Ethics, according to Parker 1998 (Ethics and Organizations), are a systematic set of normative prescriptions about human behavior, codes to govern everyday morals and morality.

Think about Aristotle’s virtuous character and Kant’s statement of “act as if your action were a general rule”.

Think about various professions and the codes that they have in place; whether they are called codes of ethics, or professional standards, or something else. Some professions that require adherence to a code might include speech pathologists, nurses, counseling, mostly in the medical field – the Hippocratic Oath, but other professions as well, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf have 7 tenets included in their Code of Ethics, they include:

**TENETS**

1. Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.
2. Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.
3. Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.
4. Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.
5. Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.
6. Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.
7. Interpreters engage in professional development.

Ethics, in short, are moral principles. I think that ethics are not simply knowing what is right and wrong, it is acting accordingly. Whether that means by your own actions and speech or by expressing concerns about something that is ethically wrong. But, as Mark Twain once said, “It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.”

We will now focus on a definition and framework for our discussions to utilize for the remainder of the session.

Adding to our personal moral principles, we have university, societal and career specific value statements that serve as guides within which we make decisions. It is up to each of us to engage in civil discussions that critically analyze ethical issues. It is through our communication and collaboration today that we hope to provide the opportunity for you to reflect and critique your own reasoning and decision making beyond this presentation.
As we prepare to examine specific ethical dilemmas, the following ethical principles adapted from Wilcox and Ebbs in The Leadership Compass will serve as our framework. Wilcox and Ebbs observe that, “These five principles serve as ethically consistent, relevant guidelines—not absolutes—upon which ethical actions and decisions can be based.” (p.40). As student affairs professionals, we are in uniquely positioned to intentionally examine and model ethical decision making.

Ethical Principles:

1. Individuals right to make their own decisions
2. Ensuring no harm is done – mentally or physically
3. Ensuring the health and welfare benefit to others
4. Being fair when weighing the rights of the group against the rights of an individual
5. Keeping promises and trust

References

