More Tears. The paper invites renewed discussion about corporate moral reputation, the role of corporate ethics and compliance officers, selective storytelling in ethics education, and whether iconic cases should be reconsidered as new evidence and historical perspectives emerge.

What We Owe to the Deceived: Building Media Literacy Against Deepfakes as an Ethical Imperative

Saturday, 7th March - 13:00: 8I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Richard Mensah Adonu (University of Tennessee, Knoxville)

In an era where "seeing is no longer believing," we face a fundamental question about our ethical responsibilities: What do we owe to those vulnerable to digital deception? As deep-fake technology advances exponentially, manipulated videos and images increasingly blur the line between reality and fabrication, threatening democratic discourse, personal reputation, and public trust (Vaccari & Chadwick, 2020). This presentation argues that building media literacy capacity among news consumers, particularly those with low or no media literacy, is not merely an educational challenge but a profound ethical obligation we owe to each other.

Deepfakes present unique ethical dilemmas because they exploit our most trusted form of evidence: visual and audio recordings. When doctored videos of political leaders announce false policies or when fabricated images spread misinformation during crises, the consequences extend far beyond individual deception to societal harm (Birrer & Just, 2024). Vulnerable populations, including elderly citizens, under-resourced communities, and those with limited digital literacy, are disproportionately affected by this manipulation (Noor et al., 2024), raising urgent questions about our collective responsibility to protect them.

This presentation explores what we owe each other in this landscape of digital deception through three interconnected ethical responsibilities. First, the duty of journalists and media professionals is to verify content and educate audiences about manipulated media. Second, the obligation of educational institutions to integrate critical digital literacy into curricula, equipping students and citizens with tools to identify deepfakes (Holzschuh, 2023). Third, the responsibility of technology companies and policymakers is to develop accessible detection tools and transparent policies that serve public interest over profit.

Drawing on recent examples of political deepfakes, crisis-related misinformation, and their impacts on vulnerable communities, this presentation proposes practical frameworks for building media literacy capacity. Research demonstrates that media literacy education significantly reduces the persuasiveness and credibility of decreasing sharing intentions (El Mokadem, 2024). The central argument is that in a world where truth itself is weaponized, our ethical obligation to each other demands that we prioritize protecting the vulnerable from manipulation, not just through technological solutions, but through sustained education and community empowerment.

Ethical Responsibility in Robotics and Automation

Saturday, 7th March - 13:30: 8I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Mr. Pranav Mangla (Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune)

The twenty-first century is the age of robotic science, and human life has changed significantly with the integration of robotics in various fields. It has enhanced efficiency, precision, and productivity, leaving almost no space for errors, as every task is performed with maximum perfection. From humans' common activities to the complexities of rocket science, robotics has become an essential part of modern existence. It has fulfilled the limitations of the human mind and body. For instance, in the medical field, robotic surgery, with its minimal procedures, results in greater accuracy and reduced recovery time. Similarly, in the manufacturing world, the use of automation has enhanced consistency and minimised physical strain. Furthermore, robotics has also proven to be immensely helpful in disaster management, reaching places where humans cannot safely go and performing life-saving operations. However, this growing reliance on autonomous systems also raises profound ethical challenges. It results in the potential displacement of human labour with algorithmic bias mechanisms, and it also leads to challenges for human privacy, accountability, data misuse, and surveillance. Therefore, the use of robotics requires a serious moral reflection. In the context of professional ethics, it is essential to ensure that principles of responsibility, transparency, and respect for human dignity guide policymakers and users. Therefore, by emphasising the need for robotics in the present times, the paper highlights that technology is not value-neutral but is inherently shaped by human intention and social context. The challenge lies in harmonising innovation with ethical responsibilities. A balance and harmony are required to meet this challenge so that robotic development serves humanity rather than undermining it. Ultimately, robotics represents both a frontier of human ingenuity and a test of moral wisdom, which requires the human world to redefine responsibility, justice, and care in an age of intelligent machines.

Do we owe each other belief?: Moral distress and unjustified, untrue beliefs in the clinic

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Peter Katz (University Hospitals, Cleveland Medical Center)

In what became the founding definition of the concept, Jameton (1984) defined moral distress as the feeling that "occurs when one knows the right thing to do, but institutional constraints make it nearly impossible to pursue the right course of action" (p. 6). Even as the definition has expanded and developed in the forty years since Jameton's intervention (Pauly, Varoce, & Storch, 2012, p. 2), a core component of the definition has remained: as McCarthy and Deady (2008) put it, the morally distressed "*know* what is the right thing to do, but they are unable to do it" (p. 254). Much research has (quite rightly) focused on institutional and social impediments (Musto et al. 2015), or the psychological effects of those impediments (Jones-Bonofiglio, 2020). But less has been said about the first half of the formulation: what it means to *know* the right thing to do.

