## Week2: Theoretical underpinning of Ethics & Moral reasoning and Professional Ethics

Hallmark of ethical thinking: recognition that there are appropriate interests other than your own, that should act as constraints on unbridled pursuit of self-interest

Practical problem: how to turn an erstwhile ethical problem into a non‐ethical one by making interest coincide.

Relativism:

Values are different

Descriptive relativism

Normative relativism

Different views are correct

Don’t judge or interfere other culture’s values

Descriptive Ethics

Summarize from what people think are ethical.

Prescriptive

Ought and should.

Principle-issue-casuistry

There is some reasons behind the judgement

Ethics is complicated

Compare ethics with prudence, politics, preference and

Argument between rules and consequences (individual morality) (Action)

Virtue

More complicated (role morality)(Action)

Normative Ethical theories

Teleological

Egoism

Nationalism

Epistemism

Utilitarianism

Deontological

Kantian ethics

Duty

Autonomy

Willing well

Consistency and universalizability

Virtue

Kant-maxims

General principle

Reason behind

Categorical imperative

Act according to universal law

Respect people’s personhood

Mill

Utilitarian

W.D. Ross

Prima facie duties

Moral pluralism  
There is no one single moral theory or principle that should be accepted as preferable to others, and there is not necessarily any single moral principle or set of principles that everyone should accept.

Contractarianism

Thomas Hobbes

John Rawls

Minimax

Maximax

Maximin

Procedural justice

Perfect

Imperfect

Pure

Moral reasoning

Barriers to ethical decision making

Three views:

Objectivity

Interest

Considerations

Partisanship

Rationalization

Bias

Ethical blindness

False equivalency

Ethical Scripts

Example:

Ford Pinto

Dilemmas

How to deal with a counterexample

Moral Judgement

Process and principle

Matter of judgement

Situation is not black and white

Ethical judgement on behaviors

stress

Rules and regulations

Accountability and responsibility

Code of Ethics vs code of conduct

Why have code of conduct

Ethical awareness

Avoid

Moral negligence

Moral recklessness

Moral blindness

Moral competence

Ethical caution

Preventing, avoiding, minimizing the unethical

Principle

Safe exit

Defensive driving

Hierarchy

Dirty hand

# Lecture summary 1

## Week 2: Theoretical underpinning of Ethics

The started the lecture by putting us in an ethical scenario and asking us questions such as making ethical decisions and identifying important moral characteristics. The lecturer first introduced that there are two types of ethics: descriptive ethics which describes people’s behavior and prescriptive ethics which defines what people ought to do. Prescriptive ethics is characterized by casuistry, normative issuesandnormative ethics. Normative ethics, also called general principle is the core of this lecture consists of two school of theories: consequential (teleological) and non-consequential (deontological). Immanuel Kant, foundation of the deontological describes ethics by four attributes: duty, autonomy, consistency and universalizability. He also suggested two important theories: categorical imperative and maxims. Maxims is a general principle that explain why somebody is doing something. By accepting duty as the basic moral feature, an agent with good will that acts autonomously and consistently to avoid hypocrisy can be regarded as a responsible person. For consequential ethics, Mill and Ross also developed theories about utilitarianism to maximize happiness or “general utility” which emphasize on consequences instead of starting point or in other word, maxims. After that, contractarianism is also introduced under deontological theory. Thus, it can be concluded that ethics is a complicated issue not only because values are different in different cultures and scenarios, but also there is no one single moral theory or principle that should be accepted as preferable to others, and there is not necessary any principles that everyone should accept. In the end, virtual is briefly talked about by quoting Plato’s and Aristotle’s theories to explain how an attribute can be defined as virtue.

## Week 3: Moral reasoning and Professional Ethics

This lecture is about making ethical decisions and making ethical judgements. First, the lecturer introduced barriers to ethical decision making that may conflict with Objectivity, customer Interest other appropriate ethical considerations which are Partisanship, Rationalization, Bias, Ethical blindness, equivalency and Ethical Scripts. And an example of Ford Pinto was given to explain the ethical scripts. Then, few ethical dilemmas are given and we talked about how to deal with a counterexample. After that, process and principle of making moral judgement is illustrated and the lecturer stressed that, in a matter of judgement, situation is not black and white. However, besides ethical judgement that represents responsibility, rules and regulations that stands for accountability are also important. Comparing to responsibility, accountability is more directive and it emphasis on process. While responsibility corresponds to code of ethics, there is also code of conduct that requires accountability. Because of the features of accountability, code of conduct is necessary to guarantee uniformity and to keep the public trust. After that, ethical awareness to avoid moral negligence, moral recklessness, moral blindness and moral competence is illustrated followed by ethical caution. Comparing to ethical awareness which is a passive principle, it requires people to prevent, avoid and minimize the unethical which is a really tough job. The principle involved are: precautionary principle, safe exit and defensive driving. In the end, the lecturer discussed bout the hierarchy and dirty hand theory by an example of trolley problem and few relevant cases.