

SYLLABUS

EPID 580, PUBLIC HEALTH ETHICS

Fall 2017

Master of Public Health Program
Division of Epidemiology, Department of Family Medicine and Population Health
School of Medicine

Date and Time:	Hybrid online course—some online sessions and class meetings as scheduled, select Thursdays 1:30-2:45, One Capitol Square Building, Room 644
Credit:	One credit hour
Instructor:	Lisa S. Anderson, MPH Instructor, Director of Educational Programs Master of Public Health Program Division of Epidemiology
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the basic theoretical perspectives underlying the field of public health ethics and review, from an ethical perspective:

- federal and state public health practices, privacy and confidentiality issues
- the Public Health Code of Ethics, legal powers given to public health
- ethics in responding to typical public health scenarios
- impact of ethics on public health decision-making
- barriers to the ethical practice of public health
- how to respond to unethical events

COURSE FORMAT

This course is a hybrid online course and includes asynchronous on-line work as well as face-to-face class meetings. See the schedule for the frequency of class meetings versus online sessions.

This course is based in part on a curriculum developed by the University of North Carolina's Institute for Public Health in the Gillings School of Public Health, for graduate students in public health as well as working public health professionals. The lectures developed by James C. Thomas, MPH, PhD, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, who also directs the Program in Public Health Ethics at UNC. VCU acknowledges and appreciates Dr. Thomas' authorization for public use of the course which he has prepared. Dr. Thomas also is one of the principal authors of the Public Health Code of Ethics. More information on Dr. Thomas' background is available at the links below.

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<http://www.jcthomas.org/ethics>

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1. The purpose of the Public Health Ethics course is to provide students with knowledge and understanding of the unique characteristics of public health ethics.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Accurately describe the underlying philosophies and ethical perspectives on which public health ethics are based
2. Correctly differentiate between medical ethics and public health ethics.
3. Accurately explain how serving populations influences the ethical framework for public health approaches as compared to clinical practice.
4. Correctly differentiate between an aspirational code and a code of conduct and describe how an aspirational code can guide an ethics discussion.
5. Effectively describe the relevance of at least 6 of the 12 principles in the Public Health Code of Ethics to the discipline of public health.
6. Accurately describe at least three of the legal powers given to public health.

Goal 2. The purpose of the Public Health Ethics course is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to identify, understand, and respond to ethical situations in public health practice and research.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Name the factors that characterize an ethical issue in public health and explain how these factors lead to recognition of an ethical issue.
2. Correctly describe the five elements of fair procedures and explain how these elements are applied in addressing an ethical dilemma.
3. Accurately describe the eight steps of ethical decision-making in a group and explain the relevance of each step to the process.
4. Describe the range of possible responses to an event that is clearly unethical.

5. Compare, contrast, and discuss the positions of various stakeholders in an ethical public health dilemma.
6. Demonstrate effective approaches to an ethical dilemma in public health by applying the Public Health Code of Ethics and other problem-solving frameworks to one or more case studies.

VCU MPH PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Virginia Commonwealth University MPH program is to engage students in an experiential, learner-centered environment, collaborate with public health partners in central Virginia to promote health equity and community wellness, and foster life-long inquiry and discovery in interdisciplinary, translational research that improves human health.

VCU MPH PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

This course covers the following MPH Program competencies. A full list of competencies is available in Blackboard through the Family Medicine and Population Health Organization.

	Health Policy and Management
HPM2	Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health and health services.
	VCU Program-Specific
VCU6	Distinguish between public health ethics and medical ethics, discussing the values and beliefs inherent to a public health ethics perspective.
	Diversity and Culture
DIV1	Explain how professional ethics and practices relate to equity and accountability in diverse community settings.
	Professionalism
PRO1	Apply basic principles of ethical analysis (e.g. the Public Health Code of Ethics, human rights framework, other moral theories) to issues of public health practice and policy.
PRO3	Promote high standards of personal and organizational integrity, compassion, honesty and respect for all people.
PRO4	Distinguish between population and individual ethical considerations in relation to the benefits, costs, and burdens of public health programs.

THOMAS LECTURE OBJECTIVES

Following are the objectives for each module in Dr. Thomas’ lecture series.

