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**Underlying Assumption:** All nursing actions have ethical implications to the extent that they are aimed at intentionally fulfilling nursing goals which are ethical goals of providing a good and meeting unmet health needs (Grace, 2001; Milliken and Grace, 2017). Developing nurse moral agency should be an ongoing aim of initial and continuing nurse education.

**Domains:**

1. Knowledge for Nursing Practice
2. Person Centered Care
3. Population Health
4. Scholarship for the Nursing Discipline
5. Quality and Safety
6. Interprofessional Partnerships
7. Systems Based Practice
8. Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
9. Professionalism
10. Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development

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| **Integrative Learning Strategies**  (James Rest’s 4 Cognitive Processes Required for Moral Agency are helpful for understanding how personal dispositions and characteristics, knowledge, confidence, and motivation are all required for students to develop confidence in their moral agency), thus should be accounted for across courses and curricula | | |
| *Pre-Licensure — Entry Level Integrating into Domains* | | |
| Initial (Freshman Soph/Jr). Integrated through the curriculum or stand-alone course | * Provide readings related to nursing professional responsibilities (see references), nursing ethics, the code of ethics, nursing goals and perspectives and how these developed over time. distinctions and overlaps among the goals and reason for existence of the various professions * Pose critical reading questions pre. class (related to characteristics of good nurses, engagement with the Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (ANA, 2015) , etc), * Value clarification exercise (explore who they are what they believe/value and why) how coherent are their values with each other and with peers * Ask them to differentiate among nursing ethics, medical ethics, bioethics and discuss areas of overlap * Role of shared decision making. Patient perspective * Engage critically with the provisions of the Code of ethics for Nurses with interpretive statements (ANA, 2015) - their examples of meaning * Large and Small Group Discussions (based on Cases where it is easy to blame people for their illness) that highlight the point that every nursing action has some ethical implications to the extent that it is focused on promoting nursing goals * Explore biases using cases, role play, explorations of areas where they have revised their beliefs * Assign Implicit Association Test https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.htm * Debates or presentations where they have to take a different position or considered both sides of an issue * Practice articulating the facets of a situation where optimal care is not being provided | Domains:  1. Knowledge for Nursing Practice;  2. Person Centered Care  a) History of the profession’s  development  b) Historical development of nursing ethics and  bioethics  c) Nursing perspectives on the nature of human beings  (Code of ethics for Nurses, 2015. Provisions 1-4; v  Central Unifying Focus (2008) Willis Grace & Roy)  **Domain 5 Quality and Safety**   1. Professional responsibility to identify and address suboptimal care conditions (Code of ethics for Nurses Provision 4 (ANA, 2015)   **Domain 6 Interprofessional Partnerships**  **Domain 9 Professionalism**  **Domain 10 Personal, professional and leadership**  **Development**  a) Self-reflection on values, biases, and prejudices,  understand how these may impact patient  care and one’s interactions with others  b) learn how to articulate one’s perspective  respectfully, clearly, and unemotionally  c) Listen to the perspectives of others  d) Grasp the limits of one’s knowledge  e) Focus on the mutual goals of team members as  well as the nursing perspective. |
| Jr/Senior (Integrated through the curriculum or stand-alone module/course) | * Explore assumptions they are making about any given situation, help them challenge these assumptions (e.g., persons with addictions are responsible for their addictions) * Help them articulate how the profession’s, goals and perspectives anchor what ethics perspectives, language and principles are pertinent * Introduce to the language and tools of ethics or revisit, apply, and reinforce if this has been provided in a non-nursing course - use cases, discuss their cases/situations (ethical decision-making is not unlike the nursing process it is recursive and requires exploring facts and values as well as pursuing more information as necessary * Review frameworks for ethical decision making and how they fit different situations (everyday issues -> difficult clinical conflicts -> dilemmas [require teamwork]) * Use their practical experiences (everyday type) to analyze what happened and what can be learned * Explore the meaning and risks and benefits (for patients and self) of courage, confidence, advocacy * Develop a more complex clinical case or use one from their practice which presents ethical challenges and for which clinical nurses should be willing and able to articulate/support their (patient’s) perspective * For a more complex case, prepare a mock clinical ethical consultation to address the challenge (engage clinical ethicists to assist) * Clearly state the ethical issue(s), assumptions, what is known and what more needs to be ascertained * Clarify the purpose of the consult and use an appropriate ethics work-up tool to facilitate dialogue * Identify who needs to be present at the table to address the challenge (IPE) * Make recommendations (SBAR for Ethics) * Is this issue illustrative of an ethical quality gap and what needs to be in place to correct the gap and prevent recurring ethical challenges? * Provide cases where injustices have led to poor or sub-optimal health outcomes. Use Introduce the idea of professional advocacy to address social injustices * Provide cases where nurse intervention was lacking resulting in poor outcomes for a patient. | **Domain 1 Knowledge for Nursing Practice**  **Domain 2 Person-Centered Care**  **Domain 3 Population Health**  a) Theoretical basis for professional ethics, nursing’s  goals and perspectives, ethical frameworks –  decision making strategies – ethical language –  social justice  **Domains 4-10**  a) Application of ethical perspectives (humanizing care)  b) Professional responsibilities to question ‘received  views’ that may not always serve patients well or  may not serve all patients well (standardized care  plans, protocols).  