MCCC Core Skill C. Ethical Reasoning and Action: Students will understand ethical issues and situations
C.1. Students will recognize, analyze, and assess ethical implications of an issue or a situation.
C.2. Students will analyze and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different perspectives on an ethical issue or a situation.
C.3. Students will integrate their knowledge, take a position on an ethical issue or a situation, and defend it with logical arguments.

Student Learning Outcomes – **General & Context Flexible** (adepted from UVU)
1. Recognize the moral and ethical features of views, issues, situations, persons and groups (C.1)
    A. Communicate the recognition of the difference between felt/reflexive moral views and deliberately framed ethical positions
    B. Communicate the recognition of the major different ethical approaches/frameworks as sources of common terms in the expression of own positions and those of others
2. Develop the critical thinking skills relevant to relating facts and values, and general, group, individual and domain-specific constraints, translating moral views into ethical positions, and the analysis of one's own and other's ethical bases and judgments (C.1/C.2)
3. Cultivate communication and tolerance skills consistent with determining and reconciling the inevitable differences, uncertainties and disagreements about ethical grounds, problems and decisions. (C.2)
4. Develop a well-framed set of positions about ethical grounds and decision procedures about ethical identities, problems & issues, and on key issues as a personal, self-conscious approach to moral matters (C.3)

C.1. Overview of Ethics – the fields here are inter-related, not distinct
Metaethics – the analysis of the nature and meaning of moral terms across theoretical frameworks, including the necessary and sufficient conditions to their verifiability
Normative Ethics - General Determines basic and broad foundations and methods, usually aims at the true and/or best moral theory that include justification for its basis and use
Normative Ethics - Applied Determines specific interpretations and applications of general theories into moral practice, usually aims at contextualizing these into fitting judgments and actions in particular circumstances; the challenge is to be sensitive to, but not just let material factors impose upon & regulate the morality, rather the reverse
Prescriptive Ethics – Normative guidance/rules about what to do
Proscriptive Ethics –Normative guidance/rules about what NOT to do
Descriptive Ethics – Non-normative - observed and empirically studied account of what moral commitments and behaviors people actually exhibit; based on observation without evaluation.

C.2. Central Concepts
Action – active or passive behavior that is the result of reasoning (not acting counts if it is the result of a decision); contrasts with an **Act**, such as an undelibrate blink
Freewill – simply, self-governed, autonomous choice-making built on being rational and autonomous; if diminished by limiting conditions, this basis for responsibility is likewise diminished
Good – adjective for positively valued nouns; Or a noun for that which is positively valued
Bad – adjective for negatively valued nouns; Or a noun for that which is negatively valued
Right – adverb for positively valued actions/verbs; alternatively a noun for a sturdy trump card individuals/agents may have and use against more powerful/broader competing interests
Wrong – adverb for negatively valued actions/verbs; Or a noun for that which is negatively valued
Sin – a wrong that is additionally a violation, defiance or betrayal against an (absolute) authority, such as a deity. Or, an extreme wrong
Duty – a noun for an externally imposed requirement, whether assented to or not, that serves as an obligation
Virtue – adverbial noun for an internalized, habituated way of acting, embodying a positive value, that is usually deliberately cultivated after maturity
Vice – The same as a virtue, except for embodying a negative value instead

This is a summary guide to the basic goal of building on whatever moral stances and reflexes people have as they enter MCCC to successfully achieve the college's goal to educate its students in ethical reasoning and action. In short, this entails the students learning to translate, define and frame their personal moral views into the ethical terms and methods of studied moral thought, as well as those others. This guide purports to serve as a counterbalance against the too common tendency of having personal, material, situational or discipline-based priorities trump or crowd out moral reckoning. Morality has traditionally supervened on circumstances, rather than being subordinated to local, non-moral concerns. . Success in this educational goal involves the increase of the students' analysis and understanding of their own morality, as well as enabling them to render their views into positions framed in terms so that others can access, understand and evaluate them. These aims are consistent with the goal of developing well-prepared students, and the kind of ethical skills that are constitutive of productive citizens that make up healthy communities. The academic discipline of **ethics**, or moral philosophy, deals with three chief concerns: 1. Right and wrong; 2. Good and bad; 3. How to live (well). To recast these: 1. How to act?; 2. What has value?; 3. Why? The third is probably the least focused on important area. It begins with questions about what range of attributes that make up human nature, but aims at the features that (somehow) mark a well-lived life. While brief and handy codes have their instrumental values, the reasons behind succinct summaries are of central concern. For instance, the aims of a person who understands her/himself to be most fundamentally an individual are likely to differ from another who finds her/himself to be most fundamentally a member (of a family, community, etc.), and vice versa. Bases such as this in turn ground the methods and motives that determine the first two concerns.