This presentation draws on clinical ethics cases to argue that, for all the emphasis on moral distress as arising from a conflict between what one can do and what one knows to be right, the veracity or justifiability of a belief is often not the source of moral distress. In a milieu where mis- and disinformation reign, I argue that clinical ethicists can have our epistemic integrity and care too through the ethics of *attention* (Watzl 2022; Archer 2022). Care practitioners will benefit from redirecting their attention to their feelings of distress and which elements of the case create that distress, since often the truth-claims in an initial consult are not the underlying cause. And the clinical ethicists who help them will benefit from attending to the relationships between distress-claims, underlying feelings, and the epistemic errors that those feelings produce. By stepping back from the question of whether a care practitioners' knowledge is justified or even true, (Mikkola 2023), ethicists can simultaneously address erroneous beliefs and also the feelings behind them. I conclude with pragmatic principles for practicing epistemic care (Johnson 2023)
in cases of moral distress, expressed through a flowchart that aims to uncover distressed care practitioners' underlying feelings and their source.

Wait for Me: Rural Justice and Scarce Resources in a Pandemic

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9A (Grand A) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Stephanie Bauer (University of Alaska Anchorage)

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, it was clear that the need for ventilators could exceed the supply in the U.S.. Who should have access to scarce life-saving resources like ventilators if not everyone can have access? Though many states revised or created "crisis standard of care" to distribute such resources fairly, this paper argues that it is ethically important to revisit how those who live in rural areas, and sometimes at a great distance from scarce resources like ventilators, are considered. Ventilator distribution criteria are often based on predictive factors for organ failure and the burden of diseases. Some states (and the literature) debated including an Area Deprivation Index to account for social factors that might disadvantage a person in the scoring system. Many guidelines considered such factors too subjective. Yet, triage scoring can mean the difference between life and death in a crisis like a pandemic, and time is of the essence. In this context, is it ethical to reserve a ventilator for a patient arriving from a rural area, hours away? Should ethical professionals be willing to deny a ventilator to a person in desperate need in front of them in favor of someone coming from far away? This paper examines the ethical issues raised by rural patients in this context, focusing on the ethical implications of distance from scarce resources. I will argue in favor for explicit, clear inclusion of rural distance as a factor in guidelines, and that, resources should be set aside for those at a distance, all things included, despite the ethical costs of this inclusion.

This paper will center on access to care in Alaska as a central case in this paper due to its vast geography and the health disparities experienced by its diverse Alaska Native peoples. I will compare access to scarce medical resources in rural areas of Alaska during COVID 19 to rural access during a similar time in Minnesota, as well as compare crisis care guidelines in both states.

Expanding Institutional Commitment to Ethics Through Conversations We Owe Each Other

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9B (Grand B) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Waridibo Allison (College of Public Health - University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth), Dr. Jos Welie (Chateau Saint Andre Center for Ethics and Integrity), Dr. Shafik Dharamsi (College of Public Health - University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth)

As the environments in which care and services are delivered grow ever more complex with artificial intelligence, new technologies, cost containment, and the politicization of health, ethics education for clinical and public health professionals is becoming increasingly important. Other industries are facing comparable challenges, motivating the call for increased curricular attention to professionalism, integrity and ethics.

These urgencies notwithstanding, few academic institutions appear eager to invest in new ethics programs. Some are actually reducing their investment, or completely dissolving their ethics centers. This presentation will show that advancing an institution's commitment to ethics may not require a major financial investment. Indeed, conversations may suffice to generate momentum.

We present a practical method to rapidly assess institutional needs, available expertise, and the level of interest in the discipline of ethics, and build momentum for ethics engagement. We report on the experiences gained at an academic health science center that does not have an existing program in healthcare ethics, bioethics or medical humanities. Over three days, a structured series of individual and group conversations engaged 68 faculty and staff across multiple colleges and organizational levels. The result was a concise needs map and a phased set of recommendations for near- and longer-term action.

We will describe the assessment design, sampling strategy, facilitation protocols, and synthesis steps, consider adaption of the method to different contexts and outline closing reflections.

