

Ethical decision making is a complex, multi-layered process that is influenced by emotions and interpersonal distance (Betan & Stanton, 1999) and regulatory focus (Trawalter & Richeson, 2006), all of which can diminish or expand students' ability to respond ethically.

Despite the American Psychological Association mandating ethics training in graduate psychology education since 1979 (Wilson & Ranft, 1993) there is little evidence of its effectiveness in improving ethical outcomes in counseling psychology students (Welfel, 2012).

On the contrary, research has demonstrated that knowledge of ethical principles and actions required by the ethics code is insufficient to guarantee implementation of ethical responses (Bernard, Murphy, & Little, 1987; Betan & Stanton, 1999). In addition, substantial disparities have been found between students' response choices to ethical dilemmas and their willingness to follow through on these choices (Bernard & Jara, 1986). Current approaches to ethics education have been criticized for their emphasis on rules, laws, and codes that have inadvertently resulted in a focus on rule following and avoidance behaviors (Handelsman, Knapp, & Gottlieb, 2002) over "human connections" (Brown, 1994, p. 276). We need to approach ethics education from a different paradigm.

Positive ethics is an approach to ethics instruction that may improve ethical decision making processes and the drive for "ethical excellence" (Handelsman, Knapp, & Gottlieb, 2009, p. 107) through the use of the ethical acculturation strategy of integration. Ethical acculturation is a bi-dimensional process that encourages students to reflect on and integrate the values of their personal culture of origin with the values of professional psychology (Berry & Sam, 1997; Handelsman, Gottlieb, & Knapp, 2005). Using the core values (Handelsman et al., 2009) and principles (Gottlieb, Handelsman, & Knapp, 2008) of positive ethics, the Ethics Course Experience Questionnaire (ECEQ) was developed to assess counseling psychology

students' experience of their ethics course. A quota sample of counseling psychology students will be obtained to respond to a web-based survey. Participants will be instructed on the purpose of the study and no deception will be used. They will rate their ethics course experience for consistency with the values and principles of positive ethics. Exploratory factor analysis will be conducted to identify factors consistent with identified positive ethics values and principles.

A modified version of Bernard and Jara's (1986) Ethics Scenarios will be used to explore associations between positive ethics instruction and ethical decision making as described by Rest (1983, 1984). Self-reported demographic and program information will be obtained from participants and reported. It is hypothesized that a positive statistical relationship will be demonstrated between students' ECEQ ratings and Ethics Scenarios responses vis-à-vis ethical sensitivity, reasoning, willingness, and resoluteness. Also, as ECEQ ratings increase students will demonstrate greater ethical decision making ability via Ethics Scenarios responses.

This study will describe positive ethics factors and provide insight into how these factors may be associated with ethical decision making. Counseling psychology students will benefit from improvements in ethics education based on this study. Data will be collected and analyzed in the spring of 2014.