The Evolution of Ethics Education 1980–2015

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Abstract Ethics education became an integral part of most U.S. institutions of higher education between 1980 and 2015. Growth can be seen in institutional messaging, number of courses in ethics offered throughout the graduate and undergraduate curricula, national recognition of degrees and certificates granted in ethics by the federal National Center for Educational Statistics, creation of campus-wide ethics centers and co-curricular initiatives, and an explosion of peer-reviewed journals in the intersection of disciplinary areas and ethics. Yet, much research is yet to be done. Connections between ethics education and students' civic and moral development remain unclear. The impact of ethics education remains unknown. There is no consensus on what counts as effective ethics education. Student voices are largely absent from discussions on the topic. And conversations relating to curricular and co-curricular ethics education continue to be divorced from analysis of the ethical implications of institutional choices.

Keywords Ethics · Morality · Values · Ethics education · Moral education
Higher education · Moral development · Institutional ethics · Education ethics
Student ethics

Long time observers of U.S. higher education have witnessed a series of shifting trends in mission and purpose. In some periods, the priority is to graduate students with civic responsibility. Then, for a while, it's vocational readiness. Sometimes stimulating students' intellectual and moral development for their own intrinsic good is in the background. Other times this goal is front and center. Priorities shift one to another and back over time. The stated purpose of higher education reflects political and social expectations of the era as well as the character of the institution and the branding by leadership at a particular moment in time.

Occasionally, an idea takes hold that creates fundamental change in how higher education is understood, how its purposes are achieved, or in how its achievements

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are measured. An analysis of 35 years of artifacts provides evidence that ethics education is an idea of this type. Ethics education, both as a basis for, and style of, critical inquiry, seems to be here to stay. Between 1980 and 2015, ethics education became embedded in the mission, vision and values statements of institutions of higher education, in written policies, in academic programs leading to certificates and degrees, in the creation of ethics courses across the curriculum, and through co-curricular activities with implicit or explicit focus on ethics. It also found its place in scholarly literatures. Practitioners, policymakers and critics turned attention to ethical issues internal to the university as well. For example, in the late 20th century, faculty research misconduct and student cheating were noted as areas of ethical concern on campus that demanded the institution's response. Faculty conflict of interest policies and disclosure of external support became common in this period. Power inequity was noted as a fatal ethical flaw in faculty-student romances. Full and part-time faculty salaries, unionization of graduate students, along with institutional purchasing and investment choices were recognized as having a previously ignored ethical component.

In this chapter, we examine the most sustained "ethics boom" (Davis 1999) in the history of U.S. higher education. This boom was first formally noted and analyzed by a research team convened by The Hastings Center in the late 1970s, resulting in seminal essays and monographs about ethics education at US colleges and universities.[1] The Hastings Center's materials, published in 1980, comprised the first landscape study of the teaching of ethics in US institutions of higher education.[2] Our examination of artifacts launches from this foundation and ends in 2015, as that is the last year that material could fully be captured at the time of this writing. Specifically, we look at how ethics education supported the stated purposes and implicit values of higher education, examine trends in academic writing relating to ethics education, and conclude with a survey of some of the different ways that ethics education has played out on U.S. campuses, including a comparison of how

[1]Along with multiple presentations at academic conferences, in 1980, the team published a book of collected essays, **Ethics Teaching in Higher Education** (Daniel Callahan and Sissela Bok, editors), and nine monographs on the teaching of ethics, **The Teaching of Ethics in Higher Education** (by The Hastings Center), **Legal Ethics and Legal Education** (by Michael J. Kelly), **Teaching Ethics in Journalism Education** (by Clifford G. Christians and Catherine L. Covert), **Teaching Bioethics: Strategies, Problems, and Resources** (by K. Danner Clouser), **Ethics in the Education of Business Managers** (by Charles W. Powers and David Vogel), **The Teaching of Ethics and the Social Sciences** (by Donald P. Warwick), **Ethics and Engineering Curricula** (by Robert J. Baum), **Ethical Dilemmas and the Education of Policymakers** (by Joel L. Fleishman and Bruce L. Payne) and **Ethics in the Undergraduate Curriculum** (by Bernard Rosen and Arthur L. Caplan).

[2]The Hastings Center study included a systematic survey of literature on the teaching of ethics in American higher education, review of 2000 college catalogs, consultations with more than 1000 teachers of ethics, a summer workshop for 150 participants, using a grounded theory approach to identify common practices and patterns along with problems and issues in ethics education.

instructional goals, student outcomes, and pedagogy and assessment have been discussed. While significant attention has been focused on many aspects of ethics education, we also identify areas that are in need of more systematic attention.

The Moral Purpose of Higher Education

Throughout history, higher education has been expected to play a role in developing students' moral and civic capacities, regardless of students' particular fields of study. One can reach back to Plato's utopian dialogue, *The Republic*, or Aristotle's experimental school, *The Lyceum*, to appreciate the long-held view of the importance of education in preparing future leaders who have the character necessary to govern. More recently, 19th century British philosopher, John Stuart Mill identified education as the social construction that made it possible for autonomous individuals to understand that one's own happiness was dependent on the health and happiness of the community within which they lived (Mill 1863/1991, p. 166). This realization was an important step in moral growth and development for all citizens, not just that of future leaders. In 1945, then Harvard President James Bryant Conant echoed Mill in prescribing an education that produced both good individuals and good citizens by "balancing free enquiry and critical individualism with the necessity for individuals to 'subordinate their individual good to the common good'" (Keohane 2006, p. 99).

Teaching ethics in earlier periods of higher education was meant to promote and reinforce community standards. In 19th century America, for example, often it was the school's president who taught required capstone courses or delivered lectures to reinforce the virtues deemed important for moral leadership in the ministry, government and law.[3] The President as instructor highlighted the significance of the lesson. Professional associations in engineering, journalism and law trace their first codes of ethics to the 1920s, which were given to practitioners as sanctioned statements of values and expectations and provided to students as standards of the professions that they had chosen to follow.

In contrast, in contemporary teaching, ethics "is treated as a subject in which controversy is normal, argument is appropriate, and answers are to be worked out in a shared search for the best reasons." A profession's code of ethics "is not just handed down. It is treated as a historical artifact to be examined, appraised, defended, or condemned" (Davis 1999, p. 15). While scholars (Colby et al. 2003) and stakeholders (Association of American Colleges & Universities) agree that colleges and universities have an educational and civic obligation to unapologetically teach for personal and social responsibility, the effectiveness of implicit or explicit attempts to meet the obligation are largely unknown (Dey and Associates 2010).

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[3]See Eliot (1869) and Stearns (1908).

