

## Ethical Issues in Online Education

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## **Ethical Issues in Online Education**

This study reviews the ethical controversies, questions, and strategies related to online education, and discusses about the role of ethics in online teaching and learning environments. The author explores how the rapid advancement of digital technology and significant growth of online learning influence the boundaries of teaching ethics. Online instructors need to raise awareness of their unique set of responsibilities when teaching online, in order to design and develop safe, ethical, and accessible online learning environments.

The standards defined and developed by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (2012) require online educators to design and select media, technology, and processes that emphasize the diversity of our society as a multicultural community; to foster online learning environments in which ethics guide practice that promotes healthy, safety, best practice, and respect for copyright, Fair Use, and appropriate open access to resources; and to foster online communities that empower online learners with diverse backgrounds, characteristics, and abilities. The International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards (2011) also stresses the effective use of technology for assessing student learning, differentiating instruction, and providing rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences for all students; advocates effective digital-age learning environments for all students; and promotes digital citizenship to maximize the learning of all students.

As learners and technologies become more sophisticated over time, there is an urgent need for online educators to probe deeper into ethical behaviors in new teaching and learning contexts.

These discussions would help enable online educators to establish how ethical issues might relate to student success or failure in online learning, thus contributing to improved online course and program development.

Keywords: accessibility, intellectual property, digital citizenship