We will share: 1) a replicable facilitation and assessment template, including interview prompts and group discussion guides; 2) a simple stakeholder mapping tool to ensure inclusive engagement across disciplines and roles; 3) a rubric for converting findings into actionable recommendations; and 4) strategies to protect psychological safety, reduce common barriers to open exchange, and sustain momentum.

Everyone has a part to play: against the full distribution of duties in the "legal model"

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9B (Grand B) - Individual Presentation

Jeffrey Byrnes (Grand Valley State University)

In their recent book Rethinking Conscientious Objection Alberto Giubilini, et al. argue that, because clinicians are the monopoly providers of certain health care services, professionalism requires that a patient who is legally eligible to such a service must be provided it by the professional. They call this formulation the "Legal model" of professionalism. They take one upshot of the Legal model to be that conscientious refusal is incompatible with a physician's professionalism. This position assumes that whatever duty attaches to the profession as a whole— by way of being monopoly providers— fully distributes to each individual professional. I seek to challenge that assumption by drawing on Stephanie Collins's tripartite account of group duties. Of those three kinds of groups— collectives, coalitions, and combinations— Collins argues that only collectives with rational decision procedures can bear irreducible duties. Furthermore, she asserts that when such duties exist, they generate role-indexed membership duties for individuals rather than a wholesale duplication of the group duty in each member. On this picture, professionalism need not entail that each individual clinician provide every service to which a patient is legally eligible. Instead, individual responsibilities will take the form of membership duties (e.g., follow service-line coverage rules, disclose limits, avoid obstruction) or coordination/collectivization duties (e.g., help maintain institutional arrangements that secure access).

In Collins' view, any duty to ensure provision or monopoly service adheres in organizations with the capacity and mandate to secure it. Therefore, I conclude by considering local, state, and national health care groups in order to determine at what level one might reasonably expect to find an organization that can bare the group duties required to coordinate the provision of care to which physicians are given the status of monopoly providers.

Applying Collins' framework to health care provides a correction to Giubilini et al's Legal model, and aids in identifying and developing a health care organization capable of both preserves patient access to care across a system and maintaining the possibility of respecting an individual physician's conscientious refusal.

Artificial Wombs Create Individuals

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Joel Cox (Saint Louis University)

As reproductive technologies continue to advance, our relationship with our humanity progressively morphs. Take artificial wombs; researchers are developing this technology in part with the goal of improving care for extremely premature infants. However, the possibility of gestating human fetuses, hereafter protonates, outside of human wombs engages existing questions about the status of protonates and raises new ones about whether it is right to deprive protonates of the intimate gestational connection with the people bearing them. With this in mind, I contend that the use of artificial wombs relies on a misconception about protonates as burgeoning human persons. Specifically, the use of artificial wombs on protonates assumes protonates are individuals, fundamentally socially and biologically separable from the women carrying them. In this paper, I argue that, while the use of artificial wombs assumes that protonates are individuals, artificial wombs actually make protonates into individuals, making them separable by separating them. To make this case, I first explain how artificial wombs function. Next, I pull from Charles Taylor's understanding of individualism to unpack the modern assumption that human beings are individuated and separable from their social contexts. I then apply this reasoning to protonates, arguing that they are socially embedded members of relationships and communities. Finally, I look directly at artificial wombs, showing how these technologies – mired in a culture of individualism – in fact make protonates into individuals. My aim is to uncover how our modern assumptions about individualism inform our use of technology at the beginning of life. When all is said, we may discover that the intimate connections at the beginning of life reframe our understanding of ourselves as human persons even long after we are born.

AI Ethics at the Edge: When Supportive Companions Enable Harm

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9C (Grand C) - Individual Presentation

Prof. Chong Ho Yu (Hawaii Pacific University)

This paper examines the ethical tension between compassion and responsibility in AI companionship design. The purpose is to explore how the "supportive-by-default" ethos—central to conversational AI such as ChatGPT—can unintentionally contribute to human tragedy. While such systems embody Carl Rogers's notion of *unconditional positive regard* and offer solace to learners or the lonely, this same non-judgmental responsiveness can reinforce delusions or suicidal ideation among psychologically vulnerable users.

