

# The George H. and Faye C. Sparks Forum in Ethics and Engineering

Caroline Whitbeck  
Case Western Reserve University

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4:00 p.m.

Student Services Building

Room 117

with a reception to follow



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## *Is Ethics Any Different for Engineers?*

Caroline Whitbeck is the Elmer G. Beamer-Hubert H. Schneider Professor in Ethics at Case Western Reserve University, where she holds appointments in the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. She is also Director of the Online Ethics Center for Engineering and Science ([onlineethics.org](http://onlineethics.org)).

Professor Whitbeck combines research and teaching interests in the philosophy of science, technology, and medicine; practical ethics; and feminist philosophy, with interest in education of a diverse student body for careers in engineering and the science-based professions.

Whitbeck's work emphasizes the synthetic as well as analytic elements in responses to moral problems. In the 1980s and 1990s, she developed the analogy between ethical problems and design problems, in particular, problems of engineering design and research design. She pioneered active learning methods in the teaching of engineering ethics and the responsible conduct of research, especially methods that place the learner in the position of the agent who must actually respond to the problem (rather than in the position of a judge who merely evaluates responses that have already been constructed). Her emphasis on agent-centered problem-solving has been widely influential.

Whitbeck was elected a Fellow of the AAAS for her work in engineering ethics, and was a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar in 1994-95. Her book, *Ethics in Engineering Practice and Research*, was published by Cambridge University Press in spring 1998 and the Japanese translation of the first half of that book, translated by Hiroshi Iino and Jun Fudano, was published by Misuzu Shobo in December 2000.