University of Massachusetts  
School of Public Health & Health Sciences  
Ethical Issues in Public Health

Syllabus

Course Number: HPP 525  
Course Name: Ethical Issues in Public Health  
Semester Hours: 3  
Meeting Times: online  
Instructor: Daniel M. Goldstein, Ph.D.  
Contact email: dmgoldst@schoolph.umass.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public health ethics presents some of the most intriguing and perplexing issues facing the country and the world today. This course introduces and explores public health ethics through the methods and principles of contemporary bioethics. The differences between public health ethics and medical ethics will be stressed. Students will learn about ethical theory and will use this framework to address some of the important ethical issues in public health, including ethical research in public health; ethics and infectious disease control; ethics of health promotion and disease prevention; the ethics of public health emergencies; questions in public health genetics, and public health concerns with social justice. Critical reading, philosophical analysis and group discussion is emphasized.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

Drawing on the skills specified in the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, adopted by the Council on Linkages between Academia and Public Health Practice, objectives for this course are designed so that the student:

• Develops a lifelong commitment to rigorous critical thinking.

• Creates a culture of ethical standards within organizations and communities.

• Listens to others in an unbiased manner, respects points of view of others, and promotes the expression of diverse opinions and perspectives.

• Collects, summarizes, and interprets information relevant to an issue.

In addition to those general competencies, after successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1 - articulate the main ethical theories and their philosophical representatives; this will be accomplished by the completion of assignments.
2 - demonstrate an ability to identify ethical dilemmas; this will be accomplished by the completion of discussions and the final exam.

3 - identify and explain ethical principles and understand their function in the discourse of public health ethics; this will be accomplished by the completion of assignments and the final exam.

4 - demonstrate familiarity with the nature and scope of contemporary public health ethics, including its distinction from medical ethics; this will be accomplished by the completion of assignments and discussions.

TEXT

REQUIRED

Public Health Ethics 2nd edition
Stephan Holland
Polity Press 2014

SUGGESTED

Public health ethics: theory, policy, and practice,
edited by Ronald Bayer [et al.],
Oxford University Press US, 2007
ISBN 0195180852, 9780195180855

There will be weekly links to required and supplemental readings, lecture notes and slides and pertinent web sites.

EVALUATION

Weekly Discussions  50%
  Original post  25%
  Response  25%

Assignments  30%

Final Project  20%

Discussion

The first requirement is a conversation. Each module will have an asynchronous discussion based primarily on the readings of the week. Your original post should be in by Thursday to give members of your group time to read and respond to your post. A response is due by Sunday at midnight.
Assignment

This requirement comprises 2 research papers involving an exploration of a specific aspect of Public Health Ethics: Assignment 1 is due October 9 – Theoretical foundations: What is Public Health Ethics; Assignment 2 is due November 6 – Identify and evaluate an issue. Choose from the following:

1. Should public health be political?
2. Should paternalism be the foundation for public health interventions?
3. Should Libertarian Paternalism be considered in promoting the public's health?
4. Should public health research be objective?
5. Should informed consent be required in all public health research?
6. Should parents be allowed to refuse vaccinations for their children?
7. Should practitioners be required to treat during a public health emergency?
8. Should genetic technologies be used for public health interventions?

If there is another issue you would like to present please submit the topic for approval.

Final Project

The final requirement is a comprehensive final paper exploring one specific public health issue using the theoretical elements of the course. The two assignments are the drafts for this final project.

GRADING SCALE

A  94 and over
A- 90-93
B+ 87-89
B  83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C  73-76
F  72 and below

CLASSROOM DECORUM

A classroom is a community -- even an online classroom. We will be together for the next 6 weeks and during that time we will get to know each other, maybe even more than we might like. Because thinking about ethics brings us to our fundamental assumptions, this class has the potential to become personal. In our community respect will be the first order of business. It is essential that we respect the ideas and beliefs of others. We are not trying to be right by proving others wrong: studying ethics is to belong to a community of researchers exploring ideas and by virtue of being in the class, we are all now part of this community.

There are two important elements to keep in mind:
Respectful interaction: know when to jump in and when to hold back
Helpful participation: be mindful of others and their expression of ideas
ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic honesty is expected and required of all UMass students. As stated in the University's Academic Honesty Policy on page 7 of the Academic Regulations online resource: "Intellectual honesty requires that students demonstrate their own learning during examinations and other academic exercises, and that other sources of information or knowledge be appropriately credited. Scholarship depends upon the reliability of information and reference in the work of others. No form of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or facilitating of dishonesty will be condoned in the University community."