C.1. Basic Definitions
Morality – The common/informal notion is what a person or group sense or feel as involving socially and personally positive behavior, generally in term of what is good and right & bad and wrong. Often thought of as just being there, some one common standard. In studied /formal terms, the generally conditioned, often un-deliberated/unreflected upon accepted moral set of reflexes, values, beliefs, commitments and views people have. In both sets of terms, usually associated with conscience and often little distinction with ethics is drawn. For our purposes, is that with which everyone who comes to Mercer walks in. Based on whatever prior influences from childhood to the present (the mixture of instincts, reflexes, senses, faiths, beliefs, theories, cultures, authorities, experiences, etc.) that faculty, staff, students and visitors who come to campus and live in our communities bring with them; it's the product of whatever set of moral development factors they have, their moral inertia.
Code of Ethics – an outline or summary of key moral criteria; does not generally include reasons for or guidance about its basis, interpretation and application
Framework – a generally stable and coherent set of terms providing the criteria and meanings of moral terms, such as theories and/or approaches
Grounds – The foundational set of facts, values or commitments that serve as the basis of justification
Theory – a well-developed set of terms often built on establishing the rational and/or empirical grounds that define and account for the bases & methods for determining, directing and judging moral actions, expressed in terms of principles; not mere speculation; can contrast with view/perspective–or considered to be a substantiated view or perspective
Approach – A coherent or at least asserted way or basis to define or decide moral views, perhaps without a clear, or at least systemic, argument to support it
Perspective – a standpoint that guides moral priorities & actions, sometimes a summary of a fraemwork's standpoint, or sometimes without well-developed reasons for its basis and/or methods for determining, directing and judging moral actions
View – a moral stance that is not (yet?), or cannot be, rationally and/or empirically established; expresses preference, taste, what is liked, or not
Position – a moral stance with a rationally and/or empirically evinced basis; expresses what has been determined to be successfully convincing in some explicit set of terms
Belief – A views/positions based on generally, commonly held bases, such as rational and empirical evidence, but not always based on such reasons; held in varying degrees proportionate to the strength of the justifications, entitlements and/or warrants; often synonymous with faith and religion
Faith – A view that is not necessarily, but often is, based on commonly held bases, such as reasonable and/or observable (or not) evidence, experiences, texts, etc.; often held with the certainty of knowledge, but without the demonstrable justification outside of a unique or one's own framework, or even any concern about such; can be only an attitude-based commitment, or mixed with some recognized evidence; religion
Knowledge – A position or judgment based on rational certainty and/or empirical findings that approach certainty; like a perfected belief when all-to-reasonable doubt is absent based on the justification; justified-true-belief; working knowledge is like very strong belief
Value – the ranking or priority that establishes worth, either personal/local or generally
Values – A generally durable if not fixed collection of thought and action guiding commitments, which are usually a mix of developed and merely assented to understandings, often held in common with like-others
Case Studies/Casuistry – Often in contrast with a theoretical approach, uses examples and analogies to establish, or at least illustrate, relevant parallels between like cases
Agent – A being capable of moral/ethical decisions/actions usually based on reason & self-awareness
Moral Community – Inclusively comprised of beings with recognized moral standing, generally agents

Common Challenges/Limits (brief responses with links)

Isn't morality all relative? Relative to what? All *relevant* factors? Yes. To merely and conveniently preferred factors? Generally not.

Isn't morality all subjective? Perhaps. This depends on what is included and excluded from the set of considerations considered to be contained within the 'subject' of moral concern. If conveniently or arbitrarily limited to what is individually personal, this is generally too limited, at least in degrees. The existence subjective views does not carry within it criteria to relate and evaluate them, let alone the justification to impose them.