Module 1: Distinguishing Public Health Ethics from Medical Ethics

Ethics in medicine has been studied longer and is more developed than ethics in public health. But principles of medical ethics do not provide the needed direction for common ethical situations in public health. Using a case study of a water fluoridation debate in a California county, this module presents:

- the relationship between theoretical and practical ethics
- the application of medical ethics to the fluoridation debate
- the application of public health ethics to the fluoridation debate.

Learning objectives:

- Describe the common practice settings from which medical ethics and public health ethics emerge.
- Explain "the tyranny of the majority."
- Explain why the medical ethics principle of autonomy does not work as well in public health.

Module 2: Values and Beliefs Inherent to a Public Health Perspective

The ethical principles of public health are born out of the values and beliefs inherent to a public health perspective, in addition to common ethical theories. This module presents:

- reasons for understanding the values and beliefs of public health
- the eleven values and beliefs that are stated in the materials of the Public Health Code of Ethics
- examples of each from the course developer's experiences in public health and from cartoons.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain how a given value or belief from the list is important to public health.

Module 3: The Public Health Code of Ethics

This module presents:

- the 12 principles for the ethical practice of public health
- explanations and a practical application of each principle
- examples of how to use the Public Health Code of Ethics.

The lecture begins with a brief description of what a code can and can't do, and the process by which the Public Health Code of Ethics was written.

Objectives:

- Describe how an aspirational code can guide an ethical discussion.
- For a given ethical principle, describe a situation where it applies in public health.
- Identify means of creating an ethical environment within public health organizations.

Module 4: Law and Ethics in Public Health

Although we often think of laws as the way a society encodes its ethics, there are actually some important differences between law and ethics. This module presents:

- the relation between law and ethics
- the federal, state, and local legal powers in public health
- how public health ethics relates to the powers given to public health by the law.

Objectives:

- Describe three of the several legal powers given to public health.
- Describe an ethical principle in public health that is not encoded in public health law.
- Describe how the exercise of any power is an ethical issue.

Module 5: Pandemic influenza: A justice case study

In this module we will see how various concepts of justice are being applied to anticipated responses to an influenza pandemic. It will begin by describing the biology and epidemiology of influenza. These characteristics give shape to a number of ethical concerns. This module addresses:

- how particular concepts of justice are most useful, or at least are most used, for particular types of questions
- a few ethical concerns that are not often mentioned in the context of the major theories of justice, but which can come to light through a code of ethics.

Objectives:

- Illustrate course principles and issues through application to a real world problem.
- Apply course principles to issues likely to confront practicing public health professionals.

Module 6: Decision-making in Public Health Ethics

The heart of ethics is decision-making. In this module you will learn how a group of people assigned the task of deciding what to do can accomplish that task. You will learn how to form such a group and the steps to follow to end up with a decision that is morally defensible.

Objectives:

- Describe how to recognize an ethical issue
- Describe the elements of fair process
- Describe the steps of ethical decision-making in a group.

Module 7: Barriers to the Ethical Practice of Public Health

If behaving ethically were easy, we might not be studying ethics. But human nature and factors of our social environment often push and pull towards unethical behaviors. In this module we will identify some of those factors. Being aware of them is an important part of trying to resist or counter them.

Objective:

- Identify the facets of human nature and our social environment that are particularly relevant in leading to unethical behaviors in public health.

Module 8: Responding to Unethical Events

What happens when you witness an unethical event or you disagree strongly with a decision that a group has reached? This module addresses the range of possible responses to behaviors or decisions that clearly are unethical.

Objective:

- Describe the range of possible responses to an event that is clearly unethical.

COURSE OUTLINE

Introduction. This course is modeled in part on the ethics course from the University of North Carolina's Institute for Public Health in the Gillings School of Public Health, posted at https://nciph.sph.unc.edu/tws/training_list/?mode=view_series&subcat_id=521&subcat_title=Public+Health+Ethics.

This ethics course has been made available by the University of North Carolina for adoption and use by public health professionals and other universities. Virginia Commonwealth University acknowledges the creation of this course by UNC and expresses its gratitude to UNC for authorizing public use of these materials.

