

Ethical Leadership and Professional Life

Dr. Andrew Fiala
afiala@csufresno.edu
www.andrewfiala.com
@PhilosophyFiala



Promoting Understanding and Research about
Ethics and Contemporary Ethical Dilemmas

1

Basic Principles and Workshop Plan

- Good leaders embody key virtues.
- Good leaders inspire by building consensus around shared values.
- Good leaders respond in ethical ways to the world.

Workshop Plan

1. Ethical Leadership
2. Ethical Decision-Making
3. Professional Ethics and Ethical Culture

2

Civil Discourse Basic Values





- Listen carefully.
- Think broadly.
- Learn openly.
- Speak truthfully.
- Care about kindness.
- Wonder about ignorance.
- Build common ground.
- Respect freedom.
- Trust rationality.
- Seek wisdom.

3



The Virtues of Civility

Civility is self-restraint in a context of liberty. In its fundamental moral aspect, it is based upon respect for the other.

Andrew Fiala, "The Virtue of Civility"

Teach them better, if you can. If not, remember that kindness, grace, and goodwill are given for moments such as these.

Marcus Aurelius

Know Thyself

Nothing in Excess

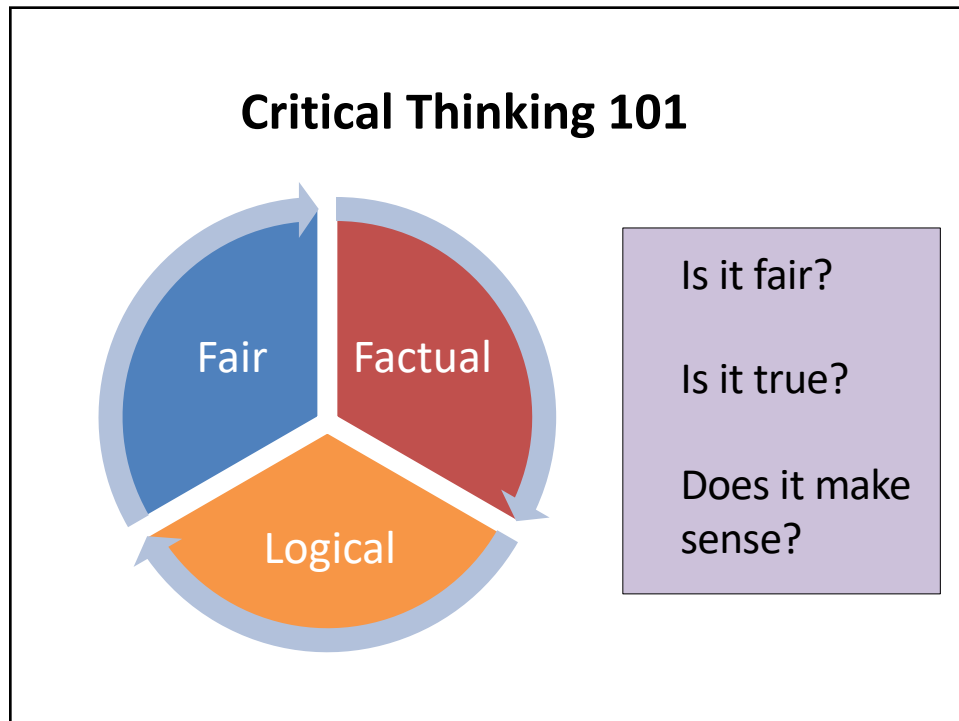
It is hard to be good



Socrates

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreeableness: go along when possible with what others propose 2. Big-Heartedness: welcome others with hospitality and praise 3. Compassion: put yourself in the place of the other 4. Curiosity: express an interest in what others say, think, and believe 5. Deference: do not insist upon yourself but defer to others when appropriate 6. Dignity: behave with self-respect; avoid belittling oneself and others 7. Eloquence: find the right word and avoid degrading language 8. Forgiveness: realize that everyone fails (including yourself) 9. Gratitude: express thanks for a benefit received 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Honesty: say what is true and avoid exaggeration 11. Integrity: behave the same way in public and private; aim for consistency 12. Justice: give to each person what is owed, earned, and merited 13. Kindness: be kind and generous and considerate of others 14. Liberality: be generous and open-minded 15. Mindfulness: attend to what everyone says (including yourself) 16. Modesty: minimize self-assertion and admit your imperfections 17. Patience: allow others to speak and think before your speak 18. Reserve: do not be intrusive or meddlesome 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Respect: give respect to others and expect it in return 20. Sincerity: mean what you say and say what you mean; avoid hypocrisy and gossip 21. Tact: minimize costs embarrassment for others 22. Temperateness: do not express anger, lust, ambition, or greed 23. Vulnerability: admit your needs, lacks, fears, and failures 24. Wonder: admit ignorance, doubt, confusion, and awe 25. Yielding: allow others to shine—do not be unyielding 26. Zest: be vigorous and life-affirming without zealotry
