

Murdough Center for Engineering Professionalism

Information on Courses in Land Surveying Ethics Offered via Distance Learning

Background on Texas Tech's Ethics for Land Surveyors Course

The land surveyor's ethics course has been created by the Murdough Center for Engineering Professionalism at Texas Tech University with encouragement from the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES).

The course assignments in the surveying course are similar to the assignments in the engineering ethics courses also offered by the Murdough Center, but focused on ethical situations faced by surveyors.

Since 1990, licensed engineers from all 50 states have enrolled in our engineering ethics courses. Although not required to do so, some enrollees inform us that they are being compelled by their licensing board to take our course. Frequently enrollees end up praising our courses and expressing the view that all practicing engineers should take at least one course in engineering ethics.

Course Goals and Objectives

The goals are to promote Understanding, Communication, Insight, and Problem-Solving Abilities related to ethics in the surveying profession.

Understanding: a clear understanding of professional ethics when practicing surveying

Communication: an increased ability to communicate ethical concerns & potential conflicts

Insight:

- An ability to recognize ethical dilemmas
- A familiarity with various codes of ethical conduct
- An appreciation for the frequency that ethical dilemmas are encountered in professional surveying work experiences
- A better understanding of one's own values, and

Problem Solving: an awareness of ethical problem-solving methods, including getting the facts, listing options, testing those options, making a decision and acting.

Overall Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The overall objectives of this course are to develop the ability to:

1. Communicate willingly and effectively with others on ethical issues.
2. Differentiate among personal ethics, legally required ethics and ethics based on the surveyor's responsibility to place public welfare above all other considerations.
3. Recognize and resolve ethical problems by learning about resources available for guidance, considering case studies, understanding the ethical component of the problem, and analyzing situations presented by case studies.



Murdough Center for Engineering Professionalism

4. Formulate solutions to ethical problems by recognizing the consequences of actions taken; apply different perspectives on ethical problem solving such as duties, consequences; distinguish between rules and relationships; analyze what is expected, knowing what's right, and doing what's right; and comprehend, compare, evaluate, and act on those solutions.

To accomplish these objectives, enrollees will:

1. Review basic knowledge and fundamental definitions of professionalism and ethics.
2. Develop an understanding of ethics as it relates to the profession by reviewing codes of ethics and other guidelines for decision making.
3. Apply the concepts of ethics codes and other guidelines to simple actions of living and working, complex actions in the workplace, and to case studies of actual and illustrative work situations.
4. Relate consequences resulting from both simple and complex actions to their immediate supervisor, the employees they supervise, and the public.
5. Analyze case study examples and situations in order to distinguish between choosing between right and wrong, without bias or personal interest.
6. Develop skills to formulate, analyze, and compare solutions to ethical dilemmas encountered in the workplace and relationships with others.
7. Learn to evaluate the value and effect of the various solutions by obtaining all the facts, listing and testing the options, making a decision and knowing when and how to take action...*and having the willingness and courage to do so.*

Course Materials

Articles on Intuition, Utilitarianism, Respect for Persons and Virtue Ethics are from *Engineering Ethics Concepts, Viewpoints, Cases and Codes*, 2nd Edition © 2008, Edited by Smith, Harper and Burgess.

Codes of ethics and cases are taken from national professional society websites.

Course Outlines

BASIC (30 PDH) Level

(30 Professional Development Hours awarded upon completion)

Description: Study of three ethical theories; application to cases and surveyors code of ethics

Introduction to Land Surveying Ethics

Assignment 1: Study of *Intuitions*

Assignment 2: Study of *Utilitarianism*

Assignment 3: Study of *Respect for Persons*

Assignment 4: Study of *Virtue Ethics*

Assignment 5: Application of an Ethical Theory to a Code of Ethics



Murdough Center for Engineering Professionalism

Assignment 6: 1,200-word position paper on professional ethics and its impact on society

Assignment 7: Select one of four *Ethics Scenarios*; write a critical thinking study relating the ethical issues to specific elements of Professional Society codes of ethics

INTERMEDIATE (60 PDH) Level

Description: A study of viewpoints on ethics, ethics case studies and codes of ethics applied to actual cases

Assignments 1 through 7 of the 30 PDH Level

Assignment 8: Viewpoints – Consider a “viewpoint” article; prepare a 500-word report summarizing the article and discussing your views on the article

Assignment 9: Case Analysis – Analysis of five specific ethics cases

ADVANCED (90 PDH) Level

Description: Independent study and research into topics related to ethical responsibilities of land surveyors to their clients, the profession, and society

Assignments 1 through 7 of the 30 PDH Level

Assignments 8 and 9 of the 60 PDH Level

Assignment 10: Research Paper Proposal

Assignment 11: Draft Paper (~2,000 words)

Assignment 12: Final Paper

Instructors

Dr Nurcan Bac

Dr. Changzhi Li:



EDWARD E. WHITACRE JR.
COLLEGE OF
ENGINEERING

TEXAS TECH

Murdough Center for Engineering Professionalism