To view the course lectures, each student must visit the Institute for Public Health training web page and create an account (link for doing this near the top of the page). It will be necessary to log in each time to view each lecture. In addition, students must complete a pre-test to access the lecture in each module and should complete the post-test. There is no need to print or produce the certificate that the site offers for this course, but you may want to obtain the certificate for your own records. Follow directions in the syllabus and Blackboard for assignments each week; students are not responsible for any other materials on the Institute for Public Health website unless specifically stated in Blackboard.

The Institute for Public Health course has eight modules, some with multiple components (e.g., introduction, presentation, readings). The eight recorded lectures address the following issues.

- Distinguishing public health ethics from medical ethics
- The values and beliefs inherent to a public health perspective
- 12 principles for the ethical practice of public health
- How public health's legal powers relate to public health ethics
- What can we learn about public health ethics from pandemic influenza?
- How are group decisions made ethically?
- What are common barriers to the ethical practice of public health?
- What can be done when unethical behavior is observed?

Awareness in an on-line course environment

Several times during this course, we will use an online discussion board. Students will be expected to complete the module, log on to the discussion board, post comments on the module, and respond to the comments of other students. Students will be evaluated on the quality of their comments and of

their responses to the comments of other students. Therefore, it is expected that students will complete all assigned lectures and tasks for this course. A rubric on discussion board posts appears in the Grading section of this syllabus.

For the online component, students should be aware of the following issues that are important for successful learning in an online environment.

1. **Discussion board: compliance with deadlines:** A discussion board is only as good as its participants. To engage in discussion, there must be postings for others to read and discuss. Timely submission of your first posting and subsequent response to other students' postings gets the conversation going.
2. **Frequent check-in:** When we have in-class discussions, we will talk for 45-50 minutes as a group and exchange ideas. Online, a discussion can last over several days. To ensure the success of the discussion, it is important to check back in several times after your first posting. It only takes few minutes to log in and check discussion activity, and reading and responding to other students' posts may take no more than 10-15 minutes. Try to check in at least once daily after you make your initial post. We all must maintain a presence online to make our learning and discussion experience engaging and mutually beneficial.
3. **Practice good "netiquette":** Were you aware that in oral communication about feelings and attitudes, 7% of what you are saying comes from the actual words you say, 38% comes from how the words are said, and 55% of the message comes from what is portrayed in your facial expression/body language? (Mehrabian, A. <http://www.kaaj.com/psych/smorder.html>) In discussion boards, we frequently express our feelings and attitudes, yet the major cues of tone and body/facial language are missing in the online environment. Therefore, when being critical of another's posting, make your comments constructive. You can also use emoticons, such as smiley faces, to indicate humor—since one can't always tell if something is meant jokingly just by reading words you post. Realize that without the non-verbal cues we use face to face, it is possible for someone to misinterpret your meaning. Consider this possibility as you develop your discussion posts.

Course Schedule	
Date	Activity
8/24	Course orientation Introduction to Public Health Ethics
	Initial class meeting
Distinguishing Public Health Ethics from Medical Ethics	
8/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrett et al, Chapter 1 • Thomas lecture 1
	DB post 1 & response (To allow all students time to post responses, please try to make your initial post by midnight on Tuesday, 8/29)
Values Underlying Public Health Ethics	
9/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas lecture 2 • Lee L. 2014. My moral compass and ethical decision making in public health. <i>Public Health</i> 128: 579-81.
	Class meeting: Group activity & discussion
The Public Health Code of Ethics	
9/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas lecture 3 • Public Health Code of Ethics • Lee et al., 2016. Revising the American Public Health Association’s Public Health Code of Ethics. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 106(7):1198-99.
	DB post 2 & response—ethics item from literature (To allow all students time to post responses, please try to make your initial post by midnight on Tuesday, 9/12)
Law and Ethics in Public Health	
9/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas lecture 4 • Barrett et al, Chapter 2 • Childress et al, 2002. Public Health Ethics: Mapping the Terrain. <i>Journal of Law, Medicine, & Ethics</i> 30: 170-78.
	Class meeting: Group discussion 1
Social Justice I	
9/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jones, 2014. Systems of Power, Axes of Inequity: Parallels, Intersections, Braiding the Strands. <i>Medical Care</i> 52 (10) Suppl 3 S71-S75. • Jones, 2000. Levels of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and a Gardener’s Tale. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> 90 (8): 1212-15. OR view video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNhcY6fTyBM • Gostin and Powers, 2006. What Does Social Justice Require for the Public’s Health? Public Health Ethics and Policy Imperatives. <i>Health Affairs</i> 25(4): 1053-60. • Read/skim through Health in All Policies, Chapter I (through p. 19), available in Blackboard or at: http://www.phi.org/uploads/files/Health_in_All_Policies-A_Guide_for_State_and_Local_Governments.pdf (direct link to pdf) or http://www.phi.org/resources/?resource=hiapguide&gclid=CLHRs46kt84CFUtahgodu30E8w (link to HiAP home page)
Social Justice II	
10/5	Thomas Lecture 5 DeBruin, et al, Social Justice in Pandemic Preparedness

