Value-Based Research Ethics Education

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Abstract

Engineering programs in the United States have been experimenting with diverse pedagogical approaches to educate future professional engineers. However, a crucial dimension of ethics education that focuses on the values, personal commitments, and meaning of engineers has been missing in many of these pedagogical approaches. We argue that a value-based approach to professional ethics education is critically needed in engineering education, as such an approach is indispensable for cultivating self-reflective and socially engaged engineers. Traditional approaches to ethics education in science and engineering are usually either based on the codes of ethics or on the theories of ethics. While we acknowledge that both approaches help meet certain ethics education objectives, we also argue that neither of these is sufficient to personally engage students in authentic moral learning. We make the case that it is important to connect ethics education to the heart, which is extensively driven by values, and present a value-based approach to research ethics education.

Body

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