---	---	---

4



5

Why Good Habits of Ethics and Civility Matter

“Entire school board resigns after accidental public livestream”
 BBC News, Feb. 22, 2021 (<https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56156795>)

An entire California school board has resigned after making disparaging remarks about families in an online meeting which they did not realize was being publicly live-streamed.

The fallout resulted in more than 7,000 people signing a petition calling for their resignations due to "egregious behavior". Two days after the meeting, the entire board resigned, according to Oakley Union Elementary School District Superintendent Greg Hetrick, who had also been on the call.

In a letter to parents, he included a statement from three of the former board members. "We deeply regret the comments that were made in the meeting of the Board of Education earlier this week," it said.

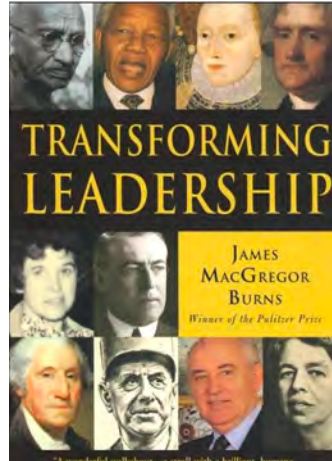
"It is our responsibility to model the conduct that we expect of our students and staff, and it is our obligation to build confidence in District leadership; our comments failed you in both regards, and for this we offer our sincerest apology. Please do not let our failure in judgement cast a shadow on the exceptional work that our teachers, administrators and hard-working employees are doing."

6

PART 1: ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is “Good Leadership”

- *We don't call for good leadership—we expect, that it will be good.*
- *“Bad” leadership implies no leadership....*
— James MacGregor Burns



7

Leadership v. Management



Management is about persuading people to do things they do not want to do, while leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could.

— Steve Jobs —

AZ QUOTES

8

One Model of Leadership

- Bold
- Charismatic
- Inspiring
- Visionary
- Courageous
- Strong
- Disciplined



We become strong, I feel, when we have no friends upon whom to lean, or to look to for moral guidance.

Benito Mussolini

9

Ethics and Leadership

- Ethical behavior is needed at all levels within organizations. It is an essential part of living well for all human beings.
- Ethical leadership is necessary for success in any field and at all levels of the organization. Ethical organizations are led by role models who embody the values of the organization.
- Ethics can be taught. Ethical culture is supported by reinforcement of shared values through discussion and practice. Ethical behaviors, habits, and attitudes can be developed through reflective practice.
- Ethical organizations are socially responsible and internally responsive. They consider the needs of all stakeholders, including the least advantaged.

