**Chapter 2. Ethics and Professional Development:
Principles, Procedures and Conduct**

Part 1: Research Ethics

Human Subjects Research Review

Catholic University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). Any research protocol involving human subjects, either on-campus or at another site, requires approval from the CPHS **prior to data collection**. The website for the CPHS is at https://sponsored-research.catholic.edu/resources/Human-Subjects-Protection/index.html. The CPHS requires certain forms to be submitted with the proposal, which can be obtained at the bottom of the webpage. If the data are being collected at another facility, that facility's Institutional Review Board must also approve the research in most cases. The review by the CPHS will ensure that the research follows the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) federal regulations for the protection of human subjects, 45 CFR 46.101, which can be accessed at http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html.

Any submission to the CPHS requires inclusion of a copy of the certificate showing that the researcher has completed the CITI online ethics course. This course can be accessed at the Sponsored Research Human Subjects Protection link above. All students are required to successfully complete it.

Some research is exempt from full review according to the DHHS regulations, including some archival (already collected) data. A list of the exemption can be found in 46.101(b) of the regulations. For a dissertation, if the student and advisor believe that the research is exempt from review, the portion of the dissertation topic form (see chapter on dissertation) regarding exemption from human subjects review must be filled out. For non-dissertation research, a brief description of the study and method, along with a rationale for why the research appears to be exempt from review, must be submitted to the CPHS. Two forms, the Exemption Certificate and the Justification for Exemption, must also be submitted that are accessible on the Sponsored Research Human Subjects Protection link above. In all cases, the CPHS has the ultimate authority to determine whether a proposal is exempt or must be reviewed.

If a research protocol requires review by the CPHS, the student must include information to enable CPHS to evaluate the adequacy with which the proposed procedures guarantee the rights of participants in the research project. The actual forms that will be used in the proposed research to establish informed consent must be submitted as part of the materials submitted to the CPHS. See the Sponsored Research Human Subjects Protection link above for material that must be included.

Research Collaboration

Research collaborators share responsibility for establishing expectations and guidelines regarding use of all data that are gathered and authorship (including order of authorship) on papers and manuscripts derived from such efforts. The APA ethics code stipulates that, except under unusual circumstances, a student is listed as principal author on a multi-authored article based substantially on the student's dissertation. The student and faculty member(s) should take special care to consider and discuss such issues at the outset of the project. See http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/

Faculty members can differ in their expectations regarding authorship on projects undertaken with students. Ambiguity may arise with respect to (a) the role of faculty other than the advisor for master's-level research (Research Apprenticeship) and (b) the role of "readers" for the Ph.D. thesis. Particular care should be taken at the outset of the research to avoid or resolve such ambiguities.

Collaboration with Outside Agencies

Issues of collaboration, including ownership of gathered data and authorship, can be magnified when students undertake research at outside settings (e.g., NIMH, Children's Hospital). Student projects can be integrated into an ongoing, large-scale study involving multiple outside investigators. The student must be sure to determine and to meet all standards and requirements for research established by the outside agency or setting. For example, research based on data collected in collaboration with a laboratory at NIH receive written clearance from the lab chief and from the NIH director of intramural research prior to submission for publication. Issues of publication authorship with Catholic University advisors and outside investigators should be discussed early to avoid problems later.

Research with General Psychology Students

Every project that includes Psychology 201 students as participants must be approved by the university's CPHS, and follow the approved procedures for participant recruitment. Doctoral students must fully discuss the approved recruitment procedures with their advisor.

Complaints. Student participants are informed that we are ethically concerned for their welfare. A procedure has been established to allow students in the study to submit a complaint. The procedure is described on the IRB form. Any ethical concerns will lead to discontinuation of a research project.

Part II: General Ethics and Professional Development

As part of your development and training within the Catholic University clinical program, there is an ongoing expectation that you will endeavor to learn and follow the ethical guidelines of psychology. As a graduate student you have a responsibility to familiarize yourself with and

abide by the American Psychological Association's ***Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code Of Conduct*** (go to: http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx). Formal training in understanding and applying ethical principles is built into the curriculum. The expectation to conduct yourself professionally and in accord with the APA principles extends outside the classroom and begins at the outset of your training.