The values construct of institutions of higher education is not limited to the ethical perspective that graduates might or might not have as they exit from their college years. Institutions of higher education themselves are dependent on shared values to promote student learning and to sustain the environment that supports the simultaneously collaborative and competitive work of seeking new knowledge. Shared values can be extrapolated from expectations for classroom conduct, research procedures, and conventions of residence hall co-habitation. Values weave through the curriculum, co-curricular activities and campus life. These values include honesty, integrity, self-discipline, "mutual respect, open-mindedness, the willingness to listen to and take seriously the ideas of others, procedural fairness, and public discussion of contested issues" (Colby et al. 2003, p. 13; Wolff 1994, p. 106). Roberts (1999) adds that values central to education include "those associated with the promotion of questioning, dialogue and reflective human activity" (p. 19). Ebels-Duggan (2015) includes "intellectual charity," to the list, noting that,

> The intellectually charitable person approaches new ideas and texts with the presumption that there is something true and worthwhile to be found there. He or she thus refrains from immediate criticism, striving first to understand the positions and to reconstruct them in a way that brings out what seems most plausible. Humility is a corresponding attitude governing one's relationship to one's own view. (p. 82)

While the campus, as a whole, is rich with opportunities for ethics learning (Colby et al. 2003, p. 277), ethics education has been assumed to produce more consistent results when it is offered in designated courses than when relying on students' informal socialization to facilitate their civic and moral development, or on the tendency for controversies to surface here and there during the course of classroom discussions. Classes in ethics theoretically provide opportunities for students to critically examine values and ethical issues, to reason about the issues and to examine the justifications for holding particular values (Ozar 1977; Davis 1990; Whitbeck 1995; Matchett 2008). Mayhew and King have suggested that a key element for ethics education is that specific courses in the field "encourage perspective-taking or that they provide structured opportunities to practice moral decision making" (Mayhew and King 2008, p. 36).

Ethics education typically includes the teaching of substantive content as well as the development of ethical reasoning skills. Content may include philosophical theories that provide the foundation for systematic moral analysis. It is likely to include examinations of the major historical and contemporary controversies within a particular discipline or field of study. Ethical reasoning "requires students to be able to assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions" (Association of American Colleges and Universities 2010). Ethical reasoning is likely to include the teaching of argument construction, logical analysis and fallacies. Colby et al. (2003) see the importance of ethics coursework as:

> working to move students beyond moral relativism, supporting deep understanding of and personal connections with ethical concepts, teaching the skills of moral discourse, promoting the values and themes that are central to the institution's goals for moral and civic education, and supporting transfer of learning to contexts beyond the classroom. (p. 142)

In summary, policymakers, scholars and stakeholders think that it is important that institutions of higher education meet their moral purpose of producing graduates who perceive themselves as having personal, civic and social responsibilities. Courses in ethics, no matter where in the curriculum that they appear, are considered important in helping to achieve this goal (Dey et al. 2009). To date, however, there is little evidence that ethics education, however it is delivered in higher education, is responsive to the myriad hopes, assumptions and expectations associated with it.

Ethics Education Within Academic Literature

Thinking and writing about ethics exploded 1980–2015 in scholarly literature and lay discussions alike. Print and broadcast news magazines gave voice to discussions of equity and fairness, political ideology, self-determination, and imperialism. Where past generations might have trusted the government to make choices on their behalf, the contemporary generation demanded to know why. Public philosophers and their books became staples on television talk shows as well as in classes taught and taken by non-philosophers. Well-respected philosophers Sissela Bok, Michael Boylan, Philippa Foot, Martha Nussbaum, Lisa Newton, Michael J. Sandel, and Peter Singer, among others, produced non-fiction works on topics in ethics that sold well in the trade press in addition to their writings that appeared in philosophy journals. *Ethics in America*, a show produced for PBS by Columbia University in 1989, brought prominent lawyers, articulate philosophers, and important contemporary leaders from government, business and media, together to discuss controversial topics of the day. The Socratic questioning and roundtable discussion modeled ethical reasoning and civil dialogue for a national audience.

As journal publication is the coin of the realm for achievement in higher education, we limited our examination of scholarship on ethics education to these peer-reviewed publications. While ethics was becoming a concept discussed at the dinner table, in scholarly literature, it simultaneously morphed into a field with sub-disciplines. Peer-reviewed journals specific to disciplinary or topical areas of practical ethics, such as medical ethics, business ethics, engineering ethics, and environmental ethics grew from fewer than 20 journals prior to 1980 to 145 by 2015. In addition, a journal devoted specifically to pedagogy for ethics education, *Teaching Ethics Journal*, was founded in 2001.

A selection of journals in ethics and journals in higher education were examined here to capture trends and major developments in the field.[4] A birds-eye view revealed an increase in the number of journals that focus on practical ethics alongside an upward trend in scholarship on ethics education published in *The Journal of Higher Education*. On the other hand, traditional journals in moral philosophy, such as *Ethics*, maintained their distance from writings in practical ethics education, as did three out of four prestigious journals in higher education.

The first of the two analyses we conducted tracked ethics education trends in flagship journals of higher education. These journals are important in establishing which aspects of ethics education have been of interest to researchers and readers of scholarship who study higher education. The second analysis examined the most prestigious journals in the two most prolific areas within practical ethics: medicine/ bioethics, *The Journal of Medical Ethics (JME),* and business & economics, *The Journal of Business Ethics (JBE)*. In addition, we examined *The Journal of Moral Education (JMED)*, the premiere interdisciplinary journal in moral education and development, as well as two prominent journals in moral and political philosophy—*Ethics* and *Philosophy & Public Affairs*.

We divided the literature into timed sequences and categories: 1980–1989, 1990–1999, 2000–2009, and 2010–2015 to provide a closer analysis of trends from 1980 forward.[5] A range of themes emerged from our content analysis of articles, which were then categorized accordingly as follows[6]:

1. **University Culture** (expressions of institutions' moral purpose; modeling and reinforcing of core values perceived as necessary for higher education)[7];
2. **Research Ethics** (animal and human subjects protections and research misconduct primarily regarding faculty researchers)[8];
3. **Ethical Responsibilities of Faculty or Administration** (impact of direct faculty and administrator behavior on students)[9];
4. **Student Academic Integrity** (cheating and other forms of academic misconduct primarily regarding student behavior)[10];

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[4]Keywords used to search descriptors for journals and articles include "higher education" combined with "ethics" or "ethical" or "moral" in the journal or article title, subject word, or description. Initial search results were then manually culled to include only academic articles (not book reviews, for example) that addressed topics related to ethics education in higher education.

[5]See Sloan (1980), for a summary of literature in ethics education prior to 1980.

[6]Artifacts that could have reasonably been coded in more than one category were placed in a primary category based on title, abstract or other determination early in the article of major focus. Two researchers independently categorized journals and articles in our study, with disagreements discussed and consensus achieved.

