

Introduction to Forensic Science

Module 02C - Ethics and Integrity Fill In the Blank

I. Objectives

- A. Demonstrate thorough understanding of the terms ethics, integrity, truth, perjury, code of ethics, sanctions, ethical dilemmas, moral imperatives, ethical conduct, and the golden rule
- B. Recognize why ethics and integrity are _____ to a career in forensic science
- C. Understand the repercussions of failing to be an ethical person
- D. Understand why professional organizations require their members to adhere to a specific code of conduct

II. Defining Ethics and Integrity

- A. Ethics is the study of principles relating to _____ and _____ conduct
 - 1. Principles of honor
 - 2. Principles of morality
 - 3. Accepted rules of conduct
- B. Integrity is steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code

III. Why Ethics and Integrity are Important

- A. Public Safety agencies cannot function well without community support
- B. The best way to garner community support is through community participation and _____ of all sworn and non-sworn personnel.
- C. Forensic science can establish that a crime was committed, who committed the crime, whether witnesses are lying or telling the truth, and what happened in an incident where no eyewitnesses were present

- D. In court, all witnesses, including forensic technicians, take an oath to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth

IV. Ethics in the Courtroom

- A. When you are testifying in court, you are requested to swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God".
- B. The reason you are requested to do so _____ is so that you cannot escape the consequences of lying.
- C. Lying under oath is perjury and you can be jailed for committing _____.
- D. To Tell the Truth – When you promise to tell the truth
 - 1. You cannot lie in response to a question
 - 2. You cannot tell the truth so narrowly that the effect is a lie
- E. Nothing but the Truth
 - 1. Example – your boss asks if you have completed your monthly report
 - 2. You reply that the arrest figures are completed, even though the evidence log report is incomplete
 - 3. You have not told the "whole truth"
 - 4. When you say "nothing but the truth", you must not tell any lies or make any _____

V. Show short video on Lies and Deception (Length = 4 minutes)

- A. Just Follow the Rules – There are simple rules to follow
 - 1. Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you (aka – the _____)
 - 2. Apply the principles of justice
 - 3. Do the "right thing"
 - 4. Tell the complete truth
 - 5. Do not lie under _____ circumstances
 - 6. If you do not ever lie, you never have to make up one lie to cover the other lie.

VI. What is a code of ethics?

- A. Written rules or standards of conduct for members of a profession
- B. A code of ethics is more than a mere reliance on moral principles
- C. Like a code of laws, a code of ethics has _____ rules governing behavior in certain circumstances
- D. No set of guides or rules will precisely fit every occasion
- E. A hallmark of a profession

VII. Existing Codes of Ethics

- A. No standardized or generally accepted code of ethics for criminalists existed before the _____ of _____ developed their code of ethics
- B. "This code of ethics has served as a model for other closely related organizations."¹ (Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward pp 212-214)

VIII. Are these statements true?

- A. "Tell the truth and have good moral character and you'll _____ run into ethical problems on the job"
- B. Criminalists have little common professional background or training
- C. The subject of professional ethics is given only cursory attention
- D. Criminalists often work in labs affiliated with police agencies whose code of ethics are directed toward police officers

IX. None of the previous statements was true

- A. Even if you tell the truth, you may run into ethical problems on the job
- B. Criminalists have common professional background and training

¹ National Research Council, 2009, pp 212-214, *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*.

- C. The subject of ethics is covered _____ in forensic education
 - D. Criminalists often work in labs affiliated with local police agencies; ASCLD/LAB has its own code of ethics
- X. Credibility of the Profession
- A. Fundamentally, a code of ethics and adherence to its principles are for the benefit of the public
 - B. The public perception that a profession has a reasonable code of ethics, and a reasonable process for making sure its members abide by its requirements, is critical to the _____ of the profession
- XI. Sanctions
- A. The primary value of a code of ethics is to provide a ruler against which to measure proposed actions in certain situations
 - B. Codes of ethics should enable practitioners to justify a particular course of action in a particular circumstance
 - C. A _____ is a _____, specified or in the form of moral pressure, that acts to ensure compliance
 - D. Types of sanctions
 - 1. Censure
 - 2. Community Service
 - 3. Fines
 - 4. Forfeiture
 - 5. Suspension of Privileges
 - 6. Probation
 - 7. Imprisonment
- XII. The California Association of Criminalists' Code of Ethics
- A. Ethics relating to _____ method
 - B. Ethics relating to _____ & conclusions
 - C. Ethical aspects of _____
 - D. Ethics related to the general practice of criminalistics
 - E. Ethical _____ to the profession

XIII. What is an ethical dilemma? What is a moral imperative?

- A. _____ - a complex situation that will often involve an apparent _____ between moral imperatives
- B. _____ - a principle originating inside a person's mind that compels that person to _____.

XIV. Ethical dilemma vs. moral imperative

- A. Ethical dilemma
 - 1. You are collecting evidence at a crime scene, when your sister shows up and asks you to get her purse from the car that was involved in a minor accident
- B. Moral imperative
 - 1. You have just seen a child struck by a speeding car whose driver fails to stop. You offer to help the child because you feel a moral imperative to do so.

XV. Show "Ethics on Vacation" Video (Approximate length = 4 minutes)

XVI. Web Resources for Further Information

- A. California Association of Criminalists - <http://www.cacnews.org/>
- B. ASCLD/LAB's Guiding Principles - http://www.ascl-d-lab.org/about_us/guidingprinciples.html
- C. Ethics in Forensic Science - Book Review <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/lab/fsc/backissu/july2002/smrz.htm>
- D. Crime Scene Ethics - Take It or Leave It [http://www.officer.com/print/Law-Enforcement-Technology/Crime-Scene-Ethics--Take-It-or-Leave-It/1\\$25204](http://www.officer.com/print/Law-Enforcement-Technology/Crime-Scene-Ethics--Take-It-or-Leave-It/1$25204)

XVII. Bibliography

California Association of Criminalists- <http://www.cacnews.org/>

National Research Council. (2009). *Strengthening Forensic Science in the U.S. - A Path Forward*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, pp. 212-214.