Ethical Issues in Graduate Education
Faculty and Student Responsibilities

The academic tradition of public higher education has been to provide students with a value-free education, but society is reexamining this goal and reconsidering the risks of a prevalent amoral education for future doctors, lawyers, and scientists [4]. Morrill, discussing primarily undergraduate education, feared openly, however, that this concern may be reflected more in commencement rhetoric than in classroom practices [13]. If higher education is to fulfill its ethical obligations to society, a logical starting place is the day-to-day interaction between professors and students. This circumstance is particularly true for graduate education, in which the relationship between student and advisor is especially important.

This article provides a framework for delineating and examining the ethical responsibilities of faculty and students in graduate education. Bargar and Mayo-Chamberlain examined the importance of the advisor-advisee relationship in graduate education from a developmental perspective [2]. They suggested that both advisor and advisee could grow by being aware of this perspective and by planning appropriate interventions. The framework provided here is based on similar assumptions, particularly that ethical responsibilities are the concern of both advisor and advisee and that developmental growth can occur optimally in an ethically congruent educational environment [7].

The format for presenting the ethical responsibilities is derived from Kitchener's [10] professional ethical codes and ethical principles. She described five principles important to analyzing professional ethical issues: autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, justice, and fidelity.

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Autonomy is freedom of action and freedom of choice, including the right to be autonomous and the responsibility to treat others as autonomous. Nonmaleficence means neither causing harm through intention nor through risking others. Beneficence necessitates contributing to another's welfare, such as promoting positive personal growth. Justice requires that persons be treated equally, without considering sex, race, or socioeconomic background. Fidelity calls for keeping promises and being loyal. The first four principles were derived from Beauchamp and Childress [3] and the principle of fidelity from Ramsey [14]. Moral dilemmas arise when these principles conflict. What does a faculty member do, for example, when a student requests help but, at the same time, needs to become autonomous? Can too much help be harmful? Kitchener examined the relevance of these principles for counseling psychologists [10] and student affairs professionals [11]. We examine the implications of these principles for faculty and students in graduate education.

**Ethical Principles and Faculty Roles**

A useful way to examine the relationship between ethical principles and expectations for faculty is to apply the principles to a variety of faculty roles. Five faculty roles were chosen: advisor, instructor, curriculum planner, researcher, and mentor. Table 1 relates ethical principles to faculty roles and provides illustrative (not comprehensive) examples of behavior. Our discussion of one row (the advisor role) and one column (the autonomy principle) will illustrate the applicability and utility of the schema for considering faculty's ethical responsibilities; it will also suggest behavioral implications for faculty.

