Ethics in Engineering

Professional ethics and conduct constitutes a set of rules and behaviors, which facilitates effective interaction on professional matters. It is the individual engineer who must adhere to these high principles of ethical conduct on behalf of the public, clients, employers and the profession. Therefore, it is imperative that there is a high level of ethical standards in the engineering profession.

This presentation conveys the meaning and importance of ethics in engineering and business applications. Although there is no unified standard code of ethics, many companies and professional societies have drafted a code of ethics and these are cited within. The presentation selects six fundamental canons developed by the NSPE (National Society of Professional Engineers).

In addition, the module provides a systematic approach to moral deliberation that is designed for groups of individuals, but can be used by individuals with some minor adjustments.

Following this are a few examples of case studies involving ethical questions based on real situations. For each example, the case is presented, the ethical questions and debates are stated, and then the NSPE’s ruling on the case is listed. This is followed by a few examples of engineering disasters and the ethical questions raised.