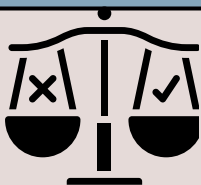# Approaches to Communication Ethics

Universal/Humanitarian versus Codes, Procedures, and Standards.

Universal/Humanitarian

- Based off of the ethical reason of principle from the Enlightenment (Arnett, Harden-Fritz, & Bell, 2009).
- Follows the rules of rationality, which is considered an essential part of human nature that requires protection and promotion for the good of humans, which is what this approach seeks to promote and protect.
- Immanuel Kant, a philosopher, stated that the moral law, which is a part of rationality, is a truth of reason, and hence that all rational creatures are bound by the same moral law (Jankowiak, 2024).
- A universal-humanitarian communication ethic cares more about the principles that prescribe or dictate one's duty (Jankowiak, 2024).

Codes, Procedures, and Standards
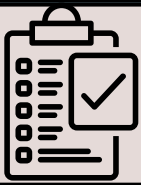
- The defining guidelines on which appropriate ethical conducts can be evaluated (Arnett, Harden-Fritz, & Bell, 2009). For example, an HR guideline book on how to professionally conduct yourself.
- NCA Legislative Council (1999) gave forth a set of "rules" for ethical communication, such as integrity, fairness, honesty, respect for others, etc.
- The main types of codes of ethics include compliance-based, value-based, and professional (Hayes, 2023). This ethical communication seeks to protect the values of ethical communication, such as being honest, being respectful, etc.
- This approach promotes being open and honest and adhering to guidelines of what an organization or person feels is ethical.

How Are Both Approaches Similar?

- Both are based upon the belief that humans are bound by moral laws.
- Both are seeking to protect and promote the principles that dictate one's duty, such as their career.
- Both are centered around a following an inherent set of rules

How Are Both Approaches Different?

- Codes in communication ethics are made around compliance-based ethics, in other words, to promote what the company thinks is ethical behavior, while Universal communication ethics are made around the principles that are instilled at birth
- Universal communication ethics will always choose the "morally correct" option, such as never lying (Arnett, Harden Fritz, & Bell, 2009). However, codes in communication ethics does not have any "morally correct" options, but rather, is more of a set of rules to follow in an organization, such as a code of conduct.

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