



# Ethical Dilemmas Roundtable Symposium

**EDUC 5990**

***Ethical Issues in Higher Education Leadership***



***Special thanks to:***

**School of Education, Graduate Programs**

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# Symposium Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- Overview of ethical educational leadership
- Ethical dilemmas
  - Rules of engagement
  - Panel demonstration
  - Roundtable discussions
- Debrief
- Closing remarks

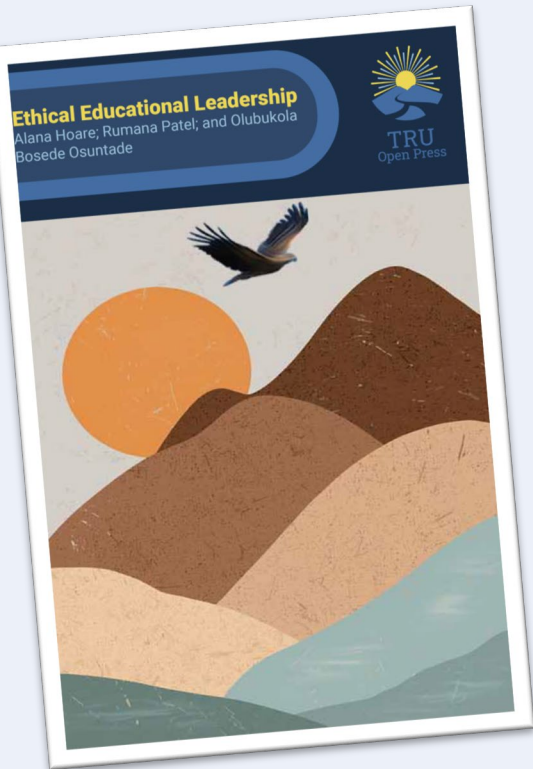


# Welcome

## Master of Education, Thompson Rivers University

### EDUC 5990 *Ethical Issues in Higher Education Leadership*

- Students explore contemporary issues impacting higher education leaders today, and discuss, critique, and pose solutions to real-world ethical dilemmas.
- Multiple ethical leadership frameworks are examined, including Indigenous leadership ethics and the ethics of *care, critique, community, discomfort, justice, self-care, and the profession.*
- The major class project is a case study, where students will select a real-world dilemma, explore it in depth, and co-author a chapter in the open textbook *Ethical Educational Leadership: Untangling Ethical Dilemmas and Imagining Alternative Futures.*



- Dr. Alana Hoare, Assistant Teaching Professor, Education
- Rumana Patel, MEd Student, Graduate Teaching Assistant and Co-author
- Olubukola Bosede Osuntade, MEd Student and Co-author
- Panelists and Roundtable Moderators and Note-takers



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# Ethical Leadership

Educational systems are becoming increasingly diverse, yet global inequities in knowledge production and exchange persist.

Massification of higher education, immigration and movement of war and climate refugees, and expansion of internationalization efforts demand that educational leaders consider multiple perspectives, worldviews, and **ethical lenses**.

This is particularly necessary as we collaborate across cultural groups to solve complex problems.





# Ethical Leadership

- What makes leadership ‘ethical’?
- How do leaders determine what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’?
- How do various forms of power and privilege, knowledge systems, policies, and structures shape our understanding of how to solve problems?
- How do we achieve equitable outcomes within a pluralistic democratic society?



# Ethical Leadership

**Ethical leadership is the pursuit of justice. Yet injustice persists.**

Reasons for the existence of injustice include:

1. Justice simply means different things to different people depending upon their perspective.
2. Everyone understands, rightly or wrongly, that some perspectives are privileged.
3. The extent to which the privileged perspective overrides others and dominates an organization's culture is the extent to which injustice is likely to be ignored (McKerrow & Bullerdiek, 2006).



# Ethical Dilemmas

**Ethical dilemmas involve conflicting moral principles.**

The most challenging dilemmas occur when leaders are faced with 'right versus right' dilemmas. These types of dilemmas are characterized as either/or situations where there exists a clear opportunity cost resulting from whatever action is not pursued.





# Leadership in higher education

Leaders must be cognizant that every action taken, or any decision made can have an immediate and long-lasting impact on the lives of people and it is important to analyze and estimate the impact of decisions.







# Ethical Judgement

Ethical judgement should be an iterative and dynamic process, where leaders draw on multiple sources of evidence, consider different moral guideposts, and engage in conversations with others to come to a well-rounded conclusion.