[7]See, for example, Besvinick (1983), Thornton and Jaeger (2008) and Wilshire (1987).

[8]See Steneck (1994).

[9]See Scriven (1982).

[10]See Thompson (2006).

5. **Ethics Education Goals & Outcomes** (articulations of expectations for ethics education and assessment, primarily curricular)[11];
6. **Ethics Pedagogy & Teacher Preparation** (examinations of teaching practices and determinations of adequate background for teaching in the field)[12];
7. **Civic Education** (development of student knowledge, skills and motivation for civic engagement, including experiential learning)[13];
8. **Student Moral Development** (development of moral sophistication at the individual student level through interventions both in and outside of the classroom)[14];
9. **Co-curricular Ethics Learning** (institution-supported ethics education that occurs external to formal curricula)[15];
10. **Other** (e.g. articles that reported on surveys of students or other stakeholders, comparisons between corporate or professional practice and the academy, reviews of trends in literature or practice).[16]

Journals in Higher Education

We identified four flagship journals in higher education based on impact factors, citation ranking, and acceptance rates: *Harvard Educational Review (HER)*, *The Journal of Higher Education (JHE)*, *Review of Research in Education (RRE)*, and *Teachers College Record (TCR)*. Of these four, only *JHE* published a significant number of articles (38) in our area of interest. *TCR* published five, *RRE* and *HER* published three each. Of those 49 relevant articles, 21 of them were published in the 19-year-period of 1980–1999. Twenty-eight were published in the 15-year-period of 2000 through 2015, indicating that ethics in higher education is of continuing and growing interest in our period of study for researchers who study it from a higher education perspective.

The first articles in this period both appeared in *JHE* in 1982, “Should there be an academic code of ethics?” (Callahan) and “Professorial Ethics,” (Scriven). Callahan’s (1982) article surveyed the list of ethical issues that confront decision-makers in higher education, determining that, even though there is “certainly good reason to confront, and to grapple with, the long list of ethical problems facing the university,” (p. 341), writing a code of ethics is not the answer. He endorsed that campuses have an ongoing project in which the whole campus community examined the school’s ethical issues. Callahan’s focus is particularly

[11]See Camenisch (1986).

[12]See Tsei (2002).

[13]See Rhoads (1997).

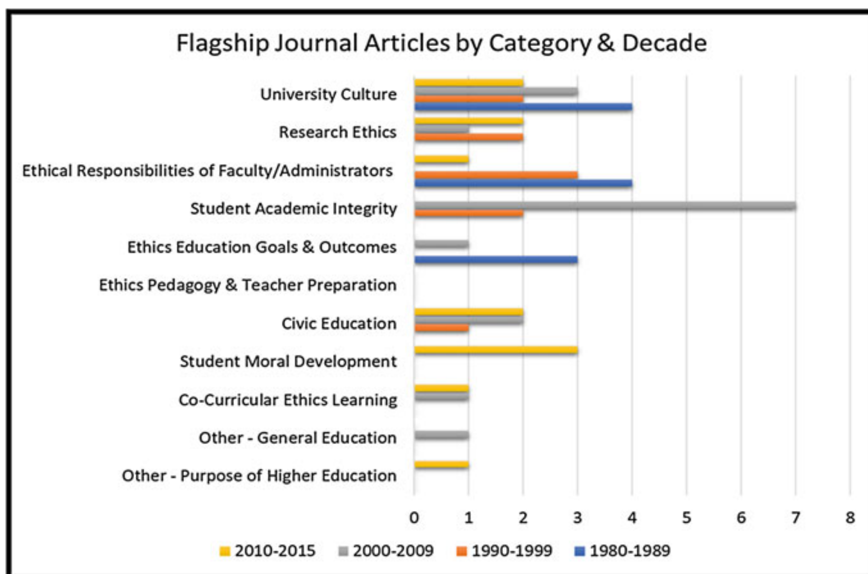
[14]See Meyhew (2012).

[15]See Magolda and Abowitz (1997).

[16]See Lee and Taylor (2013).

interesting in that The Hasting Center project that he co-directed resulted in ten publications, which all focused specifically on teaching ethics within a classroom context. His *JHE* publication is the only publication in this period that focused on university culture and how the institution as a whole could improve its ethical decision-making. Scriven (1982) discussed the need for ethical conduct of faculty in regard to students (p. 313) but also argued that practical ethics should be taught throughout the curriculum, just as writing and critical thinking are taught through many courses (p. 310–11). Three articles were published in higher education journals in the 1980's that specifically addressed the teaching of ethics.[17] Each of them referenced the work of The Hastings Center study team, reinforcing our view that The Hastings Center publications served as a foundation for the field of ethics education.

The categories of articles that appeared in the flagship journals over the 35 years reflect ethical concerns within the broad higher education environment rather than matters that might be of specific interest to instructors teaching ethics in the classroom: University Culture (11), Student Academic Integrity (9), Ethical Responsibilities of Faculty and Administration (8), Civic Education (5) and Research Ethics (5). Student Academic Integrity was the primary category of article in the 2000s (7).



[17]See Camenisch (1986), Stark et al. (1986) and Rivage-Seul (1987).

The Growth of Literature in Practical Ethics Journals

Journals focused on scholarship in disciplinary areas within practical ethics proliferated in our study period as well. Of the 145 disciplinary journals identified in this study (InCites Journal Citation Report 2017; UlrichsWeb 2017),[18] only 17 began publication prior to 1980, with only two of them beginning publication prior to 1960. The premiere journal in moral philosophy, *Ethics*, began publication in 1888.

Ethics Journals by Discipline	
Bio, Medical	33
Business & Economics	24
Moral Philosophy	20
Political Science	9
Higher Education & Teaching	7
Information Sciences & Technology	7
Social Sciences; Sociology	7
Religions & Theology	6
Environmental	6
Law & Criminal Justice	5
Psychology	5
Communications & Media	4
Military	3
Engineering	2
Public Health & Safety	2
Sports & Games	2
Public Administration	1
Animal Ethics	1
Social Services & Welfare	1
TOTAL	**145**

For further analysis, we examined publications in the *Journal of Medical Ethics (JME)* and the *Journal of Business Ethics (JBE),* the top journals in the two disciplinary areas with the most journals. In addition, we looked at high-ranking journals

[18]While we believe that we captured most of the journals that publish articles in practical ethics, moral education or moral development, no one database seems to have captured all peer-reviewed journals that belong in our study. InCites Journal Citation Reports (JCR) was chosen as a recognized source analyzing citation references within 11,000 + indexed journals including "nearly" 250 disciplines. Ulrichs Web is recognized among librarians as the premier periodical indexing system with more than 300,000 periodicals.

in moral philosophy, *Ethics*, and *Philosophy & Public Affairs* to ascertain what interest ethics education might have had for those reviewers and readers. Finally, we examined *The Journal of Moral Education (JMED),* as moral and civic development is sometimes addressed concurrently with ethics education and the researchers most likely to examine the outcomes of ethics education are moral psychologists. We identified 168 articles from these five journals for analysis and categorized them in the same manner as used in our review of the flagship journal articles.