	<p>Listen to the Podcast (or read the posted transcript) from the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues: Ethically Sound: Ethics and Ebola, available at: https://bioethicsarchive.georgetown.edu/pcsbi/node/5891.html</p> <p>For more information (optional), review the Presidential Commission's full report: <i>Ethics and Ebola: Public Health Planning and Response</i>, available at : https://bioethicsarchive.georgetown.edu/pcsbi/sites/default/files/Ethics-and-Ebola_PCSBI_508.pdf , especially pp 1-31</p> <p>Read Case study for discussion in class</p>
	Class meeting: Group discussion 2
Decision-Making in Public Health Ethics	
10/12	<p>Thomas lecture 6</p> <p>Kass, 2001. An Ethics Framework for Public Health. <i>American Journal of Public Health Ethics</i> 91(11): 1776-82.</p> <p>Powers, Faden, Saghai, 2012. Liberty, Mill, and the Framework of Public Health Ethics. <i>Public Health Ethics</i> 5(1):6-15.</p> <p>Lee, 2012. Public Health Ethics Theory: Review and Path to Convergence. <i>Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics</i> Spring 2012: 85-98.</p>
	Group discussion summary due
Barriers to Ethical Public Health Practice	
10/19	<p>Thomas Lecture 7</p> <p>Ferguson, 2007. Barriers To Serving The Vulnerable: Thoughts Of A Former Public Official. <i>Health Affairs</i> 26(5):1358-65.</p>
	<p>DB 3 post & response—webquest (To allow all students time to post responses, please try to make your initial post by midnight on Tuesday, 10/17)</p> <p>Submit your Public Health Ethics presentation topic to Lisa Anderson by email by 5 PM on 10/19.</p>
Responding to Unethical Events	
10/26	<p>Thomas Lecture 8</p> <p>Watch the NOVA documentary, "Poisoned Water," available at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/body/poisoned-water.html</p> <p>Read the Health Affairs Blog http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/08/08/contaminated-childhood-the-chronic-lead-poisoning-of-low-income-children-and-communities-of-color-in-the-united-states/</p> <p>Begin check out of ATBPO</p>
	<p>Discussion Board: Post questions that you would like for the class to discuss about this topic in class on 10/26. We will work through as many as we can in class.</p> <p>Class meeting: group discussion</p>
Dedicated work time	
11/2	<p>View <i>And the Band Played On</i> if you haven't already</p> <p>Work on your public health ethics presentation</p>
And the Band Played On	
11/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review video at: http://3030.aidsvancouver.org/1983/ Read: Remembering When The Band Played On. . . http://www.hivplusmag.com/stigma/2014/05/08/remembering-when-band-played-and-tragedy-patient-zero

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review questions in preparation for class meeting
	Class meeting: group discussion, ATBPO
Approaches to Behavior Change	
11/16	Summary of Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness, by R.H. Thaler and C.R. Sunstein: Either view video or read excerpted Introduction. Video--watch about first 25 minutes, prior to Q&A session https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rewo7dPiRyU Saghai Y. 2013. Salvaging the Concept of Nudge. <i>Journal of Medical Ethics</i> 39: 487-93. Kumanyika SK, et al. 2007. Expanding the Obesity Research Paradigm to Reach African American Communities. <i>Prevention of Chronic Disease</i> 4(4).
	DB 4 post & response (To allow all students time to post responses, please try to make your initial post by midnight on Tuesday, 11/14)
<i>Enjoy Thanksgiving Break!</i>	
Public Health Ethics Presentations	
11/30	Student presentations
12/7	Student presentations Complete on-line course evaluation (link to be provided)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS IN BRIEF