**The Advisor Role and Ethical Principles**

**Autonomy.** The graduate advisor is significant and powerful in the life of a graduate student. How the advisor fulfills that role and how the student reacts to it can be influenced by the principle of autonomy. Most graduate programs have a measure of rigidity inherent in their expectations for graduation, but doctoral-level programs, in particular, usually include some flexibility. How much freedom does the advisor allow students in choosing specific courses or in designing the focus of their total professional training program? The process of making these decisions is as related to autonomy as is the content of the decisions. Some students may not have enough information to make decisions about course selections, some may prefer direct guidance, and others may need an abundance of structure.
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<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Permit students flexibility in designing graduate programs and selecting courses.</td>
<td>Avoid undue rigor in expectations and demands. Avoid provoking stress; be attentive to pressures on students.</td>
<td>Make use of student competence and information in program development. Recognize the student as a person and as an aspiring professional.</td>
<td>Be available equally to all students with information, time, and energy.</td>
<td>Support students through comprehensive and oral exams and dissertation. Assist students in job searches.</td>
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<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Permit students choice in learning modality and appropriate flexibility in content emphasis and evaluation strategies. Allow expression of differing opinions.</td>
<td>Adequately cover essential course content. Distinguish between personal opinions and facts.</td>
<td>Acknowledge the individuality of the student within and outside the classroom. Provide students with opportunities to seek applications of course content.</td>
<td>Conduct fair evaluations. Be responsive to special needs.</td>
<td>Be available outside class time for consultation.</td>
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<td>Curriculum planner</td>
<td>Design curriculum with sufficient breadth so students can explore interests. Provide students with different routes to same goals.</td>
<td>Avoid development of a competitive climate. Ensure the curriculum permits acquisition of necessary skills and knowledge.</td>
<td>Design curriculum which provides for assessment and responsiveness to student needs. Keep program current.</td>
<td>Be fair in admission requirements. Have comparable and reasonable completion requirements.</td>
<td>Be consistent in program requirements. Maintain accreditation.</td>
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<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Permit students to select appropriate topics, research methodology, and relevant theory for dissertation.</td>
<td>Model ethical research techniques. Involve students in conceptual issues, not just menial tasks.</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for sharing of research ideas. Provide chances for students to participate in research.</td>
<td>Be fair in awarding recognition for contributions to research projects. Provide equal opportunity for student involvement.</td>
<td>Assist students in developing a program of research. Follow through on collaborating.</td>
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<td>Mentor</td>
<td>Model life-style and professional attitudes that demonstrate development of the whole person, not just the professional person.</td>
<td>Avoid using students against each other. Do not get students involved in departmental squabbles.</td>
<td>Model behavior and lifestyle that reflects total personal growth.</td>
<td>Be tolerant and open with students. Treat students as colleagues, not slave labor.</td>
<td>Act consistently with espoused values across time and situations.</td>
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Developmental theory suggests that some students need support more than others [6, 15]. Some need more at different stages of their professional development. Thrusting complete autonomy on a student, even a doctoral-level student, may not be providing true autonomy. Indeed, giving the student complete freedom can be shirking responsibility, resulting in setbacks and perhaps greater dependence, if not failure. The principle of autonomy needs to be mediated by the student’s readiness — whether it is for choosing specific courses or a dissertation topic. The ultimate goal is an autonomous student who recognizes and values the counsel of an advisor but is not bound by it.

**Nonmaleficence.** The graduate advisor can cause harm through action or inaction. Pushing students into courses for which they are not prepared is one example of potential harm. Strongly encouraging (i.e., subtly forcing) the student to give up a job and become a full-time student, without knowing the student’s financial situation or responsibilities, might also cause harm. Structuring expectations for students so they must spend undue time on courses, assignments, research projects, or other aspects of graduate life may give them a perspective about academic life but also may result in neglect of family responsibilities or other areas of personal development.

These are examples of harm through ignorance, neglect, or naivete rather than through intent. To avoid causing harm, the advisor needs to know the personal and professional demands on the student’s life. The advisor needs to be sensitive to the student’s time and competency limitations, to assist students to know their own limitations and constraints, and to encourage students to make their strengths and weaknesses known to the advisor. It is difficult for students to refuse a faculty advisor, but doing so could be one of the most important skills they learn in graduate training.

**Beneficence.** Graduate advisors make significant contributions to the welfare of their students. By fulfilling their role as academic advisor and assisting students in selecting courses, designing programs, choosing projects, and distributing workload, graduate advisors provide useful information and counsel to students. The advisor needs to match the template of the profession’s and the program’s expectations with the student’s individuality and goals. How much should the student bend to match the program’s mold, or how much should the mold be adapted to meet the individual student’s goals and abilities? If professional growth is influenced by or reflects personal growth, how much responsibility does the advisor have to understand the graduate student as a person and to advise the student from that perspective? Perhaps
the advisor need not provide counsel on issues broader than academic concerns, but the advisor needs to be aware of how a student's personal life interacts with his or her academic life.

Two important factors mediate between the faculty advisor role and beneficence: time and ability. Available time is influenced strongly by departmental and institutional expectations of faculty. Graduate professors, almost universally, are expected to publish and, as senior professors, are expected to attend to governance issues across the university. Ability is another possible constraint. Not all faculty have good interpersonal skills, but perhaps a minimal skill level for advising should be expected.