JBE, which began publication in 1982, published 88 articles related to ethics in higher education in our study period. The earliest published article in our time period relevant to the study was "Ethics in Education: A comparative study," (Lane and Schaupp 1989), which we categorized as student moral development. According to the authors, findings included greater competitiveness among the business students when compared to students in other colleges; business students were far more likely to see a need to "step on people" and to "clear their path" to attain their goal (p. 947).

In the 1990s, *JBE* published 12 relevant articles: Ethics Education Goals & Outcomes (2), Civic Education (2), Ethics Pedagogy & Teacher Preparation (1), Research Ethics (1) and Student Moral Development (1). Five articles were categorized as Other and included articles that compared corporations with academic settings, student perceptions with those of workers in business, and student surveys. In the five-year period between 2010 and 2015, the most recent period of review, *JBE* published 52 articles related to ethics in higher education. Ten of those focused on pedagogy and nine of them focused on institutional culture. More than any other journals examined, *JBE* published articles relating to the ethics of the institution in about equal balance with those relating to formal instruction of ethics in business and accounting education.

The *Journal of Medical Ethics (JME),* which began publication in 1975, published 52 articles that include higher education as a keyword from 1980–2015, with "Teaching medical students on the ethical dimensions of human rights" (London and McCarthy 1998), the earliest published in our timeframe. Because of the role of biomedical research in higher education, a substantial number of articles (8) related to research ethics, with the highest number of articles (27) focused on formal ethics education for undergraduate or medical students in either the Ethics Education Goals & Outcomes category (16) or Ethics Pedagogy & Teacher Preparation (11).

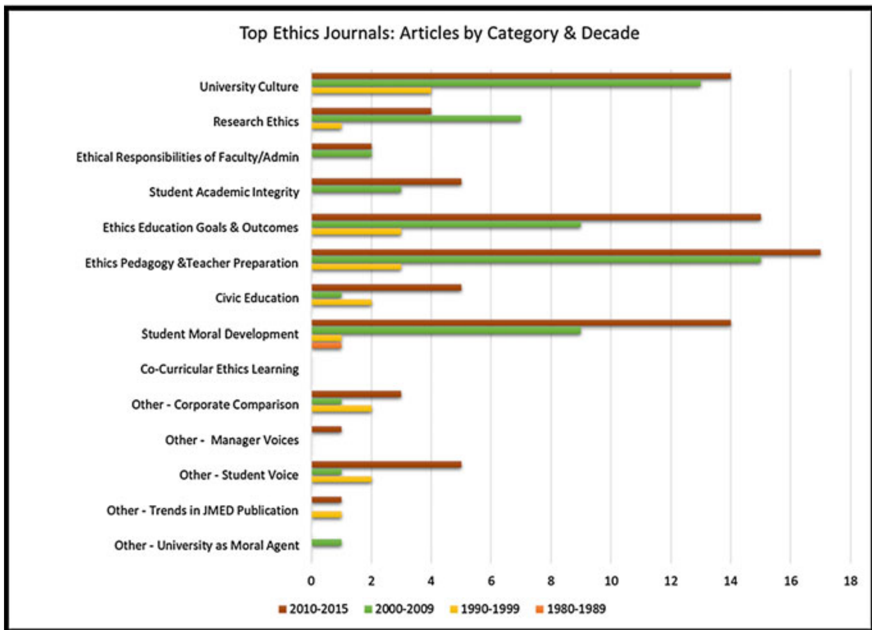
The longest-running and most esteemed journal in moral philosophy, *Ethics,* published only two articles in the time frame that were directly relevant to our study. One appeared in 1993: "Liberalism and campus hate speech: A philosophical examination," (Altman 1993), the other in 2007: "Fair opportunity in education for citizenship," (Anderson 2007). Similarly, *Philosophy & Public Affairs* saw only two relevant publications in our study period, "Diversity," (Shaw 1999), and "Yes Means Yes: Consent as Communication," (Dougherty 2015). We categorized all four of these articles as addressing University Culture, as they addressed ethical issues relating to higher education broadly speaking. But, the primary focus for each of the four articles was the philosophical concept rather than the campus environment: liberalism as political ideology, what counts as fair opportunity, the meaning of diversity and the nature of consent. It is not surprising, then, that ethics—as it plays

out in practical ethics courses or in practical matters within the higher education environment—was not of primary interest to reviewers or readers.

The *Journal of Moral Education (JMED),* which began publication in 1971, was included in our review as it has been the premiere interdisciplinary journal in moral development and education for more than 40 years. It is appropriate to include a review of a journal in moral education as "moral education" and "ethics education" are sometimes used synonymously. In addition, moral psychologists speak directly to the practice of ethics education. First they have engaged in discussing whether moral growth and development are appropriate goals for ethics education. Next, they have offered objective measures for assessment of whatever moral development might have taken place within an ethics education attempt. They have also pointed out the many ways that moral development theories can be used in analyzing moral growth in higher education. For example, Schmidt et al. examined a method for promoting cognitive moral reasoning (Schmidt et al. 2009; Lee et al. 2015) examined other-oriented motivations for moral behavior as compared with motivations that were self-motivated.

This journal published 24 relevant articles in the period under consideration relating to ethics education in higher education. While it is certainly not surprising that almost one-third of the articles were categorized as Student Moral Development (7), *JMED* also published 10 articles categorized as Ethics Education Goals & Outcomes or Ethics Pedagogy & Teacher Preparation, because of the focus on objective assessment of ethics education attempts.

As with the flagship journals, the disciplinary journals together showed a steady increase of relevant publications between 1980 and 2015. The trend between 2010 and 2015 showed a substantial increase in *JBE, JME,* and *JMED.*



Although *JBE, JME,* and *JMED* all showed an upward trend of publications in ethics education, the role of ethics within higher education cannot be said to be the primary focus for any of the journals examined. For example, the percentage of published articles relating to ethics education within higher education rose from 6.3% in the period between 1981 and 1990 to 10.9% in the period between 2001 and 2011 (Lee and Taylor 2013) in the *JMED*. In the same comparative period, these authors found no significant change relating to K-12 or professional education (p. 414). But, even an increase to 11% of journal articles devoted to the teaching and learning of ethics on college campuses reflects a relatively low level of researcher and reviewer interest.

