Selected Ethical Principles

Discussed below are some ethical principles that can provide guidance to students in discerning morally upright decisions and actions, especially in moral situations that they may encounter throughout their academic life in the university.

Selected Ethical Principles	Basic Premise	Focus of Inquiry	What a good action is	What a bad action is	Some Criticisms
● Ethical Relativism	● Each moral situation is unique. ● There are no absolute universal moral truths.	● Diverse contexts ● Relative character of morally significant actions ● Individual differences	● A morally good action is what is deemed good by the Individual or Society. ● A morally good action is relative.	● A morally bad action is what is deemed bad by the Individual or Society. ● A morally bad action is relative.	● Absence of absolute moral codes ● Morality becomes loosely defined.
● Ethical Egoism	● Man is by nature selfish. ● Man's motive in voluntary actions is self-gratification. ● Only self-satisfaction ought to be sought.	● self-benefit/ self-interest ● personal happiness (as the ethical ideal)	● A morally good action advances one's own benefit, interest, and happiness.	● A morally bad action does not promote one's own benefit, interest, and happiness.	● Insensitive to others ● It has no solution for conflicts of interest. ● Ethical egoism is divisive (self vs. others).
● John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism	● Happiness is inherently good. ● Actions have no inherent value. ● Moral value of actions depends on consequences.	● consequences of actions ● utility	A morally good action produces the greatest amount of happiness in point of quantity and quality.	● A morally bad action produces more pain and suffering or lesser amount of happiness.	● Can happiness be measured? ● Minority is disadvantaged. ● Agent's motive is insignificant.
● Aristotle's Virtue Ethics	● Happiness should be understood in terms of man's distinctive	● virtue ● moral agent's character	A morally good action is done by a virtuous person,	● An morally bad action is done by a vicious person.	● lacks attention on the moral agent's action ● Identifying

	function. ● Moral virtue is the mean between excess and deficiency.				only one function of a human being is problematic.
● Kant's Duty Ethics	● Only good will is good without qualification.	● universally valid norms ● absolute moral truths ● duty	● An action with moral worth is done out of duty.	● An action without moral worth is done in conformity with duty.	● Man's feelings are not morally significant. ● Absolutist take on moral issues is problematic. ● Its formal principle fails to provide moral guidance.