Who's to decide? We and you are, as rational beings who are members of the moral community.

Isn't it unethical to be judgmental? Only if using illegitimate or unjustifiable terms, means and purposes. More often it is unethical to *not* judge with legitimate and justifiable terms, means and purposes.

Don't laws settle these issues? Laws generally, but do not always, reflect moral commitments. When they do, they tend to set moral minimums for the behaviors beyond the limit of the will and/or ability to accommodate, rather than presenting moral criteria and standards of behaviors that range between what is tolerable through what is preferable or ideal. The role of precedent in the law is also much more determinant than it is in many moral approaches.

Isn't this settled by religion? Religions generally do frame and address moral life and provide historical inertia for the transmission of stable and time-tested sets of values and commitments. Because these sets are not always plainly consistent or applicable, particularly to people with distinct and strongly held inherited or chosen religious views, reasoned judgment is nevertheless needed to understand, interpret, correlate and apply different moral foundations and judgments in the situations of our dynamically diverse world. Because so many religious views are held very dearly, this source of strength can actually impede compromise, since religious moral precepts are generally integrated so closely in their origin and justification by and with devotion to their deity, which the pious are often unwilling to compromise, since to do so would constitute compromising on their devotion to their god.

Doesn't the nature of what Facts and Values are preempt reasonable findings? – facts are generally what is discovered/found to be true, at least within a context or set of terms, and thus have value as a tool to think and act successfully with; while values are determined or judged, where priority, worth or preference is assigned often using developed or traditional criteria, instead of found evidence. Facts and values are different kinds of things, but can be used as mental ingredients as if they were the same. With awareness of how these ingredients of moral deliberation are used, it is possible to have understanding and progress in moral discussion

Don't judgments always preclude certainty? - Ethics is not a science (yet?); so it is a field marked as uncertainty, undefinitive, and as an unsettled area of concern, perhaps structurally or permanently. If this is objectively the case, then its unresolvability is a non-issue; dealing with issues in the midst of variable and often incompatible values/priorities makes the field itself messy

Won't science eventually solve ethics? – Scientists are discovering more about the biological, cultural and other factors in moral matters, but at the very least, it is a very new area with a lot to be discovered. So people are wise to stay current on and adapt moral approaches as new findings emerge that affect the bases of ethics, but it may long be the case that while science can address many of the "how's" of moral goings-on, the "why's" or morality may prove less available to their methods. Philosophical ethics addresses what remains after the matters of fact are resolved.

Isn't morality a personal matter? – Of course it is, but it's also an interpersonal matter. Individual choices & histories regarding commitments and actions is plain, but being able to translate others' & one's own idiosyncratic, felt and/or local considerations into terms more likely to be accessible and understandable across difference is imperative. Actions and inactions are performed in social space where others are affected or not, and since we are generally capable of appreciating this, whether we do or not, that we are able to exercise autonomy does not extricate us from the resulting impacts & reactions of others.

C.2./3. Evaluating Moral Arguments Elements of Ethics – Roles of *Tradition, Reason, Universality, Impartiality, & Norms*: Cultural, religious and other traditions have long been a conveyor and stabilizer of ethical bases on but as modernity confronted the effect of transportation and communication advances on historical monopolies on power and truth, there was a turn to reason as a trans-geographic, trans-cultural, trans-traditional common basis upon which to pursue ethics. The roles of reason, universality, impartiality and norms have since become less tradition-bound criteria of their own. **Criteria of (Framework) Adequacy** – Factors for the acceptability of different views, theories and frameworks, before considering specific judgments and actions. *1. Consistency with Considered Judgments & 2. Consistency with Moral Experience–these address earnest and honest conservatism regarding relevant rational and felt 1ˢᵗ- and 2ⁿᵈ-hand models in practice; 3. Sensitive to Relevant Facts–empirical, logical & cultural; and 4.Correlation with other reasonable approaches–or clear basis for divergence; 5.Usefulness in Moral Problem-Solving–practicability includes clarity, completeness & conclusively compelling in communicating & applying findings; and 6.Usefulness in Ethical Life Crafting–address having sufficient scope and being adaptively simple, fruitful, testable and aiming*

C.2. B. **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: (MCCC Core Competency)**

Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

B.1. Students will distinguish among opinions, facts, and inferences.
B.2. Students will identify and critique underlying or implicit assumptions.
B.3. Students will thoughtfully evaluate diverse perspectives and alternative points of view.
B.4. Students will ask informed questions and make informed judgments.
B.5. Students will solve problems by applying discipline-appropriate methods and standards.