Discussion board (4—40%):

- 2 question-based
- 1 based on item from literature
- 1 based on item from web (“WebQuest”)

Group session summary (1—15%)

- Individual written summary of ethics case

Final presentation (30%):

- Showcase an ethics issue or case and explain, analyze, and critique based on the knowledge gained in this course

Overall course participation (15%):

- Regular attendance and participation in class meetings

Discussion: In-class group and online board

In each module, students are expected to complete assigned lectures/readings. In four modules, students will meet for group discussion of a case. In three modules, students will be required to post responses on the discussion board. To prepare for either type of discussion, students must view/read the assigned material and complete any additional assignments to be able to contribute meaningfully. For the discussion board, each student must submit an initial posting and comment on a minimum of two initial postings from other students, following the guidelines in the rubric. For the group discussion,

each student must contribute to the discussion and write a brief summary of the group discussion that is submitted in the week after the group discussion.

Since the interchange of ideas in the discussion sessions is an important component of the learning process in this course, participation is graded. Student discussion board posts and responses to student comments are assessed, as are the group discussion summaries. Rubrics following this section outline expectations for assignments. Important to a discussion board grades are the quality of the posting and the extent to which the posting stimulates further discussion from other course participants. Important to the discussion group summaries are a comprehensive summary of the group discussion and response to all elements in the summary questions.

Discussion Board Assignments. Within the discussion board environment are three separate types of assignments. There are seven total discussion boards, broken down as follows:

- 2 discussion board forums in which students respond to questions about the discussion topic
- 1 requiring students to identify (and hyperlink to) a peer-reviewed article conduct a critical review of the article and post a brief review on the discussion board
- 1 requiring that students identify (and hyperlink to) a relevant item (e.g., peer-reviewed article, news item, video, blog) on the Internet related to the module topic with a brief explanation of that item and its relevance to the module topic

Number of postings. All assignments posted on the discussion board require students to develop an original post and then read a minimum of one post by another student and comment on the post. Once you have posted your required response to another student's post, please continue to respond to other postings, but realize that guidelines for responses to postings will be relaxed once you have made those initial two responses. However, please continue to make relevant comments of at least a sentence or two in length—"I agree" and "Yesss!!" are not acceptable responses in a discussion board! For example, agree or disagree, but briefly elaborate on your reasons for doing so.

Extra credit. Extra credit of 1 point per discussion board will be assigned for students who make efforts to continue a discussion thread beyond the minimum number of posts, by questioning other students about their posts or providing feedback that stimulates further discussion. At least two additional posts are required to earn a point.

Discussion Board Groups. The class will be divided into two-three groups for discussion boards and will remain in those groups for the full semester. The purpose of establishing groups is to reduce the number of participants in each discussion board and provide more opportunity for idea exchange among participants. Each discussion board group will have the same assignment.

Class Discussion Groups. Discussions may be in large groups or students will be assigned to groups of 4-5 members for group discussion or in-class tasks. Attendance at group discussion sessions is expected. Students with reasonable explanations for not being able to attend a session should notify the instructor more than 24 hours in advance of an anticipated absence, barring unexpected events such as sudden illness. Students may be required to submit a written summary of certain group discussions (including their own input) in the week following the class meeting. Students who miss a group discussion session will be responsible for submitting the related group work assignment. More than one absence from group discussion may lead to deduction of points for related assignments.

Public Health Ethics Presentation

Student teams of 2-3 will give a presentation at the end of the semester on an item or topic of importance to public health ethics and relevant to the course content. Students select the topic, with approval from the instructor. Appropriate focus for this presentation includes

- an article in the peer-reviewed literature
- a recent event or issue reported in the mainstream media
- a historical event

The purpose of this presentation is to allow students to demonstrate what they have learned from the course material by applying and linking knowledge about public health ethics to their presentation topics. Depending on the number of teams, presentations will be 15-20 minutes—and will be timed to ensure that we can fit all presentations into the last two class meetings. Each presentation must include:

- (1) A brief summary of the presentation topic
- (2) An explanation of how the item demonstrates two or more concepts/public health ethics principles or values from this course
- (3) An explanation of the relevance of this presentation topic to public health ethics; i.e., why this item addresses critical public health ethics issue and lends insight and/or understanding of this discipline
- (4) Conclusions or critique that related to the topic; e.g., was the correct action taken and if so, why (explain); if not, what would you have recommended be done? or what does this topic/event teach us about how to act in an ethical manner in future, similar situations?
- (5) All students on the presentation team are expected to give a portion of the presentation.