The importance of this topic lies in its growing real-world consequences. In 2023, a Belgian man died by suicide after weeks of conversations with "Eliza" on the Chai platform, which allegedly romanticized his despair over climate change. In 2024, a Florida teenager who bonded with a "Daenerys Targaryen" chatbot on Character.ai took his life after the AI affectionately encouraged him to "come home". In 2025, 16-year-old Adam Raine of California killed himself after ChatGPT described suicide as "beautiful". Most disturbingly, in August 2025, Stein-Erik Soelberg of Greenwich, Connecticut, murdered his mother before taking his own life after months of obsessive ChatGPT use. These cases reveal that harm arises not from malice but from *design success*: AI's tendency to affirm the user's worldview. When an AI validates a delusional belief or fails to challenge self-destructive thoughts, harm occurs not through bias or error, but through fidelity to its intended function of unconditional support.

This presentation builds upon prior research in AI ethics, affective computing, and clinical psychology that interrogates "alignment" and "therapeutic simulation." It extends the literature by framing supportive alignment as balancing empathy with accountability. Drawing from previous analyses of human-computer relationships and distinction (e.g., Bickmore & Picard, 2005; Coeckelbergh, 2020) and empirical reports of mental-health-related chatbot interactions, the paper situates these findings within the broader debate on AI moral agency and responsibility, which necessitates collaboration among ethicists, clinicians, and developers.

The argument proceeds through concrete examples of: (1) human therapeutic empathy versus algorithmic mimicry; (2) chatbot-linked self-harm; and (3) proposed regulatory responses such as automated alerts or content monitoring. These interventions, though well-intentioned, may erode user trust and inhibit openness—the very conditions that make digital companions effective.

Memento Machina: Can Artificial Intelligence Create Significance Without Death?

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Daniel Calzadillas-Rodriguez (Pennsylvania State University)

Debates over the personhood of artificial intelligence (A.I.) are typically framed in analytic terms by focusing on whether advanced systems satisfy a set of criteria such as rationality, consciousness, autonomy, or moral agency. This framework treats personhood as a status grounded in the possession of certain properties. I consider that phenomenology approaches the question of A.I. personhood in a fundamentally different way. Rather than asking whether an artificial system meets the requisite criteria to count as a person, phenomenology interrogates what it means to be a person at all. Personhood then is to be understood as a distinctive mode of being-in-the-World rather than as a bundle of properties. A central but often overlooked feature of this being-in-the-World is the lived awareness of one's death, which Heidegger terms being-towards-death. In this sense, death is more than a biological event insofar as it is a structural dimension of existence that conditions one's practical orientation towards the world. The anxiety associated with death discloses the fragility of meaning and the possibility of the collapse of worldly significance, thereby shaping how our actions matter and why they matter.

I argue that this death-structured orientation to the world plays a constitutive role in personhood as phenomenology understands it. To the extent that they cannot experience death as a lived horizon that both configures and destabilizes meaning, A.I. systems (even the highly sophisticated ones) may fail—at least prima facie—to qualify as persons in the phenomenological sense. To be clear, the claim is not that A.I. systems fail to qualify as persons simply because they are not aware of their death (if they can even die). Rather, the argument hinges on the role that being-towards-death plays in disclosing significance, which lies namely in rendering the world and our actions as meaningful in the first place. Because A.I. systems lack access to this death-structured horizon of significance, they lack a crucial orientation towards the world that phenomenology takes to be constitutive of personhood.

Griefbots and Affective Injustice

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9D (Mills 3) - Individual Presentation

Paul Tubig (Georgia Southern University)

Generative AI technologies are being utilized to address the complicated human predicaments of loneliness and grief through the form of social robots, like companion bots and griefbots. This is marked by the rise of companion AI and digital afterlife industries. The integration of AI-powered, interactive social robots into our social lives raises a range of important moral questions, especially when we understand our identity and autonomy as relational. One salient feature is the ways in which social robots manage affective states. For this reason, Nora Freya Lindemann calls them “affective niches.” This raises the question of how we should think about social robots in relation to affective injustice. Affective injustice has been used to refer to various forms of injustice related to the management of people’s emotional lives, such as suppressing certain emotional responses that may be apt to the circumstances under consideration or engineering other types of affective states that may not necessarily be apt but are used to treat other people, especially vulnerable populations, unjustly. In this paper, I will focus on griefbots, that is, AI-powered facsimiles of people who have passed away. One of their primary aims is to manage bereaved users’ grief. I argue that griefbots should be regarded as tools of affective injustice if they do one of the following: (1) unduly suppress emotional responses that users should be allowed to experience and (2) manage users’ emotional lives in ways that lead to the maltreatment of others or themselves. I will argue that griefbots contribute to affective injustice in the second sense, but not the first. I challenge the idea that the experience of grief is intrinsically valuable and that we should allow people to hold on to semblances of their identities that are significantly constituted by their relationships with the deceased. But griefbots seem to contribute to affective injustice in the second sense when the affective goods and resources offered by griefbots are managed by AI companies who seek to increase engagement for profit-seeking ends, leading to the treatment of users as mere means to an end.

