

The need to include ethics content in professional licensure exams in the US (and worldwide)

Vince Cronin, International Association for Promoting Geoethics
EGU 2024

CroninProjects.org/EGU-Geoethics2024/



**(US) National Association of
State Boards of Geology**



<https://asbog.org/>

This talk reflects the author's work, and is not intended to describe ASBOG policy

**ASBOG serves the US public and the
geosciences community...**

- 1. by publishing model law, rules, and regulations that
states can adopt**

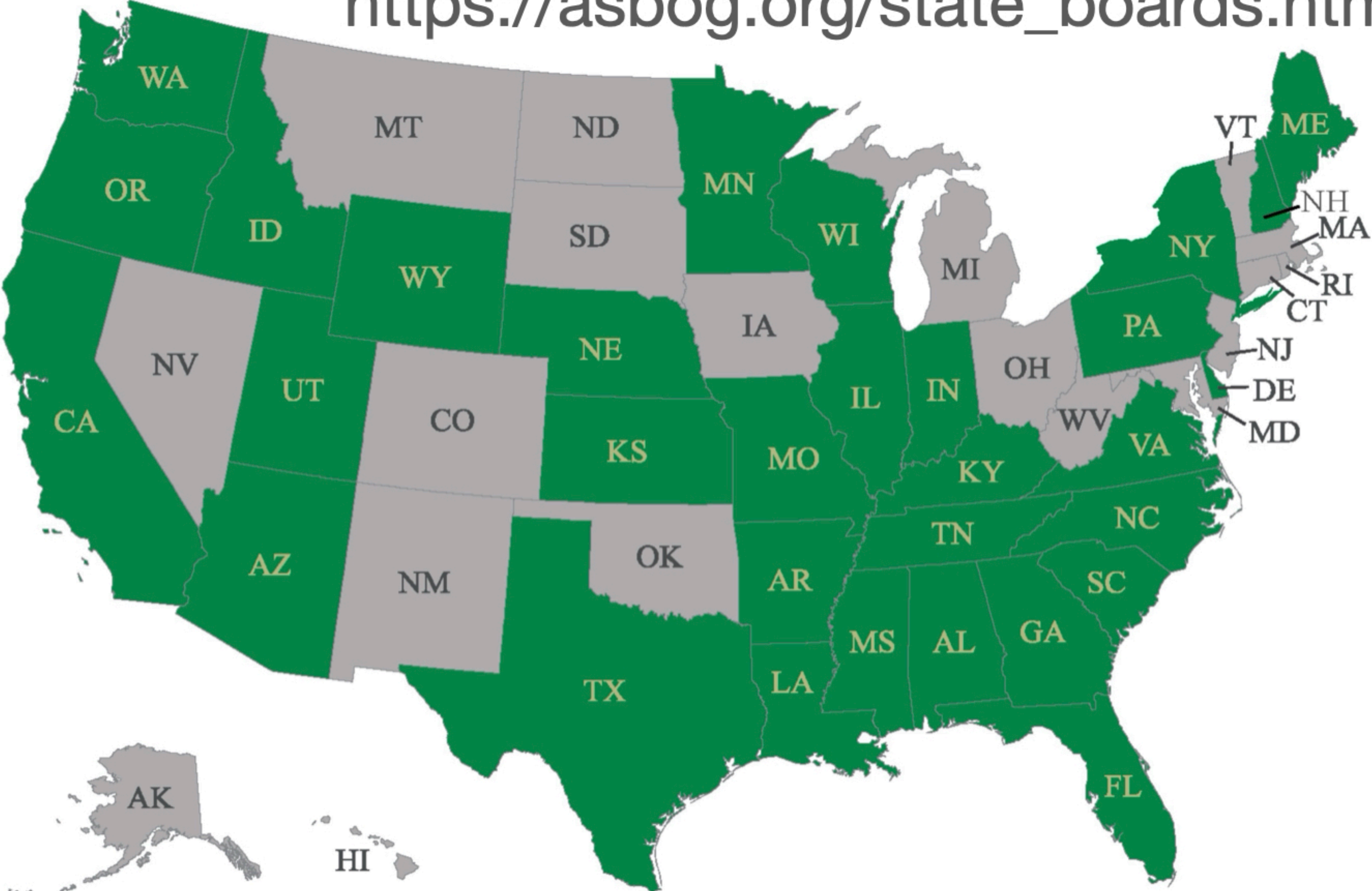
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- 3. by providing related educational materials to help licensure candidates prepare for the exams**

