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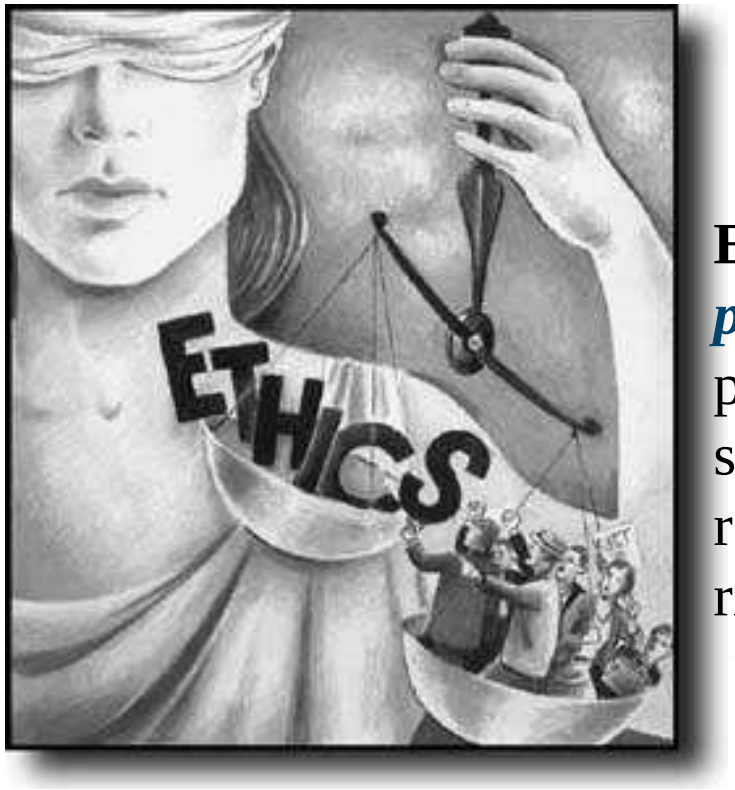
Ethical Issues In Virtual Education

Introduction

Ethics

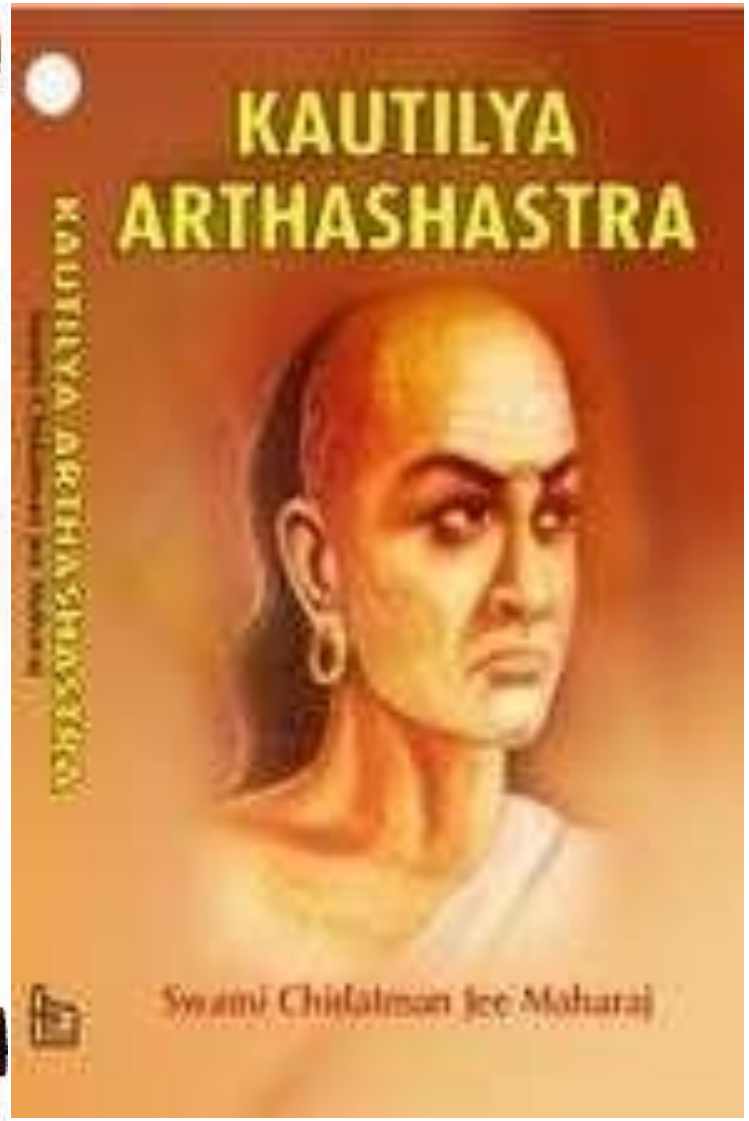


Ethics, also known as ***moral philosophy***, is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior.

