

Student Learning Exercises

ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses Faculty Pak

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STUDENT OUTCOMES:

The ANA Code of Ethics Educator Guide introduces the concepts of ethics and the nurse's responsibilities to use the ANA *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* ("the Code") as a guide to clinical decision-making. Behavioral objectives for this educator guide are listed below.

At the completion of these learning exercises the student will be able to:

1. Identify a moral or ethical dilemma in nursing practice
2. Apply the ethical theories or principles to nursing care of an individual and family
3. Discuss the multiple conflicting loyalties of the nurse to patients, the profession, employer, physician, insurer and government
4. Analyze provisions of the Code.
5. Formulate rationale for a position on an ethical issue using a contrasting framework
6. Determine ethical implications of a technological development in health care
7. Analyze the flaws in a discredited research study.

The behavioral objectives reflect knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be demonstrated by undergraduate students and reflect levels of learning domains. Mastery assessment is based on these objectives.

Background for the Educator

This faculty guide addresses essential content for baccalaureate nursing students. Every aspect of health care is embedded with ethical issues requiring analysis and decisions. The Code is the major source of guidance for these issues. If ethics is not an integral part of nurses' preparation for practice, they will not be equipped for the challenges facing them in the healthcare environment. Patients, nurses and healthcare in general will all be enriched if nurses diligently learn and apply the Code.

The role for undergraduate students is primarily direct patient care, which the first sections of the Code addresses. As these new nurses mature and expand their roles and embrace the larger profession of nursing, they will need the last sections of the Code to guide them in addressing social determinants of health, justice and broader collaborative efforts to ensure healthy populations throughout the nation and internationally.

Powerpoint Slides

The Educator Guide features three PowerPoint slide sets corresponding to the three sections of the Code: Nurses and patients (Provisions 1-3), boundaries of duty and loyalty (Provisions 4-6) and beyond individual patient encounters (Provisions 7-9). These slide sets should be viewed in order to follow the sequence of the Code of Ethics. There are discussion points embedded in several places to mark those places for student engagement. These are marked with a symbol indicating a pause for dialogue.

Mini-Papers

Educators realize it is more difficult to distill thoughts and literature into a small document than a large one, where rambling and padding of content is often tempting. Two small papers are designed to expand the student's comprehension of the depth and scope of ethics in clinical practice. Each three-page paper is linked to a student outcome. A rubric is supplied to specify levels of quality expected.

Case Study Peer Analysis

A case is presented that includes a minor patient, conflicting opinions about the course of treatment, cultural elements and a nurse faced with an ethical decision about truth telling at the end of life. Divide the class into small groups of five for a 15-minute analysis of his case, instructing them to arrive at a consensus with justification. Ask each group to report to the entire class. Compare the responses to see if decisions about the nurse's response differed or if varying rationale was used to justify the decision.

Debriefing Questions

Following completion of this learning exercise, all or some of these questions could be used to enhance student engagement and retention.

1. What insights did you gain about a nurse's role in end of life care where family dynamics are touchy?
2. How does a nurse deal with conflicting opinions about a course of treatment?
3. To whom is the nurse most accountable, the patient, the family, the physician? How does a nurse balance these conflicting loyalties?
4. How does the Code guide you in a spur of the moment when a response is expected momentarily?
5. What ideas did this learning exercise prompt in your thinking?

Code of Ethics Analysis

Assign Code provisions to student groups so that each of the 9 provisions and interpretive statements are assigned. Depending on the size of your class, groups may vary from 3 to 12 to work on each provision. Student groups are to formulate a 5 page paper with 15 references responding to the questions posed. They will present their findings to the entire class, beginning with provision one and following in order through all 9 provisions. A rubric is provided for the paper and presentation.

Debriefing Questions

Following these presentations, these questions could be posed to deepen understanding.

1. Given the pace of change, the shifting healthcare environment and the expanding roles for nurses, how can one code of ethics be sufficient to cover all nurses in all settings and all roles?
2. The Code is timeless, or is it? What language in the Code reflects earlier practice patterns, and what language forecasts new developments yet to come?
3. What is missing from the Code?
4. What could be deleted without weakening the Code?
5. How will you use the Code in your daily practice?