GRADING

Grading scale

91-100	A
81-90	B
71-80	C
< 71	failure (course unacceptable for graduate credit)

Assignment Rubrics

Expectations for postings in response to discussion board questions

Element	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Original post content	Addresses the issue with insightful questions, critical reactions that examine inconsistencies, provide additional information, examine and/or draw conclusions, use reasonable judgment, synthesize data; stimulates further discussion from others	Asks some insightful questions, categorizes content, identifies inconsistencies, recognizes context, shows some reasonable judgment; attempts to stimulate further discussion from others	Fails to question concepts and issues, misses major content areas, detects no inconsistencies, fails to draw conclusions, sees no arguments, overlooks differences, does not stimulate further discussion from others
Minimum length	2-3 paragraphs, minimum 4-5 sentences each		
Response postings to others' original posts (per post; 1 post min.)	1.5-2 points	1- < 1.5 points	0- < 1 point
Content	Supports or constructively critiques fellow student's post; provides reasons for the support or critique from the module material or other resources; makes observations relative to course content to date; introduces new ideas; stimulates further discussion in the thread by asking questions	Supports or questions fellow student's post. Supports arguments and links to at least two major issues/principles covered in course content to date. Attempts to stimulate further development of discussion	Minimal content; fails to offer arguments for or against post; does not link comments to module material; does not attempt to stimulate further development of discussion
Minimum length	1-2 paragraphs, minimum 4 sentences per paragraph		
Overall grammar and usage: 2 points are assigned for proper grammar, usage, and punctuation. Point deductions occur for more than 2 typos, misspellings, or instances of incorrect grammar or punctuation usage.			

A posting should:

For traditional discussion board posts:

- Reference 1-2 specific points from the lecture or other material being discussed
- As appropriate and as the course progresses, relate new information to prior information learned in the course or pull in relevant information such as current events or other materials you identify on your own
- Discuss the issue(s) critically, meaning that you question, critique, offer alternatives, or draw conclusions rather than simply describe or summarize the lecture or other module material.
- Provide concrete reasons for why you agree or disagree with a particular point and justify why you analyze aspects of an issue or module material as positive, negative, etc.
- Employ proper grammar, spelling, and usage.

Expectations for postings, critical article analysis discussion board

Element	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Relevance of article to PH ethics	Item directly and clearly related to public health ethics and topics studied in course to date.	Item clearly and directly related to public health ethics or item is related to public health ethics but public health ethics is not the main focus of article. However, it is possible to clearly parallel concepts and topics studied in course to date.	Selected item not directly related /does not cover issues relevant to public health ethics; relation to topics studied in course to date hard or impossible to draw.
Original post content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully summarizes article, addressing major and minor points Fully explains article's relevance to the ethics topic, citing important elements from module lecture Critically analyzes 1-3 salient points in article with 1-2 questions about and/or arguments for or against main issues or viewpoints, clearly and fully explained with evidence from article or course content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes article, addressing main points; a few minor points may be overlooked. Explanation of relevance to module topic cover major issues Analysis of article's points addresses major issues; questions, critiques, or arguments about article content link to major issues; may address some of the minor issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to summarize article in a way that helps reader understand content without reading article itself Fails to explain article's relevance to topic, omitting reference to major issues Provides minimal analysis and/or does not question issues or provide evidence supporting the critique of specific issues or viewpoints; summarizes rather than critiques
Length	No more than 3-4 paragraphs, minimum 4-5 sentences each		
Response posting (1 post min.)	Supports or constructively critiques fellow student's post; provides reasons for the support or critique from major and minor issues in course material or other resources; stimulates further discussion in the thread by asking questions	Supports or questions fellow student's post, addressing major issues and connecting only to primary course materials. May attempt to stimulate further discussion.	Minimal content; fails to offer arguments for or against post; does not link comments to module material; does not attempt to stimulate further discussion
Length	1-2 paragraphs, minimum 4 sentences per paragraph		
Overall grammar and usage: 2 points are assigned for proper grammar, usage, and punctuation. Point deductions occur for more than 2 typos, misspellings, or instances of incorrect grammar or punctuation usage.			