History of Ethics

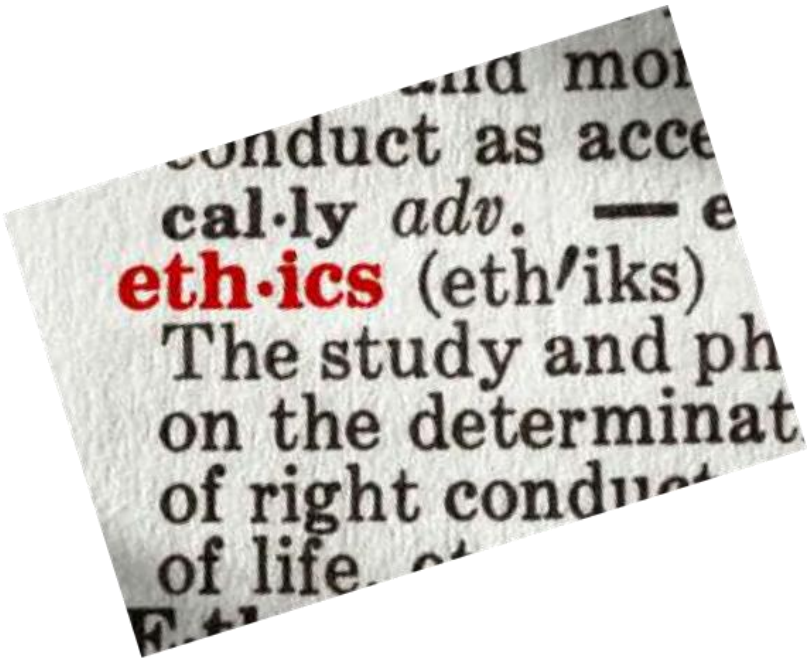
- Mesopotamian Epic of Gilgamesh
- Homer's Iliad
- The Icelandic Eddas
- The Sumerian Farmer's Almanac
- The Egyptian Instruction of Amenemope

Ethics in Ancient Days



Components/ Qualities

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Confidentiality
- Objectivity
- Respectfulness
- Obedience to the Law



INTEGRITY

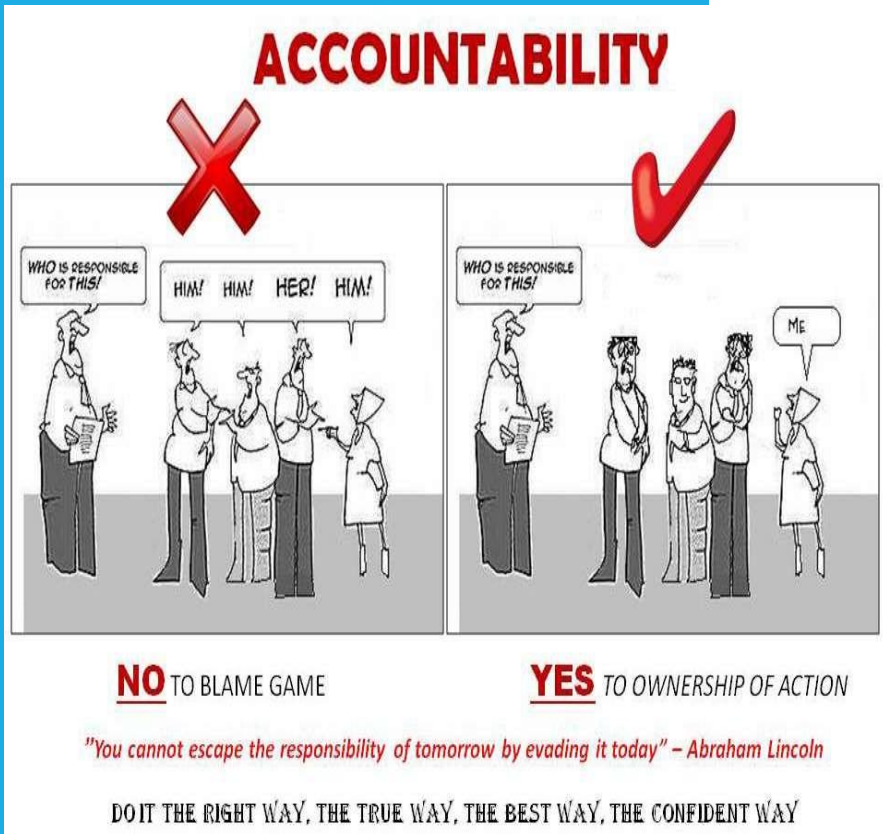
- Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.” -

Samuel Johnson

TRANSPARENCY

“A lack of transparency results in distrust and a deep sense of insecurity.”