c) Critical evaluation of the soundness of accepted  knowledge (Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2015)  Provisions 6-9)  d) Use practice experiences to identify research  questions and policies that don’t serve patients and  the public well (local to social)  e) Identify the root causes of disparities and injustices  that lead to poor health  f) Identify safety issues and bring to the attention of  influencers (leaders, nurse leaders, etc.)  g) Collaborate with the healthcare team, ethics experts  to optimize care and address unsupportive  environments  h) Understand the importance of professional  organizations to good healthcare and policy change  i) Importance of ongoing ethics discussion for  developing and maintaining nurse moral agency  j) Provide leadership to others  k) Ethical importance of caring for self so one can care  effectively for others (provision 5 of the Code of  Ethics for Nurses (ANA,2015) |
| Post – Licensure – Advanced Level (builds on experiences, learning, and skills from pre-licensure) Integration into Domains | | |
| Master’s and Doctoral Level  (Building on prelicensure – remedial work needed if they did not get it in pre-licensure) | Masters Level   * Differentiate nursing ethics, medical ethics, bioethics and areas of overlap using available literature (resources provided under references) * Explain and critique the Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2015) - In relation to its implication in various clinical settings and related to rectifying disparities and injustices. Use cases - debate * Explore the idea of applied ethics and its tools – use seminal cases as illustrations. Various text books provide cases and have worked through the ethical analyses of them see references (Grace & Milliken; Grace) * Use a case to demonstrate the limitations of different moral theories for decision making in clinical settings by arriving at different conclusions * Students articulate different perspectives on ethical decision-making in healthcare – Use seminal and contemporary readings, compare and contrast likely patient outcomes using the various perspectives   + Narrative Ethics   + Virtue Ethics   + Care Ethics   + Ethical principles and their scope and limits in analyzing difficult situations (in the absence of understanding nursing goals and perspectives as anchors) * Interprofessional Education as a way to understand the perspectives of different professions and their perceived responsibilities * One can also craft scenarios (simulation works) where students have to assume the role of patient, family, physician and others (requires preparing a script for each part) * Identify a challenge to organizational integrity and use a mock organizational integrity consult to draft recommendations to address the challenge * Have student formulate a policy to address a practice problem * Students research and present an ethical issue for nursing and healthcare – from both sides of the issue and suggest avenues of resolution * Students demonstrate how they would support colleagues and supervisees to resolve a difficult issue of everyday practice   Doctoral Level   * Develop a list of contemporary hot topics that have ethical implication for students to provide an ethical analysis (e.g., vaccine hesitancy, conscientious objection, the use of AI, harm reduction, medical assistance in dying) * Students prepare an op-ed, position paper, or practice article to highlight an ethical issue in practice and propose strategies for resolution (elicit assistance of university PR department or English department) * Join an ethics committee or IRB to increase knowledge, mock ethics committee where students practice acting as ethics expert/consultant * Students take an issue of social injustice for their population that gives rise to disparities, provide an ethical argument and strategies to address * Identify and address a public health ethical challenge related to the population you serve using models of interprofessional collaboration (e.g., vaccine hesitancy, mask policies, etc.) * Students teach a class on ethics to undergrads or colleagues * Peer review -for research or publication. Ethical review elements and written submission * Nurse role in IRB and protocol review - Human Subject Protection * Review a research proposal involving human subjects using IRB criteria * Taking a leadership position – support nurses having a voice at the “ethics table” in their system and propose ways to support ethical competence/nurse moral agency to be evaluated annually. * Many employees are critical of the ethics climate or environment in the system. Have students research strategies to enhance the ethical climate and promote the moral agency of every nurse/employee. * Use the National Center for Ethics in Health Care website to have students review resources in program management, ethics consultation, preventive ethics and ethical leadership (<https://www.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics.asp>). * Use the issues approach in the VA’s preventive ethics primer to identify a system-wide ethics quality gap and develop a plan to resolve it (<https://www.ethics.va.gov/docs/integratedethics/pe_primer.pdf>) * Practice using communication and mediation techniques to defuse conflictual practice situations | **Domains, 1,2,3,5,6,9,10**  Each of these domains may utilize these strategies from different perspectives – Some examples that could apply to master’s or doctoral level  a) Research tools to assess sources of system-wide compassion fatigue, burnout, moral distress, and/or moral injury. Develop an interprofessional plan to develop needed resources to address the deficiencies discovered.  (https://www.nationalacademies.org/...oach-to-professional-well-being )  b) Review the moral resilience literature and identify 5 strategies you can employ to enhance the moral resilience of your staff system-wide.  c) Review your system’s disaster policies including your active shooter policies. Identify the criteria you will use to evaluate the ethical dimension of these policies. Identify and prioritize the interests of stakeholders. Identify and address deficiencies.  d) Compare and contrast nurse practice sites that are unionized with those that are not. Determine the criteria you will use to assess which best safeguards patient safety and quality while simultaneously advocating for nurses. |