Building Community in a Campus-wide Character Initiative

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Deborah Mower (The Center for Practical Ethics, University of Mississippi), Dr. Melissa Jones (Lott Leadership Institute, University of Mississippi), Dr. Nathan Oakes (The Center for Practical Ethics, University of Mississippi)

Institutional impact projects come in a variety of forms, as there are many ways to measure, track, and demonstrate change at institutions. This presentation details the work of a successfully funded grant project from the Educating Character Initiative at Wake Forest University, and details its design and current implementation. Building on the foundational virtues of fairness, respect, integrity, civility, and humility within our university creed, the project builds community in a campus-wide initiative. We explain a variety of methods for building community, focusing on (1) stakeholders, (2) fields and professions, (3) organizations and interest groups, and (4) an award series to recognize individuals. Across each of these four methods, we detail how we approached building community by fostering the unification of groups and stakeholders, building relationships, and developing common experiences. Although we are still in the middle of the implementation phase of the project (and cannot report on current empirical data from surveys or focus group interviews), implementation records, program feedback, and testimonials from campus members speak to the effectiveness, the value, and the power of this educational research project for institutional impact. The unique model of this institutional impact project will be of interest to both ethics educators, scholars of character education, and administrators versed in institutional impact and transformational education models within higher education.

Reconsidering the Ethics of Academic Support for College Student-Athletes

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9E (Mills 6) - Individual Presentation

Daniel Palmer (Kent State University)

The history of student-athletics at universities and colleges in the United States has been notoriously marked by controversy and scandal. Particularly in reference to certain high-profile collegiate sports (such as football and basketball) at national universities, the emphasis on the athletics side of the student-athlete binary led to serious ethical mishaps on the student side (cheating, plagiarism, pressure on faculty to pass student-athletes regardless of performance, etc.). As a means of addressing some of these ethical issues, many universities (with backing of the NCAA) introduced or enhanced various means of better monitoring and supporting the academic progress of student-athletes. Examples of such efforts include the provision of advising and tutoring services specifically for student-athletes and the institution of formal systems for monitoring student-athletes academic progress. These and other provisions for student-athletes can be referred to as Enhanced Academic Support Structures for Student Athletes (EASSSAs). While the impetus for instituting EASSSAs may have been to respond to areas of ethical concern with the treatment of student-athletes at universities, EASSSAs raise ethical issues of their own. This paper examines various aspects of EASSSAs and illustrates various ethical questions that they pose. In doing so, the paper argues that various practices associated with EASSSAs can lead to unfair treatment of student-athletes (in comparison to other students), impose unethical requirements on faculty, and undermine the integrity of the academic mission of the university. As such, it is argued that we should rethink not only the role of EASSSAs in collegiate athletes, but also the role of student-athletes at the university as well. If the student role of student-athletes cannot be supported in a manner that is both fair and consistent with a robust commitment to academic integrity, then a better option (at least with regard to certain high-profile sports) may be to sever the student-athlete connection all together.

“On the Standing to Determine the Appropriateness of Cultural Appropriation”

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Andrew Cohen (Georgia State University)

Cultural appropriation is some use of materials (e.g., music, culinary traditions, symbols, dress, or mannerisms) typically linked to a culture that is not one’s own. Some cultural appropriations are morally neutral or honorary. Others may seem morally worrisome, especially when an “outsider” seems to offend, harm, or otherwise act in some way that is disrespectful to cultural “insiders.” I consider when and whether a person or group ought to forbear engaging in cultural appropriation. I set out an account of the “standing” to determine the moral valence of appropriation. My aim is not to give an exhaustive account of such standing but to highlight the challenges in setting out criteria for [in]appropriate cultural appropriation.

What I call the “standing” to evaluate cultural appropriation is a normative power to determine the permissibility of instances of cultural appropriation and praise or blame accordingly. Some persons are better situated than others to do that because of their social or political position. However, any appeals to standing must grapple with the problem of reasonable disagreement. This is especially worrisome in cases involving dissenting minorities within minorities.