https://asbog.org/state_boards.html



ASBOG Member Board
Regulatory State (32)



PR

ASBOG exam topic areas

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1. General geology and geological investigation

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6. Hydrogeology
7. Engineering geology
8. Mineral and energy resources



National Association of State Boards of Geology

TASK ANALYSIS SURVEY 2015:

A Study of the Practice of Geology in the United States and Canada

Prepared by
Jack L. Warner, Ph.D.

TEST, Inc.

April 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The content or subject matter tested on licensing exams is often determined through formal task analysis research studies that are designed to maximize the relevance of the exams to the practice of the professions. The task analysis studies identify the tasks/activities that are performed by professionals and the underlying knowledge that is necessary to perform these tasks. The task analysis results form the basis for creating test blueprints that define the content and scope of the exams. These studies are conducted on a regular basis to keep abreast of advances and/or changes in the practice of the profession.

ASBOG GeoEthics TAS 2015

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1. Misrepresentation of professional qualifications

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6. Failure to maintain confidentiality
7. Conflict of interest

ASBOG GeoEthics TAS 2015

8. Plagiarism

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8. Plagiarism
9. Practicing without license

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8. Plagiarism
9. Practicing without license
10. Inappropriate advocate for client

ASBOG GeoEthics TAS 2015

8. Plagiarism
9. Practicing without license
10. Inappropriate advocate for client
11. Insufficient scope of work

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12. Dishonest invoicing

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10. Inappropriate advocate for client
11. Insufficient scope of work
12. Dishonest invoicing
13. Giving or getting gifts



**Challenges for creating ethics study resources
and questions for ASBOG FG and PG exams**



Challenges for creating ethics study resources and questions for ASBOG FG and PG exams

**Different states have adopted different ethics codes
(or no code at all) for professional geoscientists**



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Fair and useful exam questions about geoethics are difficult to write (if they can be written at all)



Primacy Principles

Primacy principles are the most important ethical constraints for our work.

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For example, the Hippocratic Oath is an ancient expression of primacy principles under which a medical healer must work.

Primacy Principles for Professional Geoscientists

In our professional work,
the health, safety, and wellbeing
of the public are paramount

Robert Tepel

Primacy Principles for Professional Geoscientists

The ethical imperatives,
standards, and norms that
apply to any scientist also apply
to professional geoscientists

Primacy Principles for Professional Geoscientists

Professional geoscientists have a responsibility to act in ways that promote, protect, and sustain the health of the Earth environment.

MODEL RULES AND REGULATIONS

TO ACCOMPANY

THE PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGIST MODEL LICENSURE LAW

MODEL RULES AND REGULATIONS

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ASBOG®

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE BOARDS OF GEOLOGY

Created 2011

Updated August 2019

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[https://asbog.org/documents/
ASBOG Rules-Regs 2019.pdf](https://asbog.org/documents/ASBOG_Rules-Regs_2019.pdf)

Suggestions for finding solutions

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**Build open-access educational resources
around the list of ethical concerns**

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Build open-access educational resources around the list of ethical concerns

- **Primacy principles**

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Build open-access educational resources around the list of ethical concerns

- **Primacy principles**
- **Definitions of key terms & concepts**

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Build open-access educational resources around the list of ethical concerns

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- **Examples with explanations**

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Develop questions that confirm a basic understanding of relevant ethical issues

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