-Dalai Lama



- When a man points a finger at someone else, he should remember that four of his fingers are pointing at himself."

— ***Louis Nizer***

CONFIDENTIALITY

- “In intelligence work, there are limits to the amount of information one can share. Confidentiality is essential.” **-Gijs de Vries**

RESPECTFULNES

- “I speak to everyone in the same way, whether he is the garbage man or the president of the university.”
- **-Albert Einstein**

Ethics in E-Learning

- Ethical Issues for e-Learners
- Ethical Issues for e-Teachers
- Ethical Issues arising within the context of e-Learning in general

Ethical Issue for Learners

- Inappropriate assistance on examinations
- Misuse of sources on papers and projects
- Writing assistance and other inappropriate tutoring
- Misrepresentation in the collection and reporting of data
- Improper use of academic resources
- Disrespecting the work of others

Ethics in E-Learning

- Lack of protection for human subjects in research
- Breaches of computer ethics
- Lack of adherence to copyright and copy- protection
    - Fass, R. A. (1990) Cheating and plagiarism. Ethics and Higher Education.

Ethics in E-Learning

Taking one's own responsibility in learning

(This is typically Thai problem – as Thai learners are not mature enough.)

- Self discipline
- Independence

Self motivation

- Ability to set goals and pursue means to achieve the goals

Ethical Issues Concerning E-Learning Itself

- Criticism → E-Learning can't substitute for face-to-face learning
  - This is true, but e-learning is better than no learning;
  - Face-to-face learning can be detrimental if conducted badly
  - E-Learning can be better if conducted well.
- E-Learning and learning outcomes
  - How can e-learning realize learning outcomes and be contribute to Qualification Framework?

Ethical Issues Concerning E-Learning Itself

- Privacy
- Intellectual Property and Copyrights Network Security
- ‘Netiquettes’

Digital divide

  - Who benefits from the digital content?

- Theses for sale

Looking into the Future

- E-Learning will become more prevalent. Robot teacher
- Implanted computer chip in the brain Enhanced humans – Transhuman
    - Enhanced cognitive abilities which results in more effective learning
    - Ethical issue – what about those who are not enhanced?
- Automated teaching

E-Learning and Moral Education

- Can e-learning help educate more ethical population?
- Learning does not take place only in the classroom – this is trivially true in the case of e- e-learning, but the content of e-learning and e- activities does not have to be entirely academic.
- Integration of online and offline activities – study trip, getting together, charity work.

Criticism

- Can e-learning help educate more ethical population?
- Learning does not take place only in the classroom – this is trivially true in the case of e- e-learning, but the content of e-learning and e- activities does not have to be entirely academic.
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Objection

- But we don’t need to have the same goals of education as Dreyfus or Kierkegaard.
- We can have real commitment through the Net, even become deeply religious. Dreyfus misunderstands the nature of the Net – The fact that there is a lot of info on the Net does not mean that one has always to shop around.
- But that won’t happen automatically.

