WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE NUMBER: MCC 8050
COURSE TITLE: Ethical Decision Making

I. RATIONALE:

Professional ethics, while properly viewed as a set of rules and strategies that help the
counselor to avoid legal liability and professional censure, is better understood as a way
of being in relationship to clients, supervisees, supervisors, students, and colleagues that
both promotes development and prevents harm. Professional counselors who fail to meet
the standards of ethical care at best do not provide for their clients’ development and
growth as people and at worst inhibit that same growth and development. It is imperative
that professional counselors understand the implications of the ethical codes in the day-to-day practice of their profession.

II. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A: Understand the professional identity of counselors

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

A-1 Articulate the philosophy underlying the counseling profession.
A-2 Become familiar with the preparation and credentialing of professional
counselors.
A-3 Understand the similarities and differences among and between the helping
professions.
A-4 Understand the implications of his/her professional and personal identity in a
multicultural society.

GOAL B: Demonstrate knowledge of the Code of Ethics of the American
Counseling Association

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

B-1 Demonstrate familiarity with all sections of the ACA Code of Ethics.
B-2 Be able to resolve ethical dilemmas using the Code of Ethics as a guide.
B-3 Articulate how the Code of Ethics can influence promotion of higher standards of
care in professional counseling.

GOAL C: Develop sound professional ethical practices
Learning Outcomes: The student will:

C-1 Demonstrate the capacity to make sound ethical decisions that promote and protect client welfare in everyday practice.
C-2 Articulate a coherent explanation of Informed Consent.
C-3 Be able to explain the constructs of Confidentiality and Privileged Communication to a client.
C-4 Articulate understanding of boundary issues in a counseling relationship, including the nature of dual relationships.
C-5 Demonstrate knowledge of complying with record-keeping laws, particularly HIPAA regulations.
C-6 Create a plan to maintain professional competencies in his/her particular area of clinical practice.

GOAL D: Apply ethical standards across different groups and treatment modalities.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

D-1 Differentiate the ethical obligations concerning adult clients and child clients.
D-2 Describe the ethical obligations of the counselor working with families.
D-3 Understand the ethical conditions present when working as a group counselor.

GOAL E: Understand the capacities and limitations of counselors performing testing and assessment.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

E-1 Learn which types of testing instruments are appropriate for professional counselors.
E-2 Learn which types of testing instruments should be performed by a psychologist or psychiatrist.
E-3 Understand the current legal issues concerning testing and assessment.

GOAL F: Understand the ethical considerations of working with third party payers.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

F-1 Describe limitations on confidentiality when working with third party payers.
F-2 Identify the issues that arise in the ethical use of technologies in counseling, particularly computer-based testing and transmission of confidential data over the internet.

GOAL G: Understand the ethical and legal issues that arise when interacting with other helping professionals.
Learning Outcomes: The student will:

G-1 Develop knowledge about confidentiality issues in consultation or supervision with other helping professionals.
G-2 Be able to recognize ethical issues that arise in counselor education, particularly during practicum and internship periods.

GOAL H: Understand the legal and ethical issues that affect research and publication.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

H-1 Identify the Informed Consent and Confidentiality issues that occur while doing research.
H-2 Be able to develop strategies that protect the subjects of research projects.
H-3 Demonstrate knowledge of the ethics involved in publishing, including the proper use and distribution of data, issues concerning attribution of the source of information, and plagiarism.