Ethical Debate

Divide the class in half using birthdays: those whose birthdays fall from January through June assigned to use a Deontology framework (duty regardless of consequences) and those who were born between July and end of December using a Teleology Utilitarian framework (outcomes producing the greatest good for the greatest number). Instruct them not to color their responses with their own opinions, but to rely on guidance of the framework they have been assigned as well as the Code. Two propositions are provided that position individual autonomy against public safety. Ask them to weigh individual autonomy and privacy against social justice for the community. Give them 10 minutes to arrive at a consensus agreeing or disagreeing with the proposition with three points of rationale from their respective framework. Then bring the two groups together to debate. A set of criteria for expectations of this debate is provided.

Debriefing Questions

As the debate comes to a conclusion, ask one or more of these questions to enhance learning.

1. If one focuses only on outcomes, how can they be accurately predicted?
2. If one focuses only on duty in the present circumstance, does one avoid responsibility for outcomes? How?
3. When can restriction of individual freedom be justified for the greater good? Give other examples from public health.
4. America is the land of the free, the birthplace of individual liberty. Is restriction of freedom anti-American?
5. What did you learn about your own values as a nurse from this debate?

PowerPoint Presentation on Ethical Aspects of an Innovation

Students are to form small groups of three to five, select a technological innovation from a list provided, analyze this innovation in terms of its ethical implications and produce a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation. They are to address the questions posed in this assignment and use the Code. They are to forecast advances in healthcare over the next 15 years to determine how this innovation will influence patient care. A rubric is provided to clarify expectations for quality.

Debriefing Questions

Following the presentations, prompt deeper thinking by posing these questions.

1. What skill sets will nurse in the future need to cope with advancing technology?
2. The Code can't accurately predict innovations, yet provides a framework for integrating new technology ethically into patient care. What is missing from the Code that would give future nurses more direction in adapting to new scientific advances?
3. As specializations and sub-specializations emerge with new science, will nurses practicing in these new frontiers need their own code of ethics to guide them in more specific practices? What will this do to the unity of the profession?
4. As you anticipate your own practice over the next two decades, how will you keep your skill sets and competencies at the cutting edge to keep pace with new technology?

Discussion Board Postings

Two assignments ask students to post responses on the electronic discussion board. They are to address questions, apply provisions of the Code and cite references to support their responses. A rubric is provided to clarify expectations for these postings.

Internet Resources

The National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature (NRCBL)

<http://bioethics.georgetown.edu/>

The President's Commission on Bioethics: Transcripts and Papers

<http://bioethics.gov>

ANA Center for Ethics and Human Rights: Position Statements

<http://nursingworld.org/ethics/>

Ethics Research Community

<http://ethicshare.org>

1. Mini Paper of a Nursing Dilemma

A military RN is ordered to force feed a terrorist prisoner while he is undergoing interrogation. The prisoner is on a hunger strike protesting his capture and highlighting his cause. The nurse is to ensure the prisoner remains hydrated and fed so he can provide information, and does not starve. The nurse is torn. On the one hand, the nurse has strong loyalty to the military objective of ensuring public safety by uncovering terrorist plots along with fear of reprisal if orders are disobeyed. Yet the nurse is appalled at the over-riding a patient's wishes by force feeding him against his wishes.

There is a distinction between an ethical dilemma and a moral dilemma.

- An *ethical dilemma* requires a choice between two equally appealing mutually exclusive choices **or** two equally distasteful alternatives, also mutually exclusive.
- A *moral dilemma* emerges when a person knows what is right but is constrained from doing it by forces beyond his control, or conversely, knows what is wrong but is compelled to do it anyway.

In both ethical and moral dilemmas, the person faces some remorse for making a choice that is not in complete compliance with personal values. This is referred to as moral distress which can accumulate, shaping future decisions and actions.

Write a three-page paper analyzing this military nurse's dilemma in terms of the following questions. Provide a bibliography of five references including the 2015 edition of *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*.

- Is this an ethical dilemma or a moral dilemma?
 - What ethical principles are in contention? How?
 - Are there any virtues at risk? Whose? Why?
 - What justifies over-riding an individual's autonomy to make his own choices?
 - How does the Code guide the nurse in invoking conscientious objection?
 - What lessons can be learned from this nurse's dilemma?
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2. Mini-Paper: Review a recent article from the nursing literature

The nurse is often a moral spectator observing decisions made by others and dealing with the patient's response to those decisions.