Four Stages of Ethical Argument (that aims at what is the true or best conclusion, not simply at winning or being the most successfully persuasive) (adapted from Peter Suber)

Stage 1. To say nothing in support of your claim. To make an assertion without argument. Alone, the form of dogmatism and ideology.

Stage 2. To offer an affirmative argument, relating general bases and particular applications. This affirming can be positive or negative on the issue, but not yet both; the form of much rhetoric.

Stage 3. To offer both an affirmative and alternative arguments. To argue (at least) two-sidedly, honestly laying out the bases & applicability of each, but without comparative analysis; the form of being informative without being constructive.

Stage 4. To offer affirmative and alternative arguments, to anticipate objections to those, and to respond to those objections. To argue two-sidedly and responsively, with the evidence and logic of the responses establishing the grounds for the determining the best justified finding. The form of an instructive and motivating considered judgment.

* The stages are not independent of the quality of the logic and evidence, but neither do they correspond to particular standards of empirical and rational evidence, thus the evaluation of the logic and evidence is likewise neither independent of nor correlated to specific stages.

C.2./3. Basic Moral Decision-Making (adapted from U of Nebraska) Other models

1. Existing rules: Examine positive morality in the form of relevant law, ethics codes, and custom, along with ethical frameworks
2. Openness: Be open to all considerations. Get information and opinions
3. Impartiality: Consider the issue from all points of view.
4. Discussion: Speak about the issues and possible resolutions.
5. Processing: General values: Consider what values, frameworks and persepctives are at all connected. Specific values: Determine all affected parties and what and whose interests and frameworks are significant in which ways given the situation.
6. Justification: Can the resolution be explained with transparency and be reasonable to reasonable people? Can the decision be justified in multiple ethical approach frameworks?
7. Follow up: How can the results be assessed and learned from?

What is Ethical Deliberation? Ethical deliberation is an open-ended process, with three main features.

1. Ethical deliberation goes beyond simply following a particular set of rules. Although rules like "be kind," "tell the truth" and "promote the general good" might help you to be more ethical, you have to notice when you are in a situation to which the rules apply if they are to be of any real use. Since every person faces slightly different circumstances, you also have to understand how the rules can be applied to a wide variety of situations. There will also be times when you need to figure out which rules are justified, or whether any of the usual rules are applicable at all. Your judgments may often depend crucially on the details of the particular case.

2. Ethical deliberation is an ongoing activity that lies in the background of all human endeavors. It is not a special kind of thinking, or something that you can decide to engage in now and then. Every choice has an ethical dimension, because every choice reveals something about what you currently value, and in some sense, who you really are.

3. Ethical deliberation is never purely personal. Everyone spends at least some time thinking about how well they are living their life, because everyone wants to make their own life as worthwhile and enjoyable as possible. But while you must ultimately be able to live with ourselves, you must also be able to live with other people. If you cannot justify your choices to anyone other than yourself, you have at least some reason to question the adequacy of your own deliberations. Despite the open-ended character of ethical deliberation, not just anything can count as an ethical choice. You must be able to give reasons for your choices, and to articulate values or principles that other people can understand.

C.2./3. Evaluating Moral Arguments

Evidence – Common sense and readily observed plus scientifically established facts, tending toward the more empirical, but also including the facts about how relevant, applicable frameworks, laws and other social or cultural constraints set the terms of understanding, i.e. framework dependent facts, such as how the Roman Catholic Church has determined/ evaluated that the use of contraception is wrong – this value is rendered into a fact *as framed*; some use values like facts, as useful ideas to think with successfully