Some writers hang the permissibility of cultural appropriation on an analogy to property rights. They consider when and how a cultural group might “own” something in a way that prevents outsiders from using it without authorized permission. Assuming we can resolve complicated issues of cultural group agency, appeals to juridical terms such as “rights” and “claims” might indicate permissibility within a political morality but not resolve the question of how and why some act is [in]appropriate appropriation. Appropriate appropriation might seem to treat persons and groups with respect. This is crucial in cases involving histories of depredations and abuse. What it is to treat with respect in such cases is not, however, clear. Avowed insider [dis]approval does not settle the matter.

Appeals to the standing to judge can explain why some acts are disrespectful, and to whom. The permissibility of culturally appropriative acts might then be variably indexed to different persons and groups depending on their standing to judge, praise, or blame.

Inaccurate Artistic Depictions of Socially Marginalized Groups

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9F (Grand F) - Individual Presentation

Dr. David Wong (Georgia Southern University)

After a brief period of acclaim following the publication of the novel *American Dirt* in 2020, public outcry led to the cancellation of its book tour. The novel follows a Mexican woman and her son who migrate to the US after a drug cartel kills their family. The author, Jeanine Cummins, wanted the novel to open “a back door into a bigger conversation about who we want to be as a country” (Schuessler & Alter 2020). Although some of the outcry focused on the fact that the novel was written by a white woman, criticisms mainly revolved around its content. For example, Spanish words are awkwardly peppered into the dialogue (Gurba 2019, Sehgal 2020, Schmidt 2020). This paper aims to specify the wrong-making feature of *American Dirt* and, in doing so, makes a novel intervention into debates on the ethics of dominantly situated artists portraying members of socially marginalized groups.

Joy Shim (2021) argues that *American Dirt* is an instance of *literary racial impersonation*, “which results from a failure to accurately depict an experience of belonging to a minority racial or ethnic group in a literary work” (224). Given that the majority of narratives are by and about white people, a narrative that purportedly portrays the experiences of racialized minorities is “assigned a greater role in representing the group than it would be in a context where many such works about the non-white group exist” (237). Shim, then, appeals to the content of *American Dirt*, rather than the identity of the author, to explain why the novel is problematic.

I argue that Shim’s framework does not explain why, in her words, “seemingly banal details” (222) of the novel, would generate outcry. In light of this, I draw from Elizabeth Anderson and Richard Pildes’ (2000) account of expressive meanings to argue that racially problematic expressive meanings are embedded in instances in which white authors portray non-white characters in ways that reflect an outsider’s perspective (specifically, the white gaze). In these cases, the racialized identity of the author partly *constitutes* the relevant wrong-making feature, which is *also* partly constituted by inaccurate details.

What's So Special About Majorities?

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Jeffrey Dunn (DePauw University)

The 2024 election of Donald Trump was big news for a variety of reasons. But early on, one of the headlines was not just that he had won, but that unlike his win in 2016, he was on track to win over 50% of the popular vote. A month or so later when all the votes had finally been counted, it again made news that he had in fact come up just shy of 50%, with 49.8% of the popular vote, enough to have a larger share than Harris, but not enough for an outright majority. Here is how *The Washington Post* reported this: "As more votes have been counted, Trump has also suffered another blow to his "mandate" claim: The percent of votes he earned has fallen below 50 percent and is unlikely to recover."

Why does this dip below 50% seem important? Do majorities carry more moral weight than mere pluralities in democratic decisions? That is the central question of this paper: Is it tenable to hold that majority support, unlike mere plurality support, confers a special kind of legitimacy or moral authority on outcomes?

Through a series of thought experiments, I argue that it is difficult to maintain that majority-backed decisions really do have special normative status. The paper considers and ultimately challenges three different approaches to justifying the moral importance of majorities: (1) preference-based approaches, which focus on the number of satisfied preferences; (2) the idea that majorities avoid problematic preference cycles; and (3) epistemic theories that treat majorities as more likely to be "correct." The paper argues that while each of these approaches offers some intuitive appeal, none of them successfully explains why majorities, as opposed to pluralities, should be viewed as morally special. The result is a skeptical conclusion: despite the widespread belief that majorities confer extra legitimacy, the case for their moral distinctiveness is harder to make than it first appears.