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policies and regulations:

(http://www.umass.edu/registrar/media/academicregs.pdf)
(http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/downloads/AcademicHonestyPolicy.pdf)
(http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty)

Our class uses turnitin.com to collect submissions of assignments, papers, and exams. This online “plagiarism prevention service” compares submissions with billions of websites and other student papers. It issues “originality reports” with a percentage score – the higher the score, the less original the submission. This service may be used by students to verify citations as I set it up to allow resubmissions up until the due date. You might want to submit your work at least one day before the due date to verify your originality report. If the score of your originality report is over 40% and not cited properly, you will be asked to resubmit the work. If you choose not to resubmit, the grade for the submission will be 0.

As a condition of continued enrollment in this course, you agree to submit your work to the Turnitin for textual comparison or originality review for the detection of possible plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Amherst dedicated database of assignments at Turnitin and will be used solely for the purpose of checking for possible plagiarism during the grading process and during this term and in the future.

ACCOMMODATION POLICY

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), Learning Disabilities Support Services (LDSS), or Psychological Disabilities Services (PDS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me during the first week of the class so that we may make appropriate arrangements.
### COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>9.6 – 9.11</td>
<td>Module 1: Public health and the Love of Wisdom</td>
<td>Online readings</td>
<td>Discussion 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>9.12 – 9.18</td>
<td>Module 2: The science of ethics</td>
<td>pp. 1 - 36</td>
<td>Discussion 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>9.26 – 10.2</td>
<td>Module 4: Police power &amp; Paternalism</td>
<td>pp. 57 – 76</td>
<td>Discussion 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>10.3 – 10.9</td>
<td>Module 5: Epidemiology I</td>
<td>pp. 77 – 86</td>
<td>Discussion 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>10.10 – 10.16</td>
<td>Module 6: Epidemiology II</td>
<td>pp. 87 - 110</td>
<td>Discussion 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>10.17 – 10.23</td>
<td>Module 7: Health promotion</td>
<td>pp. 111 - 134</td>
<td>Discussion 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>10.24 – 10.30</td>
<td>Module 8: Health promotion II</td>
<td>pp. 135 - 159</td>
<td>Discussion 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10.31 – 11.6</td>
<td>Module 9: Immunization</td>
<td>pp. 160 - 187</td>
<td>Discussion 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>11.7 – 11.13</td>
<td>Module 10: Public health emergencies</td>
<td>Online readings</td>
<td>Discussion 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>11.14 – 11.20</td>
<td>Module 11: Public health genetics</td>
<td>Online readings</td>
<td>Discussion 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>11.21 – 11.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>11.28 – 12.4</td>
<td>Module 12: Social justice</td>
<td>Online readings</td>
<td>Discussion 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>12.5 – 12.11</td>
<td>Module 14: Public health and the environment</td>
<td>Online readings</td>
<td>Discussion 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.12 – 12.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Project due 12.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In the interests of enhancing this course and the students' learning experience, the instructor reserves the right to make unannounced changes to this syllabus.*
Module 1

- Plato, "The Allegory of the Cave." Book 7, The Republic

Module 2

- Stephen Holland *Public Health Ethics*, "Chapters 1 & 2" pp. 11 - 47.
- Ursula K. LeGuin "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," by

Supplementary texts (Classics of moral philosophy, not required):

John Stuart Mill Utilitarianism
Jeremy Bentham Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation
W.D.Ross The Right and the Good
Immanuel Kant Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic Of Morals

Module 3

- Kurt Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron."

Methods of bioethics Supplementary

• Ronald H Mckinney, "The new casuistry vs. narrative ethics: A postmodern analysis," Philosophy Today; Winter 1995; 39, 4; 331-344
• Al Jonsen “Casuistry in Clinical Ethics,” Theoretical Medicine 7 (1986), 65–74.

Module 4

• Stephen Holland Public Health Ethics, "Chapter 4, pp. 63 - 79.
• Dostoyevski, Fyodor, "The Grand Inquisitor," The Brothers Karamazov

Supplementary

• Piper, Mark, “Autonomy: Normative,” The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Module 5


Module 6

Module 7


Module 8


Supplementary

- Eliza Shapiro "The Unintended Consequences of Company Wellness Penalties" The Daily Beast, July 6, 2013

Module 9

- Maggie Koerth-Baker, "Values and Vaccines" Aeon Media Group Ltd. 2012-2017
- KEVIN M. MALONE AND ALAN R. HINMAN, "Vaccination Mandates: The Public Health Imperative and Individual Rights."
- Al Jonsen, Do No Harm, Annals of Internal Medicine, (1978) Vol 88, pp. 827 – 832

Module 10

Supplementary

- World Health Organization, "Addressing ethical issues in pandemic influenza planning."
- University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics, "Stand on Guard for Thee: Addressing ethical issues in pandemic influenza planning."
- CDC, "Zombie Preparedness Plan."

Module 11


Supplementary


Module 12

- Dan Beauchamp, "Public Health as Social Justice,"
- Powers and Faden, Chapter 4 "Social Justice and Public Health,"

Module 13