**Justice.** Providing fair and equal treatment to graduate students is a reasonable expectation for a graduate advisor, one that is, perhaps, not so easily accomplished. Key ingredients of justice in advising include being available, spending comparable amounts of time, and giving proportionately needed, if not equal, attention to students. Not all students are equal, however, in potential, motivation, interests, or physical attractiveness. How does an advisor balance the time devoted to two students when one is creative, stimulating, and interested in academic issues and research similar to the advisor's, and the other student is a plodder, has few new ideas and no interests that match the advisor's? It is natural for the advisor to be more attentive to the more interesting student, but when does disproportionate time become inappropriate? Even the favored advisee does not reap cost-free benefits. If attention and praise are given with limited evidence of competency and apparently achieved with ease, future skill development by the student may be inhibited and reality testing postponed, and the consequences may eventually catch up with the student.

Graduate assistantships are often funded at levels barely above minimum wage (accounting for their description as "slave labor"). Undoubtedly, students gain important educational experiences through assistantships, but the system needs to be monitored to prevent abuses; students have to eat as well as learn. Questions of injustice about authorship among students and faculty may be a more public concern, but the examples cited indicate that injustice can take more subtle and perhaps more harmful forms.

**Fidelity.** The principle of fidelity is particularly relevant to the advisor role in graduate education. Occasionally, the advisor must become the student's supporter, if not his or her advocate. The student needs support through comprehensive exams, while designing a dissertation proposal, and when defending the final dissertation. The
advisor is responsible for giving students an optimal opportunity to succeed. The student needs to stand alone, but the counsel, encouragement, and support of the advisor are important.

The role of the responsible advisor in graduate education does not end with completion of the basic academic requirements. Students need support, contacts, and ideas when they launch a job search. What are advisors’ responsibilities to help students make professional contacts? How active should they be? Abandoning students once they have their diploma is not being faithful to student expectations, not meeting their needs, and not fulfilling the principle of fidelity.

The Principle of Autonomy Across Faculty Roles

Instructor. Educators profess concern about individual differences, but it is problematical whether this concern is articulated as fully as it might be within graduate education. How receptive are graduate faculty to student requests for alternative modes of learning and evaluation, or for alternative materials? No matter how specialized the graduate program, students bring a wide variety of interests and talents to the program. How frequently is the faculty open to changing assignments, suggesting special readings, or letting students “test out” of course requirements?

How instructors ask and respond to questions in the classroom reflects both their tolerance for differing opinions within the classroom and how much they encourage student autonomy [9, 17]. It is the instructor’s responsibility to promote autonomy as well as to recognize it by allowing expressions of differing opinions and by raising and openly discussing ethical questions. Instructional practices need to encourage students to formulate, honor, and defend their own ideas.

Curriculum planner. The curriculum is a living embodiment of the faculty and their ideas. It can be as vibrant or as dormant as the faculty. As curriculum planners, faculty have the responsibility to see that courses are appropriately sequenced and to consider the entry-level skills of students (i.e., to build on strengths and eliminate weaknesses). In order to foster student autonomy, curricula must be sufficiently broad so students will be aware of what is available and can explore and determine what might be appropriate subspecialties. A curriculum designed to support and foster autonomy might not be completely elective, but it would include core courses that develop a comprehensive sense of what a profession is about.

Acknowledging expediency and efficiency is important when design-
ing and implementing a curriculum. Fully individualized instruction is an ideal, although perhaps not an attainable one. Nevertheless, adhering to the principle of autonomy necessitates a curriculum that provides different avenues for reaching the same goals. If the professor is not master of the curriculum, he or she is still master of how that curriculum is implemented through teaching. The potential power of the curriculum for reflecting and promoting autonomy cannot be overestimated.

**Researcher.** A graduate student can be subtly or directly influenced by the kind of research conducted by his or her advisor. Matches occur sometimes because of mutual interest; often, however, the student is vulnerable to pressure to pursue a topic congruent with the advisor's interests, and the principle of autonomy is in jeopardy. Decisions by master's degree students to do a thesis or not may be directly influenced by the advisor's available time and interest. The doctoral student's topic for research, the choice of the relevant theory to test, and the selection of the research methodology will be affected by the advisor's interests, biases, and skills.