Logic - Deductive – when claims are certain, necessary, universal and/or absolute in scope and/or specificity; usually non-consequentialist approach, principle or duty based frameworks aiming at true answers; arguments structured such that if the premises are true, the conclusion must be, or generally, arguing from universal or general principle to a particular conclusion Inductive – when claims are probable, conditional, general and/or limited in scope and/or specificity; usually consequentialist, evidence based frameworks aiming at best answers, arguments structured such that if the premises are true, the conclusion is probably true, or generally, arguing from particular examples/analogies to a general conclusion; Abductive – when claims are based on hard to reconcile/compare terms, like facts and values, or conflicting duties/principles/laws, leaving the likelihood of even a probable finding hard to recognize and achieve; called an argument to the best explanation/result and often associated with virtues or mixed approaches; relies on how alternatives are rendered, no typical structure, though often like inductive

Rhetorical Force – Appeals to emotions, traditions, etc., where relevant feelings are in- and provoked and can be very persuasive, but more for appeals to morality (or non-cognitive ethics) than to reasoned ethics, but can serve to augment or to illustrate ethics, and bring the force of convictions into relief.

C.2./3. Basic Frameworks/Theories *In general and in practice, more cosmopolitan people tend to blend different aspects of frameworks; more traditional people do this less.*

Duty-based – This is basically an action managing, principle-based, deontological, non-consequentialist ethics. Ethics is based on externally imposed obligations considered to be authoritatively grounded, such as in religion, reason, traditions and "common morality". Advantages include stable, clear rules and logics and appeals to well-established sources of moral grounds such as cultural & religious traditions, while also being commonly and conspicuously modeled by people is such groups as the teams, military, police and firefighters; Disadvantages – highly based on accepting a claimed-to-be-universal basis that is often not recognized as such by all, tends towards absolutism in application – which is insensitive to contextual considerations and conflicting duties, the often ancient or ahistorical and changeless foundation is increasingly remote, thus requiring more diluting-of-objective-authority subjectivity in interpretation and applications. Major frameworks include: *Most religions* – the foundation of morality is generally integrated into the fundamental understanding of the basis or nature of reality/humans: *Divine Command Theory* – what is understood to be the deity's will determines what is good, right, just and their opposites; in practice often blended with a virtues approach, such as *Jewish, Christian & Islamic Ethics*. *Natural Law Theory* – draws the bases of morality from the way the world is found and/or understood to be through the rational appreciation of laws, or from nature or creation – can be in synch with scientific laws of nature but is generally based more on traditional models of the world. Related to rules according to a higher law, e.g. divine law is higher than natural law, which is higher than conventional laws; *Kantian Ethics* - wherein morality is based on what Reason dictates, Kant argued exhaustively that rational examination concludes that there is only one basis of morality that is pure, certain and guaranteeing of morality, and that is acting out of 'the duty to act out of the principle of goodwill', which he translates into different forms of the one categorical imperative, the two key forms of which amount to: 1. Only do what would serve as a universal rule/example for all others; and 2. You can use people, but you cannot just use them, you must treat them as ends onto themselves at the same time. Kant argued that if you can stay within the confines of the categorical imperative as the 'form' of what is good, you can keep your intention in line with the above duty. Consequences, which can only be known with probabilistically, are excluded from consideration for that reason; *Rights-based Ethics* – Individual rights serve as the basis of rightness and the corresponding duty of others to respect rights is the context and core of the decision procedure. Rights are natural (and thus usually considered universal) if they are considered to be inherently part of the right-bearing person nature, as determined by natural or divine laws. Rights are conventional (such as civic, civil, legal, etc. rights) if their source is a human agreement, governmental grant or other sort of social contract. Rights are also often distinguished as negative and positive, with negative rights protecting against being interfered with, and positive rights granting individuals the right to be helped by others. Rawlsian ethics is based on two core grounds for justice: 1. Everyone has the same extensive set of rights as is consistent with everyone else having the same set of rights, 2. The only changes to common equality must be based on helping the least advantaged. Social Contract Ethics – all ethics, at least in practice, is based on rules/principles to which informed, rational people have or would willingly agree. Hobbes, Rousseau and Rawls are key figures; *Common Morality*, which in one form or another purport to list the key elements of all morality that all people share as human beings living together, and generally assumed, universal, inherent, pan-historical and non-geographical. The last six of the Ten Commandments would qualify (with the first four being religious commands that serve as the non-moral basis for the others; W.D. Ross argues that we have basic *prima facia* duties, like standing orders (fidelity, reparation, gratitude, justice, beneficence, self-improvement, non-malfeasance), but only have one actual duty per situation, with intuition to discern what it is if they conflict; Anna Weinstein lists the five basic principles common to all faiths as: do no harm, make things better, respect others, be fair & be loving. Bernard Gert´s list: Do not kill, do not cause pain, do not disable, do not deprive of feeling, do not deprive of pleasure, do not deceive, keep your promises, do not cheat, obey the law, & do your duty. Beauchamp and Childress list four core ethical principles: autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice, with underlying guidance. (In an important sense, all theories claim to be getting at or to common morality.); *Doctrine of Double Effect* – is a versatile mixed theory that mixes deontological (usually natural law)and consequentialist considerations: 1. The action is itself inherently good or neutral 2. The bad effect is not used to create the good effect – no evil means to an end 3. The intention must be to bring about the good effect – must aim to avoid/mitigate the bad result 4. The good effect must be at least as important as (proportionally greater than) the bad effect