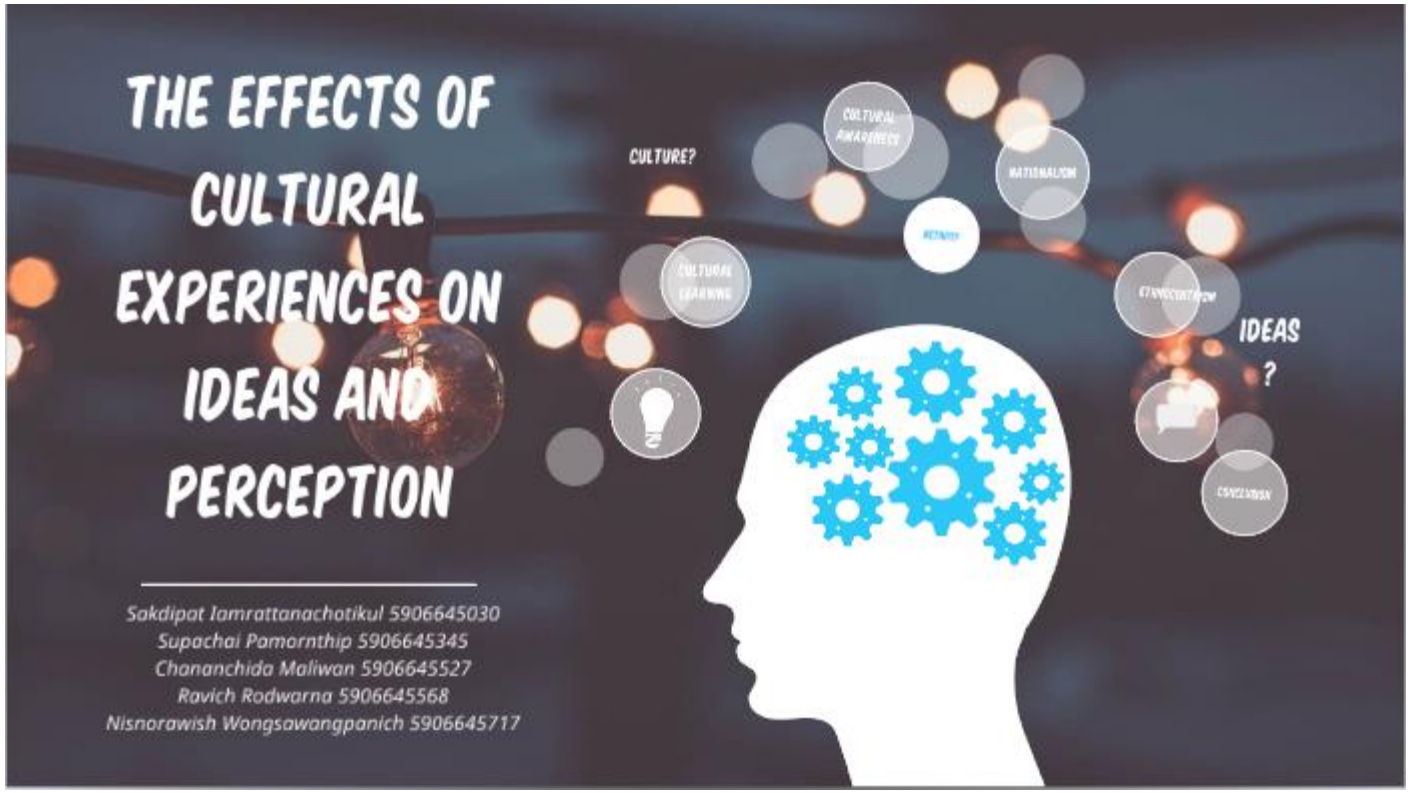
Brey, Questions

- Can social, cultural and academic values be successfully transmitted in computermediated education?
- Are computer-mediated educational settings conducive to academic freedom or do they threaten to undermine it?
- Does a reliance on computer networks in higher education foster equality and equity for students and does it promote diversity, or does it disadvantage certain social classes and force conformity? … What kinds of unethical behaviour by students and staff are made possible in computer-mediated education, and what can be done against it?'

Equity and diversity in online education

- Access to online education: education for all?

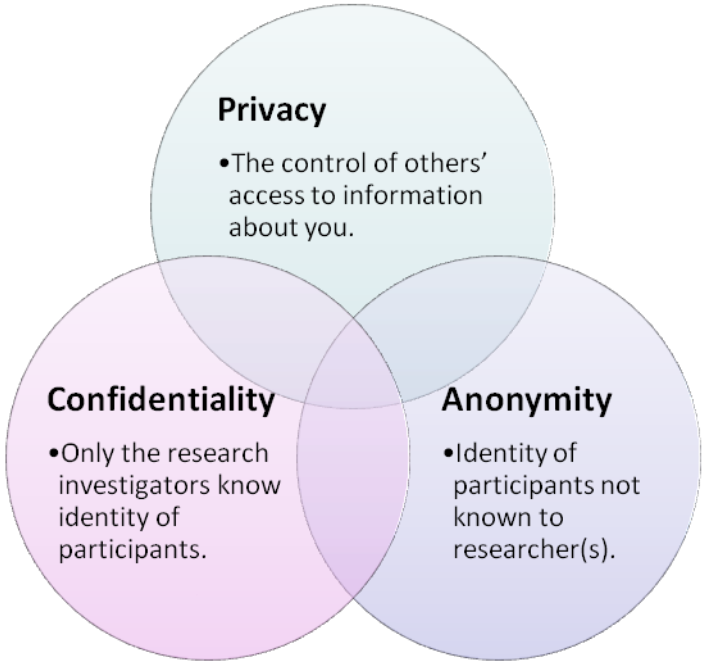
Cultural impacts



Students and staff— teaching and learning online

Surveillance

Identity, confidentiality and anonymity



E-LEARNING