Studying ethics as a *preventative* measure

- Be informed
- Recognize ethical issues
- **Develop analytic skills**
- Elicit a sense of responsibility
- Tolerate disagreement and ambiguity

Seven step guide to ethical decision making[1]

1. State problem (What is the ethical situation? What makes you uncomfortable about the situation?)

2. Check facts

3. Identify relevant factors (e.g. persons involved, laws, professional code, other practical constraints)

4. Develop list of options

5. **Test options (see next slide)**

6. Make a choice based on steps 1-5.

7. Review steps 1-6: What could you do to make it less likely that you would have to make such a decision again?

[1]Davis, Michael. *Teaching ethics across the engineering curriculum*, Center for the study of ethics in the professions, IL Institute of Technology, text taken from www.onlineethics.org/essays/education/davis.html

Test Options

- **Harm test** - does this option do less harm than alternatives?

- **Publicity test** - would I want my choice of this option published in the newspaper?

- **Defensibility test** - could I defend choice of option before Congressional committee or committee of peers?

- **Reversibility test** - would I still think this option is good if I were adversely affected by it?

- **Colleague test** - what do my colleagues say when I describe my problem and suggest this option as my solution?

- **Professional test** - what might my profession's governing body or ethics committee say about this option?

- **Organization test** - what does the company's ethics officer or legal counsel say about this?

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