The study of ethics education specifically spawned journals dedicated to the teaching of ethics: *Teaching Business Ethics* began publication in 1982, but then merged with the *Journal of Business Ethics* in 2004. *Teaching Ethics* (2001) is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes biannually and welcomes articles relating to the teaching of ethics in any learning environment. This is the one continuing journal devoted to ethics pedagogy. One new publication in ethics pedagogy, *International Journal of Ethics Education* began publication outside of our time-frame (2016), but claims to "present a platform for exchange of theoretical and practical experiences with teaching ethics in various educational settings" (Springer Publication 2017). Articles on ethics education also appear in *Teaching Philosophy*, which has been published since 1975.

Our examination showed that journals with a focus on higher education were mostly concerned with ethics education as it affects the university as a whole: university culture and ethical issues that cross disciplinary lines, such as faculty research misconduct and student cheating. Within the disciplinary journals, we saw greater activity in publication on issues relating to teaching content and skills. Only the *JBE* published a balance of articles between those focused on classroom activity with those relating to the university as a whole. The siloes that we see in the thematic foci of journals reflects the fracturing of ethical concerns that persists on college campuses today. More could be done to understand and address how ethics in the classroom connects with ethics in the university environment.[19]

Ethics Education on Campus

The increase in ethics education scholarship has been mirrored by growth of ethics education practice on campuses. In the years of this study, many higher education policy makers, leaders and curriculum planners have been convinced that intentional ethics education has a place in higher education. In some cases, the move toward ethics across the curriculum happened in concert with university-wide or programmatic accreditation. In other cases, ethics stepped outside of the traditional departments of religion or philosophy through creative team-teaching by professors working cross

[19]See especially Keenan (2015).

discipline to provide student their shared expertise. On yet other campuses, administrators or curricular specialists found opportunities to seed ethics education throughout their institution's programs of study and provided faculty development to assist instructors in gaining needed expertise. In this section, we examine a number of the different ways that ethics education has become part of the face of campus.

Evidence for Interest in Intentional Ethics Education

Some institutions have chosen ethics education as the basis for their campus-wide Quality Enhancement Projects (QEP). At the time of this writing, QEPs were required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), which is one of the six regional accrediting councils in the U.S. for institutions of higher education. That SACS has accepted campus-wide curricular and co-curricular ethics projects as appropriate QEPs is a significant indication of policy-maker acceptance of the importance of intentional ethics education.[20] As an example, beginning in 2010, James Madison University developed a saturation technique for ethics across the curriculum. *The Madison Collaborative: Ethical Reasoning in Action* invited faculty to integrate eight key questions into their courses, regardless of field. The eight questions addressed fairness, outcomes, responsibilities, character, liberty, empathy, authority and rights (James Madison University 2017).

In addition, national accreditation councils for specific disciplines, such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) include ethics education as a qualifier for program accreditation.

While a few institutions of higher education, including Harvard, have required undergraduate study in ethics from the time that general education requirements were put in place, other schools began requiring ethics in or near our period of review.[21] Many more schools have added ethics requirements to particular majors. A steadily increasing number of institutions are offering ethics degrees at the undergraduate, master's or doctoral levels.

Beginning in 2000, institutions of higher education have been able to offer certificate and degree programs in ethics recognized by the federal National Center for

[20]Schools that developed a campus-wide QEP based on ethics include Barry University, Campbellsville University, Carson-Newman College, Eastern Kentucky University, Georgia Military College, Hardin-Simmons University, James Madison University, Marymount University, Oakwood University, St. Philip's College, Texas Tech University, The Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, Webber International University, William Peace University.

[21]See for example, The University of Montana, which introduced the general education requirement, Ethics and Human Values in 1975 and continues through the time of this writing. Thirty courses are listed as providing general education credits in this area including the intriguingly-named literature course, "Placebos: The Power of Words".

Education Statistics. The Center hosts the Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which in turn provides data categories that all post-secondary educational institutions must use in reporting details regarding their institutions, academic programs and students. IPEDS created a standardized system for reporting academic programs that lead to degrees or certifications, the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) in 1985. CIP codes relevant to this review are *Ethics* (38.0103, introduced in 2000), *Applied and Professional Ethics* (38.0104, introduced in 2010), and *Bioethics/Medical Ethics* (51.3201, introduced in 2010).

Ethics CIP 38.0103: "A program that focuses on the systematic study of the theory of moral good and its application to various theoretical and practical problems. Includes instruction in ethical theory, history of ethics, belief and value systems, ethical constructs, and applications to specific topics, issues and problems."

Applied and Professional Ethics CIP 38.0104: "A program that focuses on the systematic study of ethical issues in the workplace and public life, and the application of ethical decision-making to the practical problems of society and the professions. Includes instruction in ethical theory; history of ethics; contemporary social dilemmas; methods in applied ethics; and applications including medical ethics, legal ethics, business ethics, environmental ethics, and criminal justice ethics."

Bioethics/Medical Ethics 51.3201: "A program that focuses on the application of ethics, religion, jurisprudence, and the social sciences to the analysis of health care issues, clinical decision-making, and research procedures. Includes instruction in philosophical ethics, moral value, medical sociology, theology, spirituality and health, policy analysis, decision theory, and applications to problems such as death and dying, therapeutic relationships, organ transplantation, human and animal subjects, reproduction and fertility, health care justice, cultural sensitivity, needs assessment, professionalism, conflict of interest, chaplaincy, and clinical or emergency procedures." (National Center for Educational Statistics 2017).

The chart below represents the number of institutions offering degrees in each of the CIP codes. The chart begins with 2010–11 as that was the first year that all three CIPS were available:

IHE with Programs

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ethics 38.0103	24	20	27	26	30
Applied & Prof. Ethics 38.0104	5	8	11	13	14
Bio/Med Ethics 51.3201	18	22	25	30	26

The overall number of institutions offering degrees in one or more of these CIP codes has grown steadily. The growth pattern is consistent across public institutions, private institutions and religious institutions. For example, across the three CIP codes in 2014–15, 25 public institutions had certificate or degree programs in one or more of the three CIPs, 20 private institutions had programs, and 24 religious institutions were offering certificates or degrees in one or more of the ethics CIP codes. In 2014–15, New England College of Business and Finance became the first for-profit institution of higher education offering a degree in ethics. Schools offering degrees include large public research institutions, religious schools, and private liberal arts colleges.[22]

Goals and Pedagogy in Ethics Education

The 1980 Hastings Center report was a response to concerns about intentional ethics education that surfaced in the 1960s and 1970s. The study team asked themselves what the new focus on ethics education meant: "What are the appropriate purposes of courses in ethics? What kinds of student should such courses try to reach, and at what point in the curriculum? Who should teach such courses, and what training ought they to have?" (p. xiv). The Hastings Center's research team lamented that students' opportunities to formally examine ethical questions in general life or in the professions were "often scant and episodic" (The Hastings Center 1980, p. 79). The research team identified appropriate goals in the teaching of ethics as: "stimulating the moral imagination, developing skills in the recognition and analysis of moral issues, eliciting a sense of moral obligation and personal responsibility, and learning both to tolerate—and resist[23]—moral disagreement and ambiguity" (The Hastings Center, p. 80).