10

Rival Leadership strategies

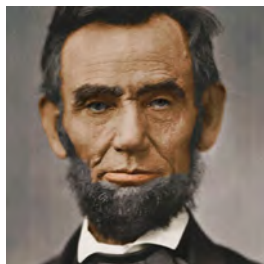
- Unethical Leadership
 - Threats
 - Bribes
 - Favoritism
 - Power
- Ethical Leadership
 - Responsibility
 - Transparency
 - Honesty
 - Fairness
- *Transactional*
 - OUTCOMES: Efficiency, order, and accomplishment
 - Egoistic assumptions
 - Rewards and Punishments
- *Transformational*
 - GOODS: justice, autonomy, greater good
 - Ethical Assumptions
 - Larger vision and shared values

11

Brainstorm



- Identify 3 leadership role models
- List 5 qualities or virtues of good leadership



12

Case Study



Fresno School Reopening Lawsuit

<https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/education-lab/article249151215.html>

- Fresno City Council Member Garry Bredefeld
- vs.
- Fresno School District Superintendent Bob Nelson

Bredefeld Resolution:
 Council Member Garry Bredefeld will be placing on the February 18th City Council agenda an action item to initiate a lawsuit against the Fresno Unified School District that would require the District to allow students to return to school for in-class instruction.

The FUSD school board and Superintendent Bob Nelson have been complicit in the damage to these children by keeping the schools closed. No more dithering, no more lack of plans to open, no more bowing before the teachers union or Governor Newsom. Prioritize the needs of our children and open the schools- NOW!”





13

Case Study


Fresno School Reopening Lawsuit

<https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/education-lab/article249151215.html>



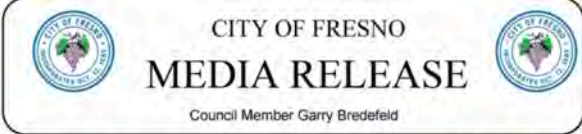
Bob Nelson @BobNelson_FUSD · Feb 10

So how is that current two-party system working for you, Fresnans? Nothing like politicizing an issue as serious as a safe and responsible return to schools in order to rally a support base. The only thing this release lacked was face paint, Viking horns, and a Chewbacca onesie.



Garry Bredefeld @GarryBredefeld · Feb 10

Enough of the school closures, lockdowns and year-long destruction of our children. @BobNelson_FUSD and the School Board have failed our kids. We, as a society, cannot allow this any longer. The time for action is NOW.



CITY OF FRESNO
MEDIA RELEASE
 Council Member Garry Bredefeld

February 10, 2021
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE


Contact: Nicole DeMera
Nicole.DeMera@fresno.gov
 (559) 621-7861

14

Case Study

Fresno School Reopening Lawsuit

<https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/education-lab/article249151215.html>



Garry Bredefeld @GarryBredefeld · Feb 10

Pathetic response just like your "leadership" over the past year. Your job is to educate and facilitate the development of 70,000 children. You've failed miserably as has your Board. You've bowed to union, your Board and ignored kids and their parents pleas for help. Disgraceful.



Bob Nelson @BobNelson_FUSD · Feb 10

So how is that current two-party system working for you, Fresnoans? Nothing like politicizing an issue as serious as a safe and responsible return to schools in order to rally a support base. The only thing this release lacked was face paint, Viking horns, and a Chewbacca onesie. twitter.com/GarryBredefeld...

15

Fresno School Reopening Lawsuit

Conclusion

[Fresno Bee, February 19, 2021](#)

A lawsuit proposed by Fresno Councilmember Garry Bredefeld to force area schools to return to in-person learning amid the pandemic failed to get the support it needed on Thursday.

The Fresno City Council voted 4-3 to remove the discussion from its agenda, killing the proposal without debate.

Bredefeld voted to keep the discussion on the agenda, as did Council members Mike Karbassi and Esmeralda Soria.

<https://www.fresnobee.com/news/local/article249340205.html>

16

Discussion

1. How should good leaders communicate and lead in a crisis?
2. What should good leaders do in the face of difficult public disputes and ongoing crises?
3. What institutional changes could help support good outcomes?
4. Who are your role models for ethical leadership? What would they do?