## **Ethical leadership in action: Critical, self-reflective practice**

- adopt an attitude of skepticism
- question the quality of their own and others' knowledge
- scrutinize claims
- respect others
- be open-minded (Somantri & Sardin, 2017)



# Purpose of the Symposium

To create space for dialogue among TRU community members about ethical issues in higher education.

We have an opportunity to hear multiple perspectives with empathy and open minds, to learn from each other's experiences, and to discuss challenges that affect us all.





# Roundtable Rules



- **Engage in dialogue; not debate.**
- **Listen with curiosity and empathy** to all viewpoints, particularly those that differ from your own. Avoid defending your perspective or repeating yourself.
- **Focus on the topic at hand and ideas shared;** avoid straying into unrelated debates or personal critiques.
- **Adhere to the time limits;** create space for everyone to share their perspective.
- **Take care of yourself and look after others.** If the topic is sensitive and causes you too much discomfort, consider pausing or stepping away for a moment. Similarly, notice if someone at your table is distressed by the topic. The table moderator and note-taker will monitor the discussion, but you know yourself best.

Counselling and supports are available for those in need. Students can connect with the Faculty of Student Development: Visit Old Main 1631. For TRU employees, counseling is available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP).



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# Panel Demonstration

## **Master of Education Students**

Rumana Patel

Guillermo “Matias” Benedit

Pankhuri Kumari

Reshma Santhakumari Isman

## **Moderator**

Dr. Alana Hoare



# Financial Crisis

## Whose interests do we prioritize: The University or members of the community



Financial crises, such as those triggered by COVID-19, force universities to make difficult decisions about resource allocation. These decisions often pit institutional survival against the immediate needs of individuals within the organization. During the pandemic, many universities resorted to layoffs, furloughs, or program cuts to address budget deficits. While these measures protected universities' long-term viability, they also disproportionately impacted students, faculty, and staff. Conversely, prioritizing the well-being of individuals can strain university resources, potentially jeopardizing its future stability.

The ethical dilemma lies in determining how to distribute the burden of financial crises fairly. This dilemma challenges the panelists to consider how to navigate crises with equity and foresight.

- Should institutions prioritize their survival over the livelihoods of their community members, or vice versa? Transparency in decision-making, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder engagement are critical to addressing this tension.
- How can universities create strategies that balance financial responsibility with compassion and fairness?
- What role should institutional leaders play in safeguarding both the institution and its people during challenging times?





# Roundtable Discussions



You will discuss two ethical dilemmas that we have prepared for you. One is common for all tables, and one you can choose from a list of options.

You will have 25 minutes to discuss each dilemma (total 55 minutes, with a 5-minute break between). Your table moderator and note-taker will facilitate the process.

## Instructions

1. Briefly introduce yourselves.
2. Table moderators will read the dilemma out loud.
3. In a circle, take turns responding to the dilemma. Whose interests should be considered and why? Are there other factors that need to be considered?
4. Conduct a second circle and take turns responding to what you heard. Did you hear a new perspective? Did your opinion change?
5. Table moderators will summarize the conversation and common themes that emerged.





# Ethical Dilemma #1

## Academic Integrity



Academic integrity is a cornerstone of higher education, yet it is increasingly challenged by evolving academic and technological landscapes. Issues such as plagiarism, grade inflation, and accountability blur the lines of responsibility between students, professors, and institutions.

With advancements like AI tools, the concept of plagiarism has become more complex. Should tools like ChatGPT be banned, regulated, or integrated into learning?

Grade inflation, another facet of this dilemma, raises questions about whether student course completion over maintaining rigorous standards.

Students are expected to produce original work, but institutional pressures, like high-stakes exams or grades, can incentivize dishonesty. Professors are tasked with fostering a culture of integrity, but should they be solely accountable for detecting and addressing violations? Institutions, on the other hand, must establish policies that balance enforcement with fairness.

The central ethical concern lies in accountability: who bears the responsibility for upholding academic integrity?





# Ethical Dilemma #2

## Table's Choice

Academic Pressure and Burnout

Intellectual Property and Authorship



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# Debrief

Ethical dilemma #1: Academic Integrity

Reflecting on your experience

**Note:** Post-symposium follow-up (report) and feedback (survey).



# Thank you!

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***Ethical Educational Leadership***

<https://leadershipethics.pressbooks.tru.ca/>



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