Those goals have been echoed (Camenisch 1986) and restated in student outcome "behavioral" terms (Elliott 2007).

Much has happened to meet these goals and to answer those concerns in the 35-year study period. If we confine ourselves to considering how teachers of ethics talk about their craft, some recommendations from The Hasting Center's team have become standard practice in the field. Based on an aggregation of results from studies performed in 2008 and 2015–16 by Cooper, that included interviews with 80 senior ethics teachers at selective English-speaking institutions in the US,

[22]See for example Arizona State University (multiple campuses), Brown University, Carnegie Mellon University, Case Western Reserve University, Epic Bible College, Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences, Kennesaw State University, Loma Linda University, New England College of Business and Finance, Northwestern University, Oral Roberts University, Smith College, Utah Valley University, University of Maryland (multiple campuses), Western Michigan University, and Yeshiva University.

[23]In some of the 1980 Hastings Center publications, the term used here is "reduce" rather than "resist".

Canada, UK, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand (Cooper 2017), Cooper (2017) noted some consensus: all agreed that “Ethics as a discipline of moral reasoning should be taught consistently in colleges and universities” (p. 67).

Concern that instructors might indoctrinate students into their own ideological views, expressed from the 1960s and articulated in The Hastings Center’s report, seems to have dissipated. Cooper reported “little difference by those teaching in the U.S., British, Asian, Canadian, and Australasian institutions. Hence, despite the uniqueness of the tutorial teaching system used at Oxford and Cambridge, and of the Confucian, Taoist, and other traditions in the Pacific, this study did not reveal appreciable national and cultural differences in attitudes toward the teaching of ethics” (Cooper 2017, p. 66). Pluralism was further promoted by an expansion beyond what Cooper called an “all but rigid reliance upon the classical canon of revered deceased philosophers” (p. 70) to include contemporary voices of women and a diversity of cultures along with secondary texts to accompany primary classical readings.

We can see consistency over the years in what counts as adequate ethics education. Matchett (2008) utilized work from Ozar and Rest in specifying knowledge and skills to be achieved in ethics education to include: values, principles and ideals, conflicts among those, and facts relevant to ethical decisions in specific areas in the knowledge arena. Skills include: multiple perspective taking, formulating logical arguments, employing conceptual tools such as ethical theories, and accurately applying justifiable standards that are reasonable to expect within the professional or social role examined (Matchett 2008, pp. 32–33). Cooper’s (2017) sample reported teaching rigorous moral reasoning, critically informed decision-making, taking deeper perspective on important issues and adopting a more philosophical or transcendent approach to life and ethical dilemmas (p. 68).

Scholars who caution against expecting too much change to occur within a single semester still adopt goals reflective of The Hastings Center’s goals: one scholar suggests that a realistically attainable and significantly valuable goal for ethics courses is to get “students to go beyond demonizing and to downgrade their own intuitions” (Murphy 2014, p. 426). Even this basic blow to student subjectivism fits The Hasting Center’s appropriately ambiguous goal of helping students learn both “to tolerate—and to resist—moral disagreement and ambiguity” (The Hastings Center 1980, p. 80).

In contrast to ethics teaching within departments of philosophy or religion, in which courses in ethics might lead students through the examination of particular philosophers, texts, traditions or theories, ethics courses taught across the curriculum have been focused on controversies. The issues that first led clinicians to consult with philosophers, such as brain death, distribution of limited resources including cadaver organs for transplant, and obligations to treat severely disabled neonates were now offered to undergraduate, graduate and medical students for analysis. Undergraduate and graduate students as well in business ethics and social responsibility courses learned processes for analyzing the ethical implications of outsourced labor and obligations to employees. They learned that ethical considerations might lead one to a outcome different from when the economic bottom line

was used as the only criterion for success. Engineering students learned behind the scene details of disasters including Chernobyl and the Challenger explosion to help them appreciate the tension between "thinking like an engineer" as compared with "thinking as a manager." The latter frame of reference implies that in important ethical values that govern the engineering profession were set aside in these cases for the priorities expressed by other powerful stakeholders. According to Cooper's findings, "the teaching of ethics should be a catalyst to both intellectual growth and to deeper understanding of moral choice" (2017, p. 70).

Pedagogy thought to best accomplish those goals is based on active student learning, such as discussion/debate (DuBois and Burkemper 2002; Dean and Beggs 2006) with the goal of steering students away from a polarized analysis of good/bad, right/wrong answers for ethical controversies in favor of an appreciation of the complexity of assumptions and justifications evident in any moral choice. Students were taught to consider the adequacy of means along with the justifiability of ends. Teachers of ethics were encouraged to focus on a range of moral permissibility, so that students were introduced to thinking of choices as morally prohibited, morally required, morally permitted or morally ideal (Gert 2005) instead of simply right or wrong. One pedagogical method offered is for educators to present ethical issues within what Whitbeck called a "design problem model." This model represents potential outcomes as expressing more than one potential good, rather than providing two alternatives or closed-choice multiple alternatives (Whitbeck 1995, p. 302).

Goals for the teaching of ethics have been further dissected to affirm the importance of students practicing ethical thinking skills as compared with the less-engaged learning of how to apply elements of argumentation and recognition of the relevant points of disagreement in controversies. For example, Kenneth Goodpaster distinguished these two pedagogical approaches as the difference between *praxis*, which he calls the "salient element" of ethics teaching and *poiesis* (Goodpaster 1982).

Instructor Preparation for Ethics Education

A common pedagogical concern of potential ethics educators and assessment specialists is the interdisciplinary preparation required to teach ethics well. Hasting Center scholars agreed that some deep understanding (the equivalent of a Master's degree) should be required both in moral philosophy and in the area of analysis (Bok, p. 30; Callahan, 1980, p. 77). Practical ethics instructors should be able to teach critical thinking skills, important components of major ethical traditions and theories, and how to build good arguments and how to evaluate the construction of arguments offered. Instructors who are practitioners within the field of analysis or who have credible expertise in the field provide important modeling. "Each time a teacher in a professional school raises a question of professional ethics, she is an example of a member of her profession concerned about its ethics" (Davis 1990,

p. 36). Along with the need for interdisciplinary knowledge, teachers of ethics need good facilitation skills, the courage to allow students to discuss controversial matters, and the ability to steer student conversation to more sophisticated and theoretical levels rather than allowing it to devolve into polarized positions on a particular case. According to Matchett (2008), "many non-ethics faculty have fairly limited ideas about how they might lead a productive discussion about ethical issues related to their course subject matter," as well as being unsure about how to assess student ethical thinking (p. 26).