An appropriate balance between independence and dependence and a match of readiness level and degree of autonomy are critical when these issues are being considered. Too much freedom with no structure may result in the student floundering in a morass leading to bewilderment and delay if not ultimate withdrawal. Like other issues related to autonomy, the extremes of no freedom and complete freedom are hazardous to the full development of the student's professional growth.

**Mentor.** The mentor role may overlap with other roles, particularly the advisor role. Nevertheless, if advising is viewed as limited to academic concerns, then mentorship warrants separate attention and has been studied for its applications to undergraduate students [5, 16] and for its importance to women in academia [12]. The mentor can be an explicit guide, a model, and a friend. Graduate students seek guides, often use faculty advisors as models, and benefit from friendships with faculty. Faculty mentors need to recognize the value of their role and need to be aware of its responsibilities. The mentor can promote student autonomy by discussing the options for career and personal development and by giving the student a balanced picture of the advantages and disadvantages of various career and personal decisions. Mentors can do this best if they have a good understanding of the student as a person and as a potential scholar.
Ethical Principles and Student Roles

Ethical behavior is not an issue solely for the faculty member. Optimal faculty-student interaction, especially at the graduate level, is reciprocal. Students also have ethical responsibilities; how they meet them may influence their future professional behavior. In a few short years, students will be advisors and mentors in academic and professional settings. As in their own graduate experience, responsible ethical behavior in these new professionals can, in turn, influence and enrich the lives of the students and colleagues with whom they interact. Table 2 presents examples of student responsibilities for the five ethical principles across five student roles. As an illustration, student behavior in the advisee role is discussed across the five ethical categories; autonomy is discussed across the remaining student roles.

The Advisee Role and Ethical Responsibilities

Autonomy. Students have two responsibilities related to autonomy: development of their own independence and recognition of the autonomy of their advisor and others. Students are accepted into graduate programs based on accomplishment and potential and soon feel pressure to demonstrate their abilities. Students want to express their independence but, at the same time, need information and counsel about courses, program design, professional focus, and departmental traditions, politics, and expectations. The advisor is a significant and identifiable resource. How does the advisee balance the need for direction while demonstrating competence and independence? Is there an optimal amount of student self-reliance and advisor counsel? Respect and deference to the advisor can inhibit some students, but is accepting the advisor's advice without thought or question taking responsibility for developing autonomy? Students need to test the limits of their autonomy consciously. Prudence is necessary, however, in matters beyond course selection. Designing the experiment and checking with the advisor before running it is better than seeking counsel at every step in the process.