Analyze an article about a situation where a decision by a physician, insurance company, government agency or health institution adversely affected a patient or countermanded a patient's wishes.

Write a mini-paper of three pages to address:

- The nurse's role in affirming the patient's wishes and risks involved
- The social and economic consequences of reversing this decision
- Guidance from the Code that sheds light on this situation
- The lessons to be learned for similar future situations
- The moral residue that haunts the nurse

Provide a bibliography of at least five references, the first of which is the citation for the article you selected and another is the 2015 edition of *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*.

3. Dialogue with your peers about this Case

Case: Robbie

- A 14-year old boy is hospitalized for relapse of leukemia after a failed bone marrow transplant. The family has been told his condition is terminal, there is nothing more to be done except keep him comfortable.
- His mother is distant, uncommunicative and rarely visits. When she does, she doesn't touch Robbie or speak to him. She sits in a recliner by the window reading novels and requesting cokes multiple times per visit.
- The staff calls a family meeting but the mother is conspicuously absent.
- Robbie's father is frantic, demanding further treatments, regardless of low likelihood of efficacy. During the family meeting, he directs the team NOT to tell Robbie he might die, as he would lose hope. He states:
"In our culture, we keep this news from patients to avoid upsetting them."
- You are the nurse. When you are alone caring for Robbie, he asks you
"Am I dying?"
- How should you respond?
 - What are three options you could select?
 - Cite advantages and disadvantages of each.
 - How does the Code guide you in the virtue of truth-telling?
 - Who is the authorized decision-maker in this case?
 - What other considerations play a part in your response?

4. Paper and Presentation on Code of Ethics Provision

Critical and Comparative Analysis of *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (American Nurses Association, 2015)

Student groups will analyze an assigned provision of the Code. Write a five-page paper with 15 references and present a 15-minute summary of findings addressing these questions.

- What ethical theories or principles is this provision designed to uphold?
- What virtues does this provision exemplify?
- Contrast this provision with a code of ethics from another discipline (pharmacy, social work, accountants, lawyers, bankers).
 - What similarities or differences do you find?
- Look into the future fifteen years. Based on expected advances in health care, what revisions would you expect would be needed in this provision?

5. Ethical Debate

Divide the class in half using birthdays: those whose birthdays fall from January through June assigned to use a Deontology framework (duty regardless of consequences) and those who were born between July and end of December using a Teleology Utilitarian framework (outcomes producing the greatest good for the greatest number). Instruct them not to color their responses with their own opinions, but to rely on guidance of the framework they have been assigned as well as the Code. Ask them to weigh individual autonomy and privacy against social justice for the community. Give them 10 minutes to arrive at a consensus agreeing or disagreeing with the proposition with three points of rationale from their respective framework. Then bring the two groups together to debate. Here are the propositions they are to argue.

***Driving privileges of uncontrolled diabetics should be restricted to protect others on the road.**

***Nurse Practitioners should report blood sugars that drop below or exceed specified limits to the DMV to protect public safety.**

CRITERIA

- Participated in respectful team consensus building
- Identified justifiable arguments applying deontological or teleological rationale and provisions of the Code.
- Demonstrated collegiate level critical thinking and verbal skills
- Articulated positions with considerations for individuals and society

6. Group Ethical Analysis of a Technological Innovation in Healthcare

Form a group from your class to develop and present this assignment. Select a topic that represents the interface of technology and health care ethics.

Select a technological innovation affecting health care:

- Stem cell research
- Genetics
- Eugenics
- Cloning
- Organ trafficking
- Chimeras
- Surrogate parenting
- Octo-mom, In vitro fertilization
- Assisted reproduction
- Placebo studies
- Other cutting edge development

Analyze the following questions:

1. What are the major arguments of the proponents and opponents of this development?
2. What ethical principles are either validated or violated by this development?
3. What Code provisions or interpretative statements are either validated or violated by this development?
4. What are the potential outcomes of this innovation for patients, the health care system, costs of health care and health providers?
5. How will nursing practice be impacted by this development by 2025 if it is allowed to proceed?
6. What ethical challenges will nurses face because of this development?

This will be a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation followed by 10 minutes for discussion.

7. Discussion Board Posting: Analysis of a flawed research study

Analyze a journal or media article about scandal or fraud involving a compromised research study in health care. Summarize the errors made and their consequences. Post a citation to the article, a summary of the study with its flaws and your analysis using the questions below on the on-line discussion board. Respond to two other postings about other flawed research studies.