Is it fair?

Is it true?

Does it make sense?


17

PART 2: ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING

1. RESEARCH the facts
2. UNDERSTAND who has an obligation (and to what extent)
3. CLARIFY the nature of your value judgment
4. APPLY value systems
5. RECOGNIZE the depth of Value Conflicts
6. REFLECT, RE-ASSESS, REFORM

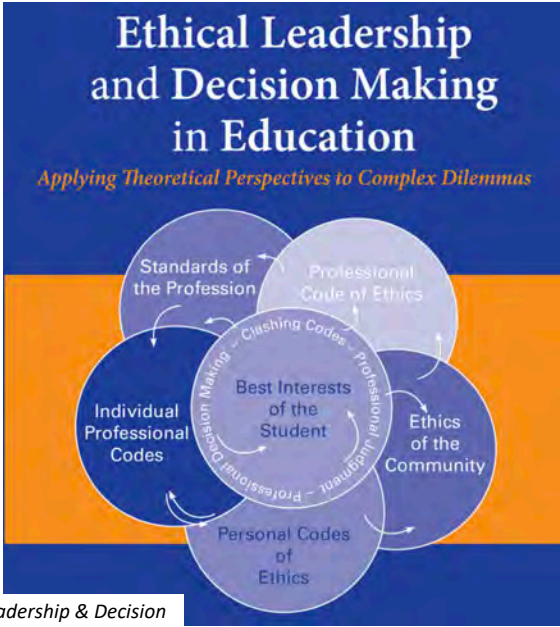
18

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Ethical Theories</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libertarian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is it freely consented to without harming others? • Natural Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Does it fulfill natural purposes or functions? • Utilitarian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Does it maximize the greatest happiness for the greatest number? • Kantian Deontology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Can we universalize it? Does it respect persons? 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Basic Values</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonmaleficence • Beneficence • Utility • Distributive Justice • Autonomy • Precautionary Principle
--	---



19

The Infinite Complexity of Living Well and Doing the Right Thing

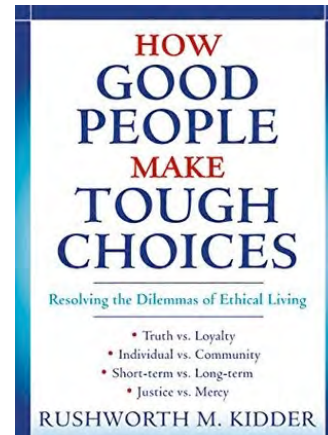


Shapiro and Stefkovich, *Ethical Leadership & Decision Making In Education* (Routledge, 2001)

20

Conflicts of Values

- **Dilemma:**
 - good v. good
 - right v. right
- **Temptation:**
 - right v. wrong
 - good v. evil
- **Dilemma Paradigms**
 - Truth v. Loyalty
 - Individual v. Community
 - Short term v. Long term
 - Justice v. Mercy



21

Professional Obligation

Who has an obligation to do what; and to what extent?

- **Standards of Professional Practice**
 - Behavior required by a professional code
- **Negligence**
 - Conduct that fails to do what is professionally required—or that falls below a standard of due care expected of a reasonably prudent person
- **Supererogation**
 - Going above and beyond the call of duty

22

Case Study: Cheating Students

Air Force Academy Cracks Down on Widespread Cheating

<https://www.airforcemag.com/usafa-cracking-down-on-students-for-widespread-cheating-last-spring/>



Air Force Magazine, January 29, 2021

- The U.S. Air Force Academy has kicked out students and reprimanded others after nearly 250 cadets were suspected of using online learning to cheat on tests and plagiarize assignments last spring.
- USAFA sent freshmen, sophomores, and juniors home from the Colorado Springs, Colo., campus in March 2020 as the new coronavirus spread across the U.S. For the first time, the school of more than 4,000 students pivoted to distance learning to finish out the semester.
- But that presented opportunities for students to game the system, away from the watchful eyes of professors, other cadets, and a wall bearing the school's honor code: "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does."