Respect for the advisor's autonomy may be a less pervasive issue but, nevertheless, a real one. The student may elect to work with an advisor because of the advisor's style or broad expertise, but the same advisor may not be knowledgeable or deeply interested in the student's research topic. How much should students expect advisors to rearrange their research interests or priorities in order to spend time becoming experts on students' topics? Adhering to the principle of autonomy requires a delicate balancing act for the student as well as for the
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<td>Classroom student</td>
<td>Seek meaningful experiences within class setting while recognizing needs of rest of class. Actively seek information or help when needed. Accept responsibility for attendance and performance.</td>
<td>Avoid monopolizing time and attention. Avoid derogatory remarks or insulting challenges.</td>
<td>Actively share ideas and participate. Promote cooperation and collaboration.</td>
<td>Recognize position of professor when evaluating student. Be fair in professor evaluations. Be open and tolerant of ideas from students and professors.</td>
<td>Be honest in submitting work, taking tests, and meeting deadlines. Adhere to agreements on classwork.</td>
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<td>Departmental member</td>
<td>Pursue individual interests and goals but recognize group responsibility and departmental representation. Respect others' right of individuality.</td>
<td>Avoid negativism, rumor-milling, power plays, coalitions.</td>
<td>Actively promote congenial relations and cooperation. Recognize helpful and collaborative roles. Take active role in promoting positive attitude toward department.</td>
<td>Be equal in treatment of professors and peers. Be fair in evaluations. Respect faculty. Represent others and department fairly.</td>
<td>Respect confidentiality. Fulfill assistantship duties, departmental position commitments.</td>
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<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Follow own interests yet recognize interests of faculty. Be open to involvement in faculty projects but seek out ways to combine interests.</td>
<td>Avoid proceeding without necessary information, competence, and supervision. Avoid alliance with questionable pursuits.</td>
<td>Share ideas and workload with colleagues. Be planful and aware of colleague needs and goals. Be informed and prepared.</td>
<td>Be honest with participants, adhere to their rights. Be fair in demanding, giving effort, and recognition of ownership.</td>
<td>Follow through on collaboration and projects. Adhere to agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentee</td>
<td>Attend to mentor's advice but choose freely without blind imitation. Promote reciprocity in giving, sharing, teaching, and questioning.</td>
<td>Avoid placing unrealistic demands on mentor. Avoid entanglements for much personal information not relevant to relationship. Do not abuse influence.</td>
<td>Be aware of mentor as person. Promote reciprocal interactions. Be open to receiving assistance and giving it.</td>
<td>Accept mentor as a person and as a faculty member.</td>
<td>Act consistently with values across time and situations. Be truthful in self-representations.</td>
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advisor, as already noted. It is also a principle that merits explicit discussions between the student and advisor. Monitoring expectations and progress through casual checks (Advisor: “Are you sure you are ready to take this on?” Student: “Are you sure I am ready to take this on?”) as well as through periodic discussions could be helpful to advisors and students.

Nonmaleficence. The student as advisee needs to avoid harming the advisor or the relationship with the advisor through neglect, naivete, unawareness, or misguided intent. Too frequent demands and over-dependency place unfair claims on an advisor’s time and effort and may jeopardize other work commitments. Disappointment and resentment can arise if other advisees feel they have not received the time and attention they deserve. Infrequent contact, on the other hand, might curtail the advisee’s major source of information and support, resulting in indecision and frustration. Needing an outlet, the student may express dissatisfaction to other departmental members, unfairly misrepresenting the advisor. Broken agreements also may be harmful. Advisee exaggeration of time and abilities might lead to taking on unrealistic obligations. The advisor may be left without the student’s promised assistance in meeting research, publication, and project commitments.

Harm can occur through neglect as well as through action and direct intent. The student who never says anything negative about an advisor or instructor is certainly not harming the professor. It is possible, however, to do harm by not saying anything, such as not pointing out to other students faculty skills and expertise that could enhance other students’ competencies and also the professor’s helpfulness.

Beneficence. This principle advocates contributing to another’s welfare, promoting his or her personal development. Is that possible given the nature of advising? The advisor possesses information and experience that can facilitate a student’s progress through a program, but do questions from advisees and their need to make program decisions promote growth or only communication? Ethical beneficence takes advising beyond the unidirectional helper role, supporting a reciprocal interaction where commitment to personal development is two-way.

The advisee may act on this commitment by stimulating thought and promoting progress through team effort. The student can seek to understand and support the advisor as a professional and as a person. The student can share ideas and offer cooperation on projects of mutual interest. The advisee also has personal insights and can react to the advisor’s guidance, teaching ability, departmental interactions,
and research. Tactful and constructive criticism from an advisee may be better received by the advisor than that from an anonymous student on a class evaluation form. This feedback may contribute significantly to the advisor's understanding of his or her successes or failures.

There are undoubtedly times when a trusted advisee may serve as the advisor's confidant. Sometimes it is easier to share good news or to complain to a trusted advisee than it might be with colleagues. The advisees' acceptance of this trust and their active and intelligent participation could help advisors understand their problems better; such confidences can also be cathartic. This principle does not demand radical role reversals between students and advisors. It does suggest, however, that within the traditional advisor-student relationship, there are opportunities for the student to be helpful to the advisor.