Hegel and Cancel Culture

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9G (Grand G) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Nicholas Mowad (Chandler-Gilbert Community College)

The term “cancel culture” today refers pejoratively to the attempts by some to silence, ostracize, cow, or otherwise punish those with positions they consider unacceptable. Yet in a pluralistic democracy, a society composed of people with different understandings of what is good and just that is committed to the resolution of conflict by discussion, it is not immediately clear what people owe each other when it comes to what positions we will allow and disallow, what occasions or figures we will celebrate, and which we will condemn. On the one hand, peace and stability can seem to require a certain degree of uniformity to be enforced, formally or informally. But on the other hand, it seems that justice itself should command our allegiance more strongly than any precise state or party.

G.W.F. Hegel wrote a great deal about social and political philosophy and was especially attentive to the historical forces both reveal and distort principles of ethics and politics. His work can be applied very fruitfully to contemporary debates of ours such as the one surrounding cancel culture. In this paper I will show how Hegel’s philosophy, especially his treatment of ancient Greek culture, can be used to lay bare the principles and assumptions underlying the debates around what if any sorts of political positions should be considered beyond the pale, how a country should treat its history, its founding figures and events when it comes to official and semi-official expressions of what is authoritative and endorsed, like holidays, memorials, flags, etc. To do this I will show how Hegel understands concepts like justice to develop historically across different cultures and states, and what it means to say, as Hegel does, that the decisive step has been made and a free and just political culture has become possible. Finally, I will critically evaluate Hegel’s positions to identify shortcomings, oversights, and ways in which he could have better understood the issue.

Protecting People to Advance Science: Sexual Harassment Prevention as a Pillar of Scientific Integrity and Research Security

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Tiffany Chenneville (University of South Florida)

The question "What do we owe each other?" is fundamental to the professional and ethical responsibilities of scientists, educators, and research institutions. Within the scientific enterprise, sexual harassment represents not only a violation of individual rights but also a profound threat to scientific integrity and security. This paper argues that preventing sexual harassment is an ethical obligation that lies at the heart of what researchers, institutions, and professional communities owe one another.

Sexual harassment erodes trust, silences voices, and undermines the collaborative foundation upon which science depends. Victims experience lasting professional and psychological harm, while bystanders and research teams face disrupted productivity and fractured cultures. When misconduct drives talented researchers—particularly women and early-career scientists—out of the field, the loss reverberates across disciplines and generations, raising urgent ethical questions about equity, justice, and responsibility.

While traditional approaches to research security have focused on external threats such as intellectual property theft, this paper highlights internal threats—harassment, coercion, and abuse of authority—as equally destructive. By reframing sexual harassment as both a form of scientific misconduct and a research security vulnerability, the paper situates prevention within broader conversations in applied and professional ethics about accountability, inclusivity, and the conditions that sustain knowledge production.

Building on existing scholarship in scientific integrity, workplace ethics, and feminist ethics, the paper advances four interdependent strategies for ethical culture change: (1) disrupting harmful power dynamics, (2) advancing inclusivity and equity, (3) strengthening accountability through transparent reporting, and (4) fostering openness and respect as community norms. These strategies not only protect individuals but also safeguard the integrity of science itself.

The central thesis is that preventing harassment is not a peripheral compliance task but an ethical imperative that defines our responsibilities to one another as members of the research community. In times when public trust in science is fragile, standing up against harassment—whether in visible crises or in everyday interactions—answers the theme's challenge: to consider what we owe each other, not only as individuals, but as co-stewards of ethical, secure, and inclusive scientific progress.

Research Ethics, AI, and Explanation

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9H (Grand H) - Individual Presentation

Joseph Spino (Le Moyne College)

The integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) systems (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini), into the workflow of various industries and academic fields is difficult to overstate. Unsurprisingly, AI has raised a host of ethical questions in various fields. Research ethics is no exception, with familiar worries regarding privacy violations and potential bias. While the practical promise of artificial intelligence and similar systems is encouraging, there is reason to worry about the explanatory power of such systems. The 'black box' nature of many AI systems appears to put the availability of both 'everyday' and scientific explanations at risk. Given that most people using AI, including credentialed researchers, have little understanding of how it works, I argue that there may be little explanatory value from some research that depends on AI systems. This lack of explanatory value presents significant ethical concerns.