For critical article analysis:

- Briefly summarize the article selected and explain its relevance to the topic of the current module or previous module(s) ; justify your selection of this article for this particular module topic by explaining how it relates to at least one specific point from the lecture
- Critically analyze salient issues in the article by, for example, by providing concrete reasons for your agreement or disagreement with a particular point and justification for why you analyze aspects of an issue as positive, negative, etc.
- Depending on your viewpoint, you may question certain elements, offer alternative explanations or suggestions for action, draw your own conclusions, etc.
- As appropriate, relate information in the article to prior information learned in the course or pull in relevant information such as current events or other materials you identify on your own
- Employ proper grammar, spelling, and usage.

Expectations for postings, Internet Item

Element	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Relevance of item to PH ethics	Item directly and clearly related to public health ethics and topics studied in course to date.	Item clearly and directly related to public health ethics or item is related to public health ethics but public health ethics is not the main focus. However, it is possible to clearly parallel concepts and topics studied in course to date. Item either clearly parallels concepts and topics studied in course to date, or if not, it is possible to draw parallels and explain how the topic relates to public health ethics.	Selected item not directly related /does not cover issues relevant to public health ethics; relation to topics studied in course to date hard or impossible to draw.
Original post content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully describes and summarizes item selected • Fully explains how item's content relates to the module topic selected, providing more than 2 reasons/arguments for item's relevance. • Offers focused commentary/opinion on ethics issue discussed, relating to course material as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary covers main issues but may overlook minor ones • Explanation of item's content addresses major topics, providing at least 2 reasons/arguments for item's • Some commentary or opinion on ethics issue; linking to major issues in course material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to summarize or describe item in a way that makes it understandable to reader without reviewing item itself • Fails to justify item's relevance or connect item's content to module topics • Lacks commentary or opinion ; makes no attempt to link to course material
Length	No more than 3-4 paragraphs, minimum 4-5 sentences each		
Response posting (1 post min.)	Supports or constructively critiques fellow student's	Supports or questions fellow student's post,	Minimal content; fails to offer arguments for or

	post, addressing major and minor issues; provides reasons for the support or critique from the module material or other resources; stimulates further discussion in the thread	addressing 1-2 major issues. May attempt to stimulate more discussion.	against post; does not link comments to module material; does not attempt to stimulate further discussion
Length	1-2 paragraphs, minimum 4 sentences per paragraph		
<i>Overall grammar and usage: 2 points are assigned for proper grammar, usage, and punctuation. Point deductions occur for more than 2 typos, misspellings, or instances of incorrect grammar or punctuation usage.</i>			

For Internet Item post:

- Briefly summarize the item you have selected and explain why you made your choice
- Explain your item's relevance to the topic of the current module or any previous module; provide at least two reasons for the item's relevance.
- Provide your own commentary on the article and salient issues, expressing opinion (with justification for the viewpoint) and linking your discussion to relevant course content
- Employ proper grammar, spelling, and usage.
- Rubric for Individual Written Summary of Small Group Case Discussion

Expectations for Small Discussion Group Summary

Element of Summary	Performance Assessment Guidelines		
	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Ethical Issues Analysis	Provides comprehensive explanation of public health risks and harms of concern, public health goals, and stakeholders and their specific interests, values, and/or moral claims. Explains how codes of ethics may provide guidance. Response demonstrates thorough critical analysis of the situation and tensions generated among stakeholders.	Addresses major public health risks and harms of concern, public health goals, and stakeholders and their specific interests, values, and/or moral claims. Addresses role of codes of ethics in providing guidance. Response demonstrates an analysis that addressed major factors involved in the situation.	Does not address all areas (public health risks and harms of concern, public health goals, and stakeholders and specific interests, values, and/or moral claims. Fails to address role