Consequences-based – this is an action managing ethics based on the nature of the outcome expected and/or produced; Keys on real-world impacts on the future. Advantages include observable, quantifiable (in theory) criteria for determinations, simple cost/benefit analysis is common and straightforward; Disadvantages include difficulty in comparing & measuring varying sorts of values & outcomes, the lack of clear constraints against the ends justifying the means, and the needs of the many trampling on the needs of the few, or one in different distribution scenarios; freeloading, and the erosion of human dignity into a commodity. *Utilitarian Ethics* – The most common public ethical framework. Bentham and Mill are key figures. Applies the principle of utility: do that which will result in the greatest overall well-being* for the most people. (*Variants: pleasure>pain/happiness>suffering/good>bad). 'People' here includes everyone (affected at all) and no one can be excluded or prioritized over anyone else, no matter how much or little impacted. Can consider oneself and dear ones, but cannot give any special priority to oneself over others. *Act-based Utilitarian* –Principle applied to an act's or situational factors so generate a judgment, *Rule-based Utilitarian* – Principle applied to a rule or set of rules designed to lead to optimum outcomes if used as a reference and followed, *Virtue-based Utilitarian* – Principle applied to how children are reared so that they are conditioned into habitually aiming optimum outcomes for everyone; *Ethical Egoism* – The theory that holds that the only determining criteria for right moral action is if it is based on self-interest. This can include 'enlightened', long-term and collective self-interest, thus it is not necessarily egotism, or selfish. Thomas Hobbes, Ayn Rand and capitalism's profit motive reflect this. Makes normative the widely observed descriptive claims of *Psychological Egoism* (humans always/usually act out of self-interest), bringing the terms and pursuit of moral success in line with material success, despite lacking any clear guard against justifying selfish actions. *Rational Egoism* Is extended commonly, if mistakenly, as *moral realism*, when the only or main criterion for not just moral, but all rational choice is if it is in one's self-interest. (*Moral realism* is more accurately the theory that actual objective moral facts exist, not just moral values.) *Pragmatic Ethics* – A distinctively American approach, in which practice is primary over theory, contextually conditioned interests are pursued so to successfully negotiate one's context. An approach that aims to cultivate personal and shared values-serving habits within local settings. LaFollette identifies key features of pragmatics ethics as : Employs criteria, but is not criterial; Gleaning insights from other ethical theories; Relative without being relativistic; Tolerant without being irresolute; Theory and Practice. Largely based on the thought of James and Dewey. Nielson's Non-theistic Ethics is a humanistic example. Discourse Ethics – Based on Habermas' ideas, built around a practiced approach involving universal impartiality in a social contract-like procedure and spirit to justify norms for all free agents in the moral community