The Hastings Center study team set a high bar for qualifications for the teaching of ethics: "As an ideal, those teaching applied and professional ethics—where knowledge of one or more fields is necessary—ought to have the equivalent of one year of training in the field in which they were not initially trained" (Callahan and Bok 1980, p. 301) or team-teaching which is cost prohibitive in many institutions. Finding sustainable methods for "training up" instructors so that they feel adequately prepared to address ethical issues within the context of their fields of expertise has remained a significant challenge.

The proliferation of graduate certificates and degrees in ethics may provide an answer in the long run, as students complete the ethics qualification in addition to disciplinary training. In the meantime, professional associations and campuses have stepped into assist fledgling ethics instructors. For example, the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE) has hosted a half-day Graduate and Early Career Scholars' Seminar in Teaching Ethics as part of its annual meeting beginning in 2010. The Center for the Study of Ethics at Utah Valley University (UVU) provides an annual five-day seminar for UVU faculty who want to teach stand-alone courses in ethics or incorporate the teaching of ethics into their regular curriculum offerings (Utah Valley University, n.d.). Such attention to faculty needs is a "best practice" for ethics across the curriculum (Matchett 2008, p. 36).

Moral Psychology, Assessment, and Ethics Education

The Hastings Center team said, "Courses in ethics ought not explicitly to seek behavioral change in students. They should seek to assist students in the development of those insights, skills, and perspectives that set the stage for a life of personal moral responsibility, manifesting careful and serious moral reflection" (1980, pp. 80–81). Discussions regarding the distinction between facilitating true moral growth and teaching content and skills have become more nuanced over time. Some scholars have sought to distinguish instructional outcomes that can be measured from "pedagogical hope," (Elliott 2007, p. 40) for how a student might turn out to be. Cooper's interviewees, the majority of whom taught in philosophy departments, were opposed (46%) or unsure (17%) about whether ethics as "moral improvement" or "character development" should be taught in higher education ethics courses" (Cooper 2017, p. 67). Yet many ethics scholars who consider

disciplinary areas outside of philosophy as their home departments discuss ethics education and moral and civic development in the same breath.

The connection between moral psychology and ethics education as addressed by scholars seems intuitive, but research has confirmed the close connection of cognition with moral judgment (Kohlberg 1981, 1984; Rest 1986). Various instruments have been developed to measure a research subject's moral competence or stage of moral development.

One test, the Personal Ethical Threshold (PET) was developed for assessing moral behavior in the face of situational pressure (Coleman et al. 2015, p. 26). Another, the Moral Competence Test (MCT) assumed that personal preferences impact moral judgment and identified consistencies in applying those preferences in solving moral problems (Biggs and Colesante 2015, p. 499). But, by far, the most discussed assessment technique used to evaluate student moral growth and development in this period of study was the Defining Issues Test (DIT), developed by James Rest based on Lawrence Kohlberg's stage-based theory of moral development. The test has been used in attempts to identify progress in students' moral reasoning in higher education as an outcome of interventions ranging from a semester-long ethics course to the full four undergraduate years.

Challenges to the use of moral development testing for ethics education include the inadequacy of the moral development theory that serves as the test's foundation as well as concerns about the test's ability to capture the complex processes at work, much less the multiple pedagogic goals in ethics teaching and learning (Thoma et al. 2016). Other theories of moral development that are compatible with Kohlberg's theory and flesh out the notion of moral sophistication, specifically those of Carol Gilligan and William Perry, were not considered in the development of the DIT (Elliott 2007). Scholars argued that the use of Kohlberg's theory as the sole basis for the instrument created a fundamental bias based on Gilligan's charge "that Kohlberg's view of morality and moral development is a decidedly masculine construction, culminating in abstract principles and rights, and that it ignores a more contextual and relational understanding of morality focusing on responsibility to persons" (Camenisch 1986, p. 506).

Kenneth Goodpaster (1982) identified other concerns with the DIT: the problem of time lag and the inappropriateness of instructors treating students as research subjects. There may be a significant time lag between an ethics course and when students recognize the importance of what they learned or until they apply the tools well after the class has ended. They may not encounter a profession-based problem until they have completed years more of pre-professional training. Goodpaster also pointed out that DIT measures only one expression of moral sophistication while philosophers encourage a pluralistic approach to application and use of ethical theory. Finally, Goodpaster argued that the DIT misses an important distinction: the ethics instructor works with students to achieve change rather than treating them as human subjects in which the results of an intervention can be measured. Goodpaster (1982) argued that teachers should not be dispassionate in the same way that experimenters should. Teachers should be fair in how they treat a group of students, but should be deeply invested in the success of each.

Evaluation of student progress in practical ethics courses has generally followed best practices for humanities disciplines, which rely on conventional methods such as classroom discussions, tests and writing assignments. Based on the assumption of Callahan's goals for the teaching of ethics, particular student abilities emerge as providing justifiable basis for evaluation: quality of arguments for moral views; mastery of theories and principles of ethics; identification of moral issues; and ability to argue both sides of a position (Caplan 1980, pp. 148–149). This approach centers on assessment of students' ethical reasoning and critical thinking skills. Sometimes assessment tools also include a component that addresses values clarification.[24] It is fair to say that methods for comprehensive assessment of student learning in ethics, those that measure ethical reasoning, have yet to be developed.

Co-curricular Growth in Ethics Education

Alongside the increase in ethics degrees and courses, some schools have created co-curricular support for the institutional ethics mission, including ethics centers and student ethics competitions. While scholars noted that integration of ethics education within campuses or between curricular and co-curricular attempts is rare (Colby et al. 2003) the elements are present on many campuses for this to occur. Creative administrators often have the elements to build ethics across the curriculum programs from existing curriculum and co-curricular programs and to support faculty development and networking and the campus-wide unification of ethics education. Ethics centers were created on many college and university campuses, at least in part, to meet some of these goals.

A 2017 study of seventy-five ethics centers found that most ethics centers were campus wide and commonly provided activities that crossed disciplinary lines including lectures, fellowship opportunities, and student competitions (Safatly et al. 2017, p. 156). As with other ethics initiatives, most centers began operations in the late 20th century, with the number of centers picking up in the 2000s[25] (Safatly et al. 2017). Data is not available to provide a full accounting of the number of college and university-based ethics centers, institutes and initiatives. While there are certainly additional ethics centers not affiliated with APPE, that association claims more than 150 institutional members, which are almost all ethics centers within institutions of higher education. Most APPE-affiliated centers have campus-wide, community-wide or even nation-wide focus, while others are disciplinarily grounded (APPE).