| **Resources** (these apply across curriculum and competency domains and under references– faculty to select what is appropriate for their level(s) of the curriculum and domain) | | |
|  | * See under references for textbooks and websites that contain cases and examples * Webinars will be available in the near future to assist educators and leaders to develop nurse moral agency * On-Line Learning Module from the Clinical Ethics Residency for Nurses (CERN) will be modified and made available * On-line ethics resources   + University of Washington Blog and Links to Ethics resources: <https://blogs.uw.edu/somehm/ethics-resources/>   + https://kennedyinstitute.georgetown.edu/resources/   + https://blog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu/2020/04/02/free-online-ethics-resources-available-covid19/ |  |
| **Recommended Content** (some recommended content is also under **Integrative Learning Strategies**) | | |
| Initial (During or before first clinical practica) | ● Understanding of the ethical nature of professional responsibility for  individuals and society (Code of Ethics for Nurses, Social Policy  Statement)  ● Familiarity with the ethical nature of all nursing actions – nursing historical development goals and perspectives (Milliken & Grace,2016)  ● Introduction to code of ethics - critique  ● Introduction to the ANA’s Scope and Standards of Practice (2021)  ● Elucidation of personal values, beliefs, educational, religious, cultural influences  ● Reflection on the influence of biases and prejudices  ● Content specific cases related to specific practicum setting (cradle to grave). Clinical faculty urged to increase their ability to help students problem-solve ethical issues  ● Ability to articulate what constitutes nurse moral agency in that setting  ● Identify uncertainty and constraints that may lead to moral distress and how to address these   * Basic idea of the meaning of ethical perspectives and language (principles). Ability to take a problem of everyday practice and determine the assumptions being made by various stakeholders, the rights of patients and what resources are available to them | **Domains 1,2,5,6,8,9,10**  **Integrate throughout domains particularly important for this level are the domains listed above** |
| Junior/Senior  (and other prelicensure) | * Grasp of role in everyday ethical practice and as a member of a team trying to resolve a more complex conflict * Practice advocating for patients - articulating their needs - using cases and being mentored in practice * Practice analyzing cases and articulating the nuances of a situation * Nuanced understanding of ethical principles, human rights, ethical concepts * Familiarity with the Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2015) and its power to support good practice Understanding of disparities and the roots of problems in the way societies are arranged and work | Add Domains 3,4,7,8 |
| Advanced  Masters and Doctoral | * Understanding of the augmented ethical responsibilities of roles that have more independence * Differentiate between legal and ethical approaches to resolving ethical issues * Practiced at ethical analysis, mediation, collaboration * Accountability for mentorship/teaching: ethical decision making, mediation, and conflict resolution * Analyze policies and practices for their ethical soundness * Accessing information and resources * Researching the state of the science re. ethical problems in healthcare | Domains 1-10 |
| Template Area 4: Assessment Strategies | | |
| Pre-Licensure | ● Ethical Awareness Scale (Milliken et al). Measures an individual’s ethical  sensitivity to everyday and conflictual situations pre and post education  ● Rubrics to measure knowledge development  ● Reflection papers on readings  ● Guided journaling about specific events  ● Simulations with self-, peer and expert critique and debriefing  ● Situation analysis  ● Articulation of the nuances of a situation  ● Moral distress scale  ● Self-efficacy scale - Bandura  ● Nurses Dilemma Test (Crisholm, 1981)  ● Articulation of the meaning of nursing goals and perspectives,  ethical approaches, principles  ● Observations of a student’s actions in articulating the ethical  aspects of a situation to team members during practice  ● Essays re. meaning of ethics early and later -compare and contrast  ● Use of standardized patients- explain advanced directives; witness  informed consent; address request for AMA discharge; understand  DNR order; |  |
| Advanced | * Analysis of a complex case using nursing goals and perspectives, principles to parse out aspects and propose possible courses of action - use of an expert rubric to evaluate * Develop a local, regional, or national policy to address a problem identifying gaps in knowledge and proposing further research as needed * Present a complex local, regional or national problem related to a disparity, analyze the ethical aspects and propose strategies for resolution * Development of an ethics education session or initiate ethics rounds in one’s clinic or institution * Membership in an ethics committee or IRB |  |
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McGraw-Hill. *(good resource for faculty wanting to take a deeper dive into the thinking behind contemporary moral thinking).*  **Other Important References**  Values clarification exercises: https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/values-clarification | | |