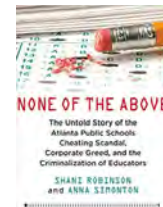
23

Case Study: Cheating Educators

Former Teacher Blames Education Policymakers For Atlanta Cheating Scandal NPR, Feb. 16, 2019

<https://www.npr.org/2019/02/16/695344751/former-teacher-blames-education-policymakers-for-atlanta-cheating-scandal>

- A 2011 Georgia state report found unethical behavior in the school system, including **teachers and principals changing wrong answers on standardized tests**. Two years later, a grand jury indicted the Atlanta school superintendent and 34 other educators. Some agreed to lesser charges; 12 eventually went to trial, and all but one of them were found guilty of racketeering in 2015 — a felony charge often used to prosecute the mafia.
- Teacher Shani Robinson said, " I think the criminalization of black educators was the next legacy" in "Atlanta's history of displacement and the destruction of black communities."



EXAMPLES in Education: Atlanta, New York, Flint Admin erased student answers; students coached during testing; students left without proctors; students allowed to re-write essays

24

Discussion

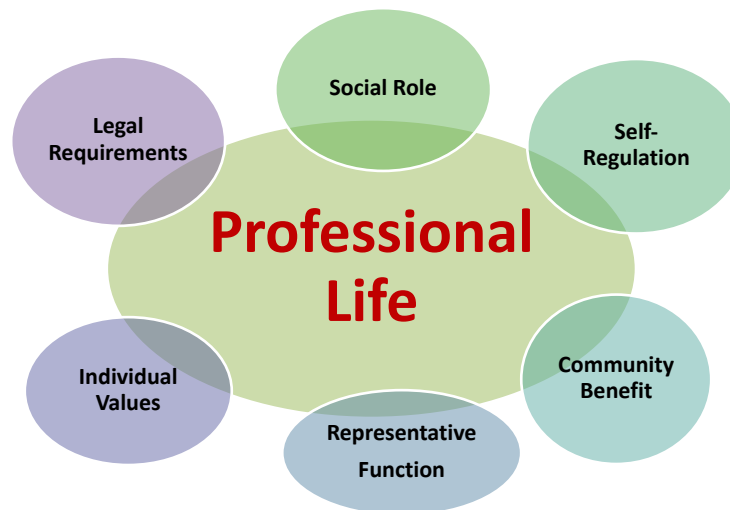
- You suspect that there is cheating going on—by students or by educators.
- What should a teacher, colleague, principal do?
- Who has an obligation to do what?
- Who should you talk to if you suspect something?
- How should ethical organizations and leaders prepare?
- How do you deal with larger social/political issues?



- **Dilemma:**
 - good v. good
 - right v. right
- **Temptation:**
 - right v. wrong
 - good v. evil
- **Dilemma Paradigms**
 - Truth v. Loyalty
 - Individual v. Community
 - Short term v. Long term
 - Justice v. Mercy

25

PART 3: Professional Ethics and Ethical Culture



26

Professional Ethics Basics

The Three C's

1. **Compliance** with the Rules
2. **Contributions** to Society
3. **Concern for Consequences**

Also:

- Conformity (professional standards)
- Culture (ethical culture)
- Care (justice and golden rule)

