Ethics

SLO # 6 professional and ethical responsibility
What does Ethics have to do with Engineering Communications?

• Engineers are held to higher standard.

• Documentation, notes, e-mail, water cooler chit-chat = evidence.
Preamble

*Engineering is an important and learned profession. As members of this profession, engineers are expected to exhibit the highest standards of honesty and integrity.*

Professions: engineering, law, medicine

Engineers: held to standards at bachelor degree
Preamble

Engineering has a direct and vital impact on the quality of life for all people.

Lawyers and medical doctors – a few thousand clients or patients

Engineers – millions of lives
Accordingly, the services provided by engineers require honesty, impartiality, fairness, and equity, and must be dedicated to the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare. Engineers must perform under a standard of professional behavior that requires adherence to the highest principles of ethical conduct.
Fundamental Canons

Engineers, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public.

2. Perform services only in areas of their competence.

3. Issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.

4. Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees.

5. Avoid deceptive acts.

6. Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession.
Fictional Case Example

Employer asks you to lie.

5. Avoid deceptive acts. [do not lie]
4. Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees. [your employer asked you to lie, so lie]

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public. [content of that lie will hurt public; do not lie]
Violations

• Professional Society Ethics Board
  – Conducts hearing with jury of peers (fellow engineers), evidence, and witnesses

• If found in violation,
  – Public apology
  – Fines (can go to criminal and civil courts)
  – Blackballed
  – Removal of credentials
    • Licensure
    • College degree
Ethics

• Canons are in hierarchical order: highest canon wins
• Adhere to Code where trained
• Ethics versus legal considerations: ethics wins
• National Society of Professional Engineers
  – ACM for Computer Science
• Order of the Engineer