# Ethical Analysis Framework: Version One February 12, 2013 CMSC 304 – Prof. Marie desJardins

1. **Identify the relevant facts** (past/future, known/concluded)
2. **Identify the possible policies.**
   1. Who is making the decisions?
   2. Who are the stakeholders affected by the policies? (Remember to think broadly!)
3. **Analyze each policy** impartially, from a deontological and consequential point of view.
   1. Does the policy pass the tests of fairness and justice? Are some individuals deprived of their rights at the expense of others? Does it make a reasonable *universal* policy?
   2. Reject any policies that are *prima facie* unethical, unfair, or unjust.
4. **Identify the principles and values** that should be factored into a tradeoff analysis – what are the goods to be protected or the rights of the individuals involved?
5. **Identify the consequences** (known or potential, positive and negative) of each policy, with respect to each group of stakeholders.
6. **Identify the laws** that may govern the actions taken by the individuals in this situation. Do they require or prohibit any actions?
7. **Identify and analyze the tradeoffs** involved in each policy, with respect to consequences and principles that come into conflict. Analyze the “goodness/harm ratio” – how much positive benefit is created, relative to the negative consequences?
8. **Analyze the ethical issues with respect to the laws.** Are the relevant laws consistent or inconsistent with the apparent ethical tradeoffs?
9. **Analyze the ethical issues with respect to the relevant professional code(s) of ethics.** Is the professional code consistent or inconsistent with the apparent ethical tradeoffs?
10. **Draw a conclusion** – that is, the action that *should* be taken, based on the policy that is the most ethical (most fair/just/happiness-maximizing) of the available options. (If this action is inconsistent with the applicable laws, then your conclusion may include a recommendation that the law should be changed.)
11. **Write a cogent summary** of your analysis and reasoning, including all of the information that you collected/created during the first ten steps of the process.