*Justice.* The principle of justice suggests equal treatment of equal persons while allowing for treatment of inequality if that is relevant. An advisee is responsible for treating the advisor with the respect and courtesy shown to other professors, if not more, because of the valuable role the advisor plays in the student's education. The advisee should be open and tolerant to the ideas and opinions of the advisor. The close relationship that may develop should not be exploited by the student, who should not expect special consideration for assistantships or other benefits. The advisee needs to recognize that the advisor, as a faculty member, is a representative of the institution and is under contractual obligations to the department and university. If an issue arises that involves this commitment, the advisee needs to recognize that the faculty role may conflict with or even override advisor-student relationships. There are times when the advisor may rule against the student.

Formal advising can demand more time and attention than other student-professor interactions. The investment can be costly to the advisor. How does the student return this investment? If there is a choice between engaging in research with an advisor on a topic holding modest interest and a more intrinsically interesting project with another professor, what would application of the principle of justice suggest? Aside from departmental political pressures, do advisees “owe” advisors more than they “owe” other faculty members?

*Fidelity.* The principle of fidelity might be the foundation of the advising rapport, involving truthfulness, trust, and faithfulness. Appropriate decision making depends on the student's honest representation of ability, experience, and interest. A degree of trust is usually
brought into the advising relationship because of student respect for
the professor's position. Trust grows as joint decisions are made and
commitments kept. If circumstances inhibit the student from fulfill-
ing a commitment or warrant its reexamination, students need to con-
sult with their advisors regarding changing directions or commitments.

Faithfulness is less clear. What is considered loyalty to the advisor,
and to what degree is it maintained if interactions change? Rather than
unswerving allegiance, student faithfulness may be better described
as a determination to return, in kind, help or consideration that has
been received. Student performance needs to reflect effort and quality.
Offers of research collaboration, dissertation support, professional
contacts, and letters of reference create situations where student appre-
ciation can be reflected in a job well done. That amount of care and
concern also inspires and deserves the student's personal support of
the advisor, possibly through offers of help, time, interest, and en-
couragement. Although loyalty develops as an emotional bond over
time, it is an expected and natural response to a relationship offering
autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, justice, and trust.

The Principle of Autonomy Across Student Roles

Class member. Students enter the classroom with varying degrees
of commitment to their courses, depending on whether or not the
course fits with current interests and needs. If there is a perfect fit,
there is probably not much at issue related to autonomy. Generally,
however, because there is less than a perfect match, what is the appro-
priate balance between personal goals and the goals of the class and
the professor? What avenues are open to the student for satisfying
personal needs but not harming the academic interests of other stu-
dents or hindering the professor from fulfilling his or her responsi-
bilities?

Many students take no unusual action to satisfy personal needs
within a graduate course. They may use their freedom to spend more
time on some topics within the course than others, or they may select
term paper topics or research projects based on their academic and
potential career needs. These actions may be enough. Sometimes,
special arrangements might be negotiated with the professor to modify
assignments and requirements based on experience or career expecta-
tions. Under the principle of autonomy, the student would be expected
to take full advantage of the opportunities to make the class the most
productive learning experience possible, rather than slavishly to follow
a syllabus.
The principle of autonomy, however, also calls for recognizing the autonomy of others—in this case, other students and the professor. The student needs to recognize that his or her contributions to class discussions, group projects, and other interactions with class members and the professor enhance the educational experience for others. Thus, the need to get the most out of the course must be balanced with acceptance of the needs of other class members and responsibility to participate fully in class activities.

*Departmental member.* Beginning with acceptance, the student is a department member faced with decisions. An advisor must be selected, a course of study planned, a proposal committee chosen, and dates set. The student has numerous opportunities to become involved in departmental activities: joining a research group, accepting a committee assignment, participating in a student organization, or applying for assistantships. An advanced student with an assistantship has increased opportunities, perhaps even for leadership roles. How should priorities be decided between personal needs, program commitments, and departmental activities? Some students pursue their academic interests, remaining aloof to departmental decisions and politics. These students never attend a student organization meeting or volunteer for departmental tasks. They pay their tuition, take their courses, do their dissertation, and graduate. Is this autonomy, or does it reflect irresponsibility?