Virtue-based – Ethics is based on character (the unity of the virtues) and relationships, what kind of person (and thus community) is what is aimed for primarily, with the regulating of behavior secondary to person-crafting. Virtues are internalized values or excellences that are habitually demonstrated in how one acts, with practical wisdom regulating thinking and behavior. Appeals to moral exemplars are common, but there is no set decision procedure, having no formulaic principles and relying heavily on virtuous personal judgments. Example frameworks include: most pre-modern (does not mean 'less than' modern!) and many religious cultures, such as African, Hindu, Daoist, Buddhist and Confucian ethics. Advantages include focusing on the agent as a whole person as the central issue for human dignity and responsibility-not just a narrowed down ability or part of what people can do, such as logic or faith – includes people's emotions, friendships; and hard to measure aspects; how people are brought up greatly influences their moral makeup (as most cultures recognize), then they become responsible to cultivate their own best self, after having already been molded into a kind of person. Adaptive to different ways of balancing how to (best) be a human being. Can factor duties, principles and local and outcome considerations; Disadvantages include being better at guiding a way of life, but not solving specific moral puzzles, and tends to be culturally relativistic, despite claims that there are pan-humanic virtues. The terms of rightness are contextual and lack clarity and easy application across circumstances, models involving mastery and achievement often fail to preempt the less than virtuous and/or wise from thinking that they are virtuous and wise. Virtues are often confused with duties. *Aristotelian Ethics* – Virtues are excellences of the function of different aspects of being human, which is defined on core attributes of rationality and self-conscious sociality. Based on this, virtues are either intellectual, or moral, and the goal is to achieve a unity of them (avoiding becoming vicious by having vices). In application, the golden mean is the standard, the mean (relative to the facts at hand) between excess and deficiency, e.g. courage is between rashness and cowardice, but just where depends on the person and context. All humans share a unique variation of the same general life goal (telos), namely *eudaimonia*, or fulfilling happiness; *Feminist Ethics* – an approach to ethics emphasizing the contrasting values and power relationships between women and men. While many variations and emphases exist, the most influential is: *Care-based Ethics* – a local, relationship based approach to ethics largely rising out of nursing and other common professions for women. Versus a formal, hierarchal, justice based approach, the needs found and honored in close personal relationships define morality, emphasizing compassion and love with concern for the whole person (not a reductively cast 'patient' or 'customer', especially if vulnerable or 'in' your care, like a patient or child.

Non-cognitivist theories - these theories describe moral behavior as having no truth content, idea or concept formation and use, and is thus nothing but a kind of conditioned, felt, precognitive response. *Emotivism* holds that morality has no truth conditions, so ethics statements are meaningless, and moral behavior is only a function of emotional reflexes developed earlier in life; *Expressivism* asserts that morality does nothing but express attitudinal preferences as a fan might for a sports team; *Prescriptivism* holds that moral utterances are merely imperatives that are not assertions, usually governed by one's reflexive adherence to a given set of rules, e.g. That's *just* wrong! *Moral Particularism* – Or Situational Ethics or Localism, holds that there are no or few defensible moral principles in general, only local considerations. *Relativism* – argues that all ethics is relative to the agent and context, with no unifying universal or general criteria; Includes cultural relativism and other forms of ethical relativism, including ethical subjectivism. Rests on seeming descriptive strength accounting for diversity. Generally internally self-contradictory and suggests there is no criteria for inter-context judgment – based on an historically false ideas of moral isolationism. Often claims tolerance, but since the only standard acknowledged by any culture, religion, individual is what is already in place, ethical relativism tends to be intolerant of dissent and progress; confuses the existence of differences in opinion and practices with the rightness or justification of them. **Scientific theories** – This is a rapidly changing area of research. There are at least two related major areas. 1. Ethics & Neuroscience Neuroethics is a field with two distinct but interrelated areas of concern: A. The implications of developing brain-related technologies on basic research-based conceptions of the self and personhood; B. The study of the psycho-/physiological mechanisms of moral decision-making, such as Kahneman's Fast & Slowing Thinking, Knobe's Side-Effect Effect, Joshua Greene's "Moral Tribes", Haidt's Rationalist's Delusion & 5 deep psychological foundations for socially constructed moralities & Paul Zak's work on the Moral Molecule; 2. Evolutionary Ethics - approaches ethics as a product of natural selection, which has resulted in humans having moral capacities. Includes ideas like balancing Dawkin's selfish gene and Darwin's altruism paradox; Paul Bloom's 'hard-wired' Moral Babies is an example of the interrelation of these areas.