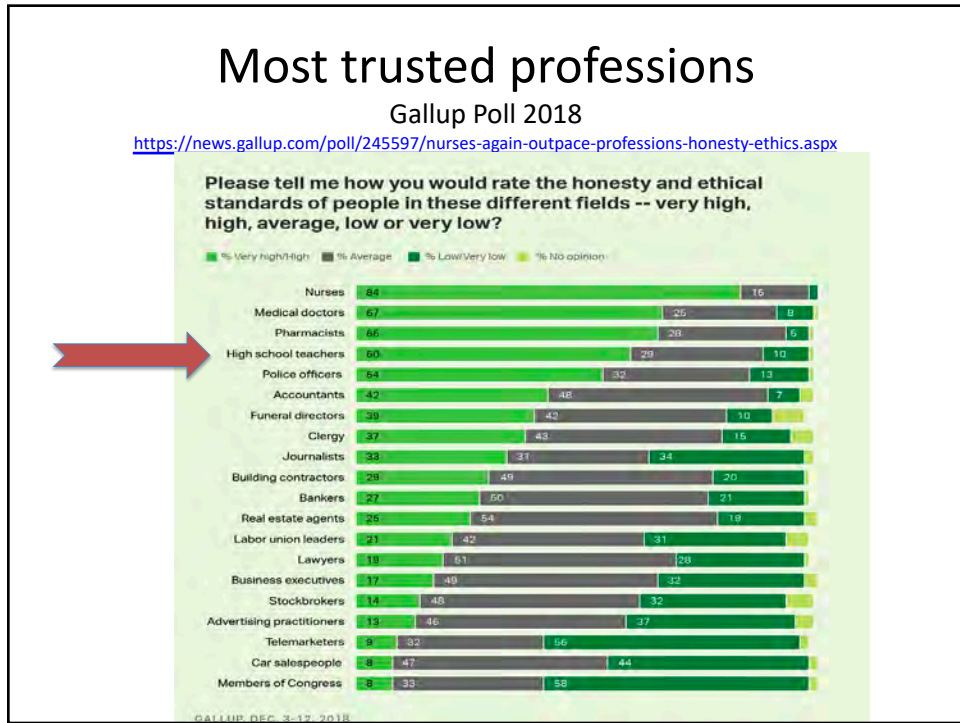


27

What is a Profession?

- **Autonomy, Expertise, and Self-sufficiency**
 - Specialized knowledge used to regulate objectives, standards, and procedures
- **Ethical Self-Regulation**
 - Reflective agents articulate and abide by codes governing best practices while exhibiting key virtues
- **Social Benefit**
 - Role autonomy and self-regulation provide a service to the community
- **Representational Function**
 - Individuals occupy roles that represent the profession to the public
- **Trust**
 - Ethical behavior and accountability create social trust

28



29

Most trusted professions

Gallup Poll 2020

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/328136/ethics-ratings-rise-medical-workers-teachers.aspx>

Profession Ratings for Having Very High/High Honesty and Ethical Standards

Please tell me how you would rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields -- very high, high, average, low or very low?

Profession	Dec 2-15, 2019	Dec 1-17, 2020	Change pct. pts.
	%	%	
Nurses	85	89	+4
Medical doctors	65	77	+12
Grade-school teachers	--	75	--
Pharmacists	64	71	+7
Police officers	54	52	-2
Judges	--	43	--
Clergy	40	39	-1
Nursing home operators	--	36	--
Bankers	28	29	+1
Journalists	28	28	0
Lawyers	22	21	-1

30

Problems for Ethical Culture

- Pressure for productivity
- Secrecy and lack of transparency
- Lack of accountability
- Unclear structure of authority
- Unclear grievance system
- No code of ethics
- No “ethical advocate”
- Lack of loyalty and team spirit
- Lack of fair merit system
- Lack of rewards for ethical behavior



31

Brain Storm Take-Aways



- What challenges remain in developing an ethical organization?
- How should leaders be selected and trained?
- How should ethical behavior be promoted and developed in your profession?
- What can your profession (and you) do to cultivate social trust?

32

Conclusions

- Dilemmas exist
- Temptations abound
- No one is perfect
- We can improve
- We are improving



The unexamined life is not worth living.



Accept finite disappointments but never lose infinite hope.

Ethics can be taught. Ethical culture is supported by reinforcement of shared values through discussion and practice. Ethical behaviors, habits, and attitudes can be developed through reflective practice.