Of the ethics education efforts offered through co-curricular activities and community service,[26] the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) has most successfully

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[24]See, for example, the AACU LEAP VALUE rubric for Ethical Reasoning.

[25]The study found at 15% of the centers examined were established in the 1970s, 14% in the 1980s, 32% in the 1990s and 39% between 2001 and 2010.

[26]See, for example, King and Mayhew (2002) and Coleman et al. (2015).

engaged the highest number of undergraduate institutions in a shared activity. The IEB was established in 1993 at the Illinois Institute of Technology by Professor Robert Ladenson and the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions (CSEP). The competition became national in 1997. Since then, the IEB has been hosted annually by APPE in conjunction with the annual meeting (APPE 2017; Ladenson 2001) and has added schools hosting undergraduate teams every year. By 2001, thirty-two teams representing colleges and universities across the United States participated. And by 2015, more than 250 campuses fielded teams that participated annually in the IEB, involving more than 1000 student team members, graduate student coaches and faculty sponsors in 10 regional bowls, with 36 of the best teams invited to compete in the national competition (APPE 2017).

Ladenson (2001) has credited the IEB with providing three contributions in the development of students' capabilities in ethical judgment and reasoning: (1) developing a framework of analysis for addressing ethical issues in an intellectually well-organized manner; (2) providing opportunities to acquire valuable background information on ethical issues of special importance to them in light of their respective interests, concerns, and career aspirations; (3) fostering the capacity for ethical understanding over a broad range of important subjects.

The IEB received the 2006 American Philosophical Association/Philosophy Documentation Center's 2006 prize for Excellence and Innovation in Philosophy Programs (APPE 2017). The competition has been endorsed by a multitude of college instructors who claim to have seen significant growth in students' ethical reasoning after participating in an ethics bowl competition (Ladenson 2001; Borrego 2004; Connolly 2009; Meyer 2012; Merrick et al. 2016). Students have also consistently reported that their ethical reasoning has become more systematic from participation and that they have learned to more carefully consider alternative perspectives (Meyer 2012).

The IEB has spawned the two-year college bowl competition, a national high-school competition as well as served as the model for disciplinary-based bowls along and many in-class explorations. At the time of this writing, more than 500 case presentations were available for use, free of charge, through the ethics bowl archives (Ladenson 2001).

Conclusion: Missing Elements in the Ethics Education Discourse

Our examination of the current ethics boom illustrates that, even though ethics education has made substantial and enduring changes in the practice of higher education, there are still urgent improvements to be made.

While students are reportedly in agreement with other stakeholders as to the importance of ethics as a component of their undergraduate education (Coleman et al. 2015), what that means to them and how and when students believe that ethics

education works best is not often explored. Students learn how to reason about prescribed matters of ethical concern, but their voices in the development of curricular and co-curricular attempts to teach ethics are largely absent. This means that we have limited understanding about whether ethics education is addressing the ethically demanding situations that students actually face or anticipate facing, and whether current offerings do so in a way that resonates with them.

In recent years, higher education scholars and policymakers have begun to ask students to share their perceptions of their college experience. Since 2000, institutions throughout the U.S. in partnership with the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) have queried over five million students about their college experience within and beyond the classroom (Kuh 2003).[27] Yet such studies of student perceptions of their learning experiences and environments have rarely been connected to ethics coursework (Dey and Associates 2009). While instructors solicit feedback on ethics courses via course evaluations, they do not typically ask whether ethics offerings have enabled students to navigate the ethically demanding situations that they actually face or anticipate facing. Aligning ethics programming with students' needs today is all the more important given the ethical quandaries students are likely to face in their personal, civic, and professional lives. Higher education must prepare students to succeed even as the world as we know it changes, with predictions of a less organizationally-bound and more entrepreneurial workforce; the ubiquity of social media and the ethical quandaries it raises about interpersonal communications and civic engagement; and changing social norms (e.g., sexual norms; shifting conceptions of privacy). Is ethics education meeting students' needs in light of the ethical dilemmas these shifts present? To date, this question remains open.

And whereas institutions have focused more on some ethical obligations—such as protection for members of the campus community from sexual assault, discrimination and harassment, protections for human and animal subjects in school-sponsored research, investigations for suspected research misconduct, and enforcement of students' academic honesty—broader expectations of institutions' moral agency are largely absent from the conversation.[28] Institutions model moral choices for their students through policies regarding resource use and sustainability, vendor choice, investments, and the ratio of full time faculty to adjuncts to name but a few. Rarely are students invited to participate in this institutional ethical decision making.

The then president of Harvard, Derek Bok, said, "If a university expects to overcome the sense of moral cynicism among its students, it must not merely offer courses; it will have to demonstrate its own commitment to principled behavior by making a serious effort to deal with the ethical aspects of its investment policies, its

[27]The annual national survey of student engagements (NSSE) examines student self-reports on "items that represent outcomes that characterize interpersonally effective, ethically grounded, socially responsible, and civic minded individuals" (Kuh 2003).

[28]See Keenan (2015).

employment practices, and the other moral dilemmas that inevitably confront every educational institution" (Bok 1976, p. 29). Yet, the moral aspects of institutional choices have remained a relatively unstudied subject for individual institutions and in the literature, especially in regards to choices impacting employees and external entities.

James Steve Counelis (1993) reported the result of his search in the late 20th century for "empirical studies on the moral behavior of those who comprise the American university community" (p. 75). He claimed that his review of bibliographies from professional ethics literature, encyclopedic works on higher education, institutional research reports on academic management, and "a computer search on moral behaviors of university boards of trustees, their administrators and faculty" yielded no results (Counelis 1993). While it is clear that Counelis missed existing literature on the subject of institutional morality in higher education and that more literature has been published since his review,[29] empirical studies on the role that ethics plays in academic institutional decision-making seem non-existent.

In this chapter, we have laid out evidence from scholarly literature as well as from policy and practice in U.S. higher education that documents the firm rooting of ethics education in U.S. colleges and universities. Still lacking, however, are clear indications of what ethics education is currently accomplishing, and how—beyond proliferation of journals, journal articles, courses and degrees—it can best serve all stakeholders and society, thus enhancing the mission of higher education. We argue that attention to students' own articulation of needs in the 21st century, a better understanding of instructional goals supported by comprehensive assessment measures, and cohesive institutional commitments to professional ethics would all constitute productive next steps.

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[29]See, for example, Englehardt et al. (2010) and Cahn (1992).

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