An Ethical Decision-Making Guide

A useful reference for steps to take to act in an ethical manner can be found in Celia Fisher's book, *Decoding the Ethics Code: A Practical Guide for Psychologists* (5th ed.). Briefly, the steps are
1. Develop and sustain a professional commitment to doing what is right.
2. Know the ethics code so you can anticipate situations requiring ethical planning and identify unanticipated situations requiring ethical decision making
3. Gather facts from professional guidelines, laws, organizational policies
4. Make efforts to understand the perspectives of stakeholders who will be affected by the decision and consult with colleagues
5. Generate alternatives, and evaluate each of them in terms of moral theories, general principles of the ethics code, and the ethical standards.
6. Select and implement action
7. Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of action
8. Modify and continue to evaluate the plan as necessary

Ethical Academic Conduct

Within the APA ethical principles there are a number of guidelines that apply directly to academic situations (e.g., considerations of authorship, appropriate boundaries, research considerations). In addition, there are university-level ethical guidelines related to plagiarism, academic honesty, and codes of conduct with which you must be familiar and to which you will be held accountable. For example, plagiarism in course papers, clinical application materials, or any written work related to the program may result in serious consequences (including possible expulsion from the program). For a full discussion of these considerations, see: http://policies.cua.edu/StudentLife/studentconduct.cfm.

Seeking Consultation for Ethical Dilemmas

It is important to realize that you may well find yourself facing ethical situations in which you are unclear how you should proceed. In such cases *always* consider approaching faculty for a consultation on the matter. We are here to train and support you, particularly in thorny situations where you may not know what to do or where you may not know what you do not know. Please know that each member of the faculty is deeply committed to your professional and personal development and growth. We therefore urge you to never hesitate to seek consultation with appropriate faculty members. This is particularly true when issues arise in clinical placements.

We may sometimes intervene on a student's behalf when there is an uncomfortable situation or a possibly ethically dubious circumstance. In our experience, these situations usually work out in a satisfactory manner, but we can only help you if you trust us to look out for your best interest and seek our help.

Professional Development

There is an expectation within the clinical program that members of the faculty will be mindful of and focused on your overall professional development. Over the course of your training experience, you will have regular opportunities to discuss with your advisor and other faculty various considerations relevant to your professional development as a clinical psychologist. For example, you may want to consider your theoretical orientation, what clinical populations or placement settings interest you, what specializations within the field you might want to pursue, etc. Please do not be shy about seeking input from any faculty (as well as your more senior peers).

Professional development as a psychologist also involves a number of issues that extend beyond the classroom and beyond technical competence. These include the ways in which you relate to peers, faculty, other professionals, the public, and individuals from diverse backgrounds; self-awareness and self-reflection; openness to feedback; and resolution of problems that might interfere with professional functioning. Faculty will monitor and evaluate your competence in these areas, insofar as they have the potential to impact your development and performance as a trainee, pose a risk to the public, or negatively reflect on the program or the discipline of psychology. See chapter 7 (Evaluation) for more details.

Technology and Professional Considerations

Advances in technology have created new potential for professional pitfalls that are important to consider. This section provides items for you to carefully consider with regard to your presence on websites, blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, email, voicemail greetings, and other electronic sources. In general, it is important to think carefully about the implications for your developing professional identity of your use of technologies (i.e. your electronic footprint). This list is based on information compiled by the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology and the University of Kansas.
1. Clients are increasingly conducting web-based searches on trainees' names and finding information about therapists (and declining to come to clinics based on what they find).
2. Potential employers are conducting online searches of potential employees prior to interviews and job offers.
3. Legal authorities are looking at websites for evidence of illegal activities. Some prima facie evidence may be gained from websites such as photographs, but text may also alert authorities to investigate further.
4. Postings to listservs might reflect poorly on oneself and the program, depending on the content of the post.

5. Although signature lines are ways of indicating your uniqueness and philosophy, one is not in control of where the emails will ever end up and might affect how others view you as a professional. Some quotations might elicit adverse reactions from other people.
6. Voicemail greetings might be entertaining to your peers and express your individuality. However, they should be thoughtfully constructed. Be sure your greeting is appropriate and professional in demeanor and content.

There have been a number of negative episodes in training programs and at universities where graduate students have been negatively affected by material on websites, emails, and voicemail messages. What might be seen to be "private" self-disclosure indicating your perceptions of yourself or the program among friends is actually very public. This includes blogs, Twitter, personal pages in Instagram and Facebook, and other similar sorts of pages. _Anything on the Web is potentially available to all who seek._ Students are advised to engage in "safe" web practices, to approach online blogs and websites—including personal information—very carefully, and be concerned about professional demeanor and presentation. Ask yourself: "Is there anything posted that you would not want current or future employers or clients to read?"

Trainees should also be aware that if you identify yourself as a graduate student in our program, then the clinical program and departmental faculty have some interest in how you portray yourself. If you report doing something unethical or illegal, then the website may be used by the program to determine probation or even non-retention.

Artificial Intelligence Generative Tools

Artificial intelligence (AI) generative tools include natural language processing or related technologies that provide a textual or visual output from user-entered data input based on mathematical and computational processes. AI tools may be used to help generate ideas or brainstorm but cannot be submitted as a student's own work, as these programs can be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic including stifling independent thinking and creativity. Including material generated by an AI program must be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with under relevant university policies.

Reference

Fisher, C. B. (2022). *Decoding the Ethics Code: A practical guide for psychologists (5th ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.