Ethical--conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession (social work)

**Ethical Considerations**

Voluntary participation and informed consent  
No harm to participants  
Anonymity and confidentiality  
Deceiving subjects  
Analysis and reporting

**NASW Code of Ethics**—social workers should follow guidelines in Section 5.02 on Evaluation and Research, including:

Consider consequences for human beings  
Obtain voluntary and informed consent  
No harm to participants  
Discuss only with relevant persons for professional purposes  
Confidentiality (anonymity)  
Credit in scholarly endeavors

Weigh costs and benefits related to ethics

Institutional Review Boards examine research to assure compliance to ethical standards

Bias and insensitivity regarding gender, culture, and class are key considerations; guidelines for conducting culturally competent, non-sexist research are found on pages 89-90.

**Political Considerations**

Political issues in social work research include choice of topic, practical costs, and use of research findings.

Social research on race provides examples of the interaction between politics and research.

Although science is neutral on political matters, researchers are not -- be aware of bias.
Questions to Consider related to ethical and political considerations:

1. What are potential ethical problems with the study?

2. What can be done to minimize these problems?

3. What are some potential biases of a political nature that may creep in to this study?

4. What can be done to minimize these potential biases?