

Ethics

Law and Ethics Seminar
Fall 2018

Ensuring public safety



A P E G S

*Association of Professional Engineers
& Geoscientists of Saskatchewan*

Program Outline

- Today
 - Ethics Overview
 - Ethical Case Studies
- Tomorrow
 - Presentation on APEGS Investigation, Discipline and Prohibition
 - “Gilbane Gold” - Video
 - “The Hearing” - Play

Quick Overview from Earlier

- What is a Professional?
 - extensive training
 - specialized knowledge
 - professional association
 - ethical code
 - certification or licensing

Overview (Continued)

- Professionalism:
 - Duty and Responsibility
 - Higher Standard of Personal Conduct
 - Code of Ethics

Overview (Continued)

- You are responsible to:
 - Society and Public
 - Employer and Client
 - Colleagues and Peers
 - Employees and Subordinates
 - APEGS
 - Yourself

Definition of Ethics

- Conforming to accepted and especially professional standards of conduct (*synonymous with virtuous, moral, principled*)
- Is relative to the environment you are working in (*the culture/the society in which you work*)

Code of Ethics (Section 20(2) of the Regulatory Bylaws)

- Protection of the public and environment is paramount
- Provide services only in area of competence
- Act as faithful agent to clients and employer
 - maintain confidentiality & avoid conflicts of interest
- Maintain competence

Code of Ethics

- Ethical conduct toward all people
- Advise consequence of ignoring good engineering principles
- Report illegal & unethical practice
- Be accountable and assume leadership

History of Professional Ethics

- Hippocratic Oath
- Primum non nocere
 - First, do no harm.
- Honour Pin Ceremony
 - Some engineering student societies
- Iron Ring Ceremony
 - Calling of an Engineer
- Earth Ring Ceremony
- Engineering Regulated in Sask 1930
- Geoscience Regulated in Sask 1997

Where do we Learn Ethics?

- Age 0 to 5
 - Parents, Siblings, Grandparents, other relatives
- Age 5 to 18
 - Home, School, Church, Media, Friends, Coaches
- Age 18 Plus
 - Employers, Peers, Associations, Church, Service Groups, Spouse
- Plus many more. The important thing is to reflect on the reasons for our decisions
- Your approach may change over time as you age

Basic Ethical Questions

RIGHT

VS

WRONG

GOOD

VS

BAD

Difficult Ethical Questions

RIGHT

VS

RIGHT

GOOD

VS

GOOD

Engineering & Geoscience Ethics

“Ethics are the moral issues which we relate to how people and organizations involved in engineering and geoscience should act in given situations.”

Ethical Approaches/Philosophies

1. Relativism

- Ethical is what the culture/society thinks is right

2. Utilitarianism

- What makes an action right are the consequences - produces the most good for the most persons

3. Deontological

- Right versus wrong. Identify your duties, where they come from, how important each are.

4. Virtue Ethics

- Ethical is what is virtuous (honesty, etc – see the APEGS Good Character Guideline)
- Goal is to maximize happiness

• Note that this is not an exhaustive list of approaches

• A knowledge of the different philosophies can be used to help define the problem and formulate a solution

Suggested Questions to Ask Yourself

- Know which approach you are using and periodically reflect on that
- What harm to whom and how much? (sometimes you have to offend to be ethical)
- Will it cause you, your family or your profession, embarrassment?
 - step back and re-evaluate
- The public expects professionals to be objective (watch for personal bias)
- **If in doubt, ask** (without violating confidentiality)

Resolution of Ethical Situations

1. Recognition that there is a problem
2. Define the problem
3. Identify critical ethical duties and responsibilities
4. Build an action plan
 - Alternatives
 - Decisions
 - Act
5. Take a Leadership Role

Resolution of Ethical Situations

DOCUMENT!

DOCUMENT!!

DOCUMENT!!!

Know This Process Well

- It will help you pass your exam
- Help you avoid APEGS investigations
- Keep you out of court
- Help you to conduct yourself as a professional

Questions

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