Whether or not a department is truly a community of scholars, it is a community and students need to recognize that they have responsibilities as members of that community. The issues focus on how, how much, and when the student will contribute to the departmental community and on how these contributions will be mediated because of expectations and pressures of academic work and personal life. Students need to weigh the expectations of the departmental community, other students, and faculty so that they choose freely the type and timing of involvement and respect other students’ rights to do the same.

*Researcher.* Research is integral to most graduate education and offers benefits to students and faculty. Faculty pursue personal research interests and are rewarded for their accomplishments. Students have opportunities to and are expected to identify specialty areas, develop research skills, and increase their involvement with the profession. The principle of autonomy in this role relates to the freedom to choose research topics and the level of participation in research endeavors.
Research entails both a subject area and a process. Students are expected to gain expertise in the research process so that their talents are applicable to many different settings. Sometimes research skills are considered incremental (i.e., a medical student may work with cadavers before working with the living). Students can gain important research skills even though they might work on a project having little intrinsic interest or little direct application to future career interests. The student must consider the need for skill development when electing to work on research projects (or, perhaps, selecting a thesis or dissertation topic) with faculty and other students. Interest may help maintain motivation, but it may not be a necessary ingredient for profiting from the experience. Issues related to autonomy arise, nevertheless. If an advisor or current classroom professor offers a research alliance, should the student feel compelled to participate? In exercising autonomous decision making, the student needs to consider the time commitment necessary. Students need to weigh carefully the choices between choosing a research topic directly in line with their advisor's research program or choosing a topic that is some distance from the advisor's major interests. Assuming the student has a choice, it is not always an easy one. Autonomy may be compromised for expediency or because of fear of rejection. It takes courage to consider a completely independent research topic, and it takes wisdom to know whether it is a good decision or not. These qualities are much to expect from a vulnerable graduate student and are why autonomy within the student researcher role is not easily achieved.

Mentee. A relationship with a mentor may be formally structured or occur casually. The mentor and student can discuss personal and professional issues, distinguishing the relationship from that of the more traditional student-advisor relationship. The student typically possesses a high regard for the faculty mentor and actively seeks and weighs advice offered. Considering the possible impact of this significant other, how should the student select the mentor? What degree of influence should the mentor have in the student's life? Two aspects of autonomy involved in mentorship are especially salient. First, the choice of a mentor should be a carefully considered, informed decision, and, in a formal program, mutually agreed on after some interaction. Second, the student needs to attend to the mentor's advice and behavior but retain responsibility. The student should choose freely without need for imitation or unquestioned acceptance. The student-mentor relationship promotes reciprocity in sharing, teaching, questioning, and giving of time and effort. Appreciating this more per-
personal interaction, the student needs to guard against excessive time demands and overdependency.

Conclusion

The application of ethical principles to faculty and student roles in graduate education does not provide prescriptions for behavior. The most difficult dilemmas arise when the principles conflict. A promise may be broken to bring greater good; some freedoms may be limited to avoid harm. A student may be advised not to conduct research in a chosen topic because he or she does not have the requisite skills. There are no simple answers, but progress toward clarity and resolutions may begin by open discussion of these dilemmas.

The ethical responsibilities described may be obvious and minimal, but they are also thought provoking and demanding. They are congruent with general expectations described in the American Association of University Professors' ethical statement regarding the responsibilities of university professors [1]. Graduate and professional school students cannot become ethical and moral practitioners unless they are confronted with their ethical responsibilities as students and work with advisors and professors who exhibit ethical behavior. Unfortunately, education on professional ethics is often like sex education: it is expected to occur naturally without explicit discussion. Many tragedies result. Faculty and students have ethical responsibilities related to their roles within graduate education. Students do not have to wait until they are professionals to consider and practice ethical behavior, nor can faculty neglect ethical considerations in their daily interaction with students. The framework and illustrations provided here may assist in making concerns for ethical behavior within graduate education more open and explicit.

References