Studies can be flawed in many ways, the most common being falsification or fabrication of data. Data can also be misrepresented, taken out of context or exploited in some way to accomplish ends unrelated to the research.

1. To what extent did the researcher follow the norms and expectations of the sponsoring institution? In other words, was the sponsor complicit in the fraud or did the researcher act alone in violation of corporate policy?
 2. What was the researcher's motive in compromising the integrity of the study?
 3. Exactly what ethical research principles were violated? How?
 4. Exactly which provisions or interpretative statements of the Code were violated? How?
 5. What consequences did the fraud carry for the subjects? The researcher? The sponsor? The researcher's profession?
 6. How could the researcher have avoided the fraud and maintained the integrity of the study?
 7. What oversight mechanisms brought this violation to light?
 8. What implications does this case have for nursing research studies?
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8. Social Justice Discussion Board Posting

Post your first responses to these questions by _____Deadline. Post your composite response to peers by _____Second Deadline a week later.

People can feel trapped by internal as well as external factors. External situations are more visible: poverty, unemployment, racism, abusive relationships, violence, injustice....Internal factors can be just as compelling, but external factors are all calls to action for social justice.

Select a current example of a population that is oppressed by life experiences or factors in the environment. Here are some populations from which to choose:

- Teen girls captured for human trafficking in sex trade
- Teen boys trapped by poverty in violent gangs
- Children caught in abusive homes
- Homeless schizophrenics
- Elderly Alzheimer's patients whose family financially exploits them
- Wounded warriors suffering from PTSD

1. How can a nurse make sense of the travesty of oppression that causes so much human suffering?
 2. What moral obligation do nurses have to prevent human entrapment rather than just caring for victims of violence? How could nurses advocate for an end to oppressive conditions such as poverty and racism?
 3. When nurses observe an underserved population trapped by one or more of these external factors, what should be done? How should a nurse begin to mobilize awareness to address issues entrapping the population being served?
 4. How does the Code guide the nurse in mobilizing forces to address this social issue?
 5. If nurses ignore forces trapping the population they serve, what is the most likely set of outcomes five years from now?
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Supplemental Readings

- ✘ American Nurses Association (2015) *Code of Ethics for Nurses with interpretative statements*. Silver Spring, MD: Author.
- ✘ American Association of Critical Care Nurses. (2005). *AACN Standards for establishing and sustaining healthy work environments. A Journey to Excellence*. www.aacn.org
- ✘ Beauchamp, T.L. & Childress, J.F. (2013). *Principles of biomedical ethics* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- ✘ Butts, J. & Rich, K. (2013). *Nursing ethics across the curriculum and into practice* (3rd ed.) Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- ✘ Fowler, M.D.M. (2015) *Guide to the Code of Ethics for Nurses with interpretative statements: Development, interpretation, and application*. (2nd ed.). Silver Spring, MD: American Nurses Association.
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- ✘ Institute of Medicine. (2010) *The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- ✘ International Council of Nurses Statements on Health and Human Rights: [http://www.icn.ch/images/stories/documents/publications/fact sheets/10b FS Health Human Rights.pdf](http://www.icn.ch/images/stories/documents/publications/fact%20sheets/10b%20FS%20Health%20Human%20Rights.pdf)
- ✘ International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics for Nurses: [http://www.icn.ch/images/stories/documents/about/icncode english.pdf](http://www.icn.ch/images/stories/documents/about/icncode%20english.pdf)
- ✘ Lachman, V. D. (2013). Ethical challenges in the era of health care reform. *MedSurg Nursing* 21(4). 248–251.
- ✘ Lachman, V.D. (2010). Strategies necessary for moral courage. *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 15(3). Sept. 30. Manuscript 3. DOI: 10.3912/OJIN.Vol15No03Man03 <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/Courage-and-Distress/Strategies-and-Moral-Courage.html>
- ✘ LaSala, C.A. (2009). Moral accountability and integrity in nursing practice. *Nursing Clinics of North America* 44(4), 423–424.
- ✘ Manthey, M. (2008). Social justice and nursing: The key is respect. *Creative Nursing* 14(2), 62–65.
- ✘ The Joint Commission (2014). The nurse's responsibility and accountability is to speak up. <http://www.jointcommission.org/speakup.aspx>