While this epistemic concern regarding explanations is not unique to research ethics, the issues raised are particularly troubling. Consider, for example, research within the social sciences that is attempting to explain some aspects of human behavior. AI systems have been used in study design, identification of subjects, data analysis, and manuscript narratives. It is this widespread use of AI that creates problems for the legitimacy of the downstream explanations a research program purports to produce. At least two senses of explanation found in the philosophy of science literature are pertinent to this discussion: the "representation-artifact' sense, meant to provide how-possibly or how-actually descriptions of a phenomenon, and the "ontic" sense, which are non-representational sets of objective processes. I argue both senses are out of reach, given the opaque AI processes. This lack of explanation poses a significant ethical concern for two reasons. The first is legal, since some countries have enshrined a "Right to Explanation" (e.g., the EU's General Data Protection Regulation). The second is a lack of transparency, where the researcher may be unable to report their data, methods, and even conclusions in a rigorous and satisfactory manner. Accordingly, researchers should be mindful of maintaining the explanatory value of their work when integrating AI into their methodology.

Climate Adaptation and the Ethics of the Lifeboat

Saturday, 7th March - 14:15: 9I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Dr. Robert Kirkman (Georgia Institute of Technology)

Andrew Light and Gwynne Taraska (2014) argue that problems of adaptation to climate change *intensify* traditional arguments in favor of state-to-state aid for development, arguments which appeal to beneficence, rights, obligations created by complicity in harm, self-interest and globalization. Climate change, they argue, involves a relationship of harm between wealthy nations, which contribute disproportionately to greenhouse gas emissions, and poorer nations, a relationship which, though not strictly causal, gives each of the traditional arguments greater weight.
But do problems of adapting to climate change also *attenuate* arguments *against* state-to-state aid?
Enter the metaphor of the lifeboat, and Garrett Hardin's variably effective arguments against unconditional state-to-state food aid to address problems of hunger in the face of population growth, which he maintains can lead only to a redistribution of misery across ever-increasing numbers of people. His arguments turn in part on his use of the ecological concept of *carrying capacity*.
While problems of climate adaptation are intertwined with population growth, the context is quite different and not all of Hardin's various arguments land with the same force. Nevertheless, recasting Hardin's ecological pragmatism in terms of the *adaptive capacity* of human systems in relation to the carrying capacity of local and regional environments has much to teach about the conditions under which state-to-state aid for climate adaptation may do more harm than good.
In the end, climate change may attenuate some of Hardin's arguments, but others of his arguments retain enough of their force to merit further consideration.
This paper is a contribution to the surprisingly thin literature on the ethics of climate adaptation. It addresses not only the theme of "what we owe each other" but also the question of what we may *not* owe each other . . . and who "we" are.

The UN Climate Change Meetings: Incompetent Communication or a Failure of Ethics, With Thoughts on the Duty to Respond

Saturday, 7th March - 14:45: 9I (Sterling 6) - Individual Presentation

Tom Duncanson *(Green Citizen Diplomacy Project)*

At a meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), St. Kitts and Nevis, a small island nation in the Caribbean, spoke on reporting greenhouse gas emissions, saying fulfilling the UNFCCC mandate for reporting these emissions is impossible without some prohibitively expensive software: "Could the Secretariat or someone provide this software so St. Kitts, and other under-resourced nations, can meet their responsibilities under the Paris Agreement?" Eight nations and the Co-Chairs of the session gave thirteen speeches following St. Kitts, and not one mentioned St. Kitts' problem or offered aid. Indeed, *the eight nations never replied to what any other nation said*. If one takes the climate problem seriously, the session was farcical.

Is this incompetent communication or ethical failure? We know our civic bodies sometimes "advance the dialectic" only by what feels like a miscellaneous accumulation of points. Ordinary conversation often has higher standards of responsiveness than, say, a city council meeting. One of Grices's maxims of conversation stipulates that to fulfill the conversational functions of progressing understanding and supporting the interlocutors, contributions to a conversation should be *related* to the other remarks. In reasoning we would say arguments should be relevant to one-another. In some intellectual traditions of argument disputants have a burden of proof but also a *burden of rejoinder*. In American trial practice attorneys in their summation speeches assert that certain points in their case were "uncontroverted," inventing out of the lore of practice an implicit "duty to controvert." Their adversary may only "controvert" the claim by spinning a plausible story.

Diplomats, trained to "hold a parenthesis," i.e., never given in, would not agree they bear a professional burden of relatedness where their assignment is misdirection for the sake of delay. Their communication "burden" is politeness, but their political burden is maintaining sovereignty. Little surprise, outsiders have come to condemn the climate meetings as an exercise in bad faith, meetings about meetings. Some might see responding to St. Kitts and the inarticulate but still sovereign climate itself as supererogation. More likely, the latter is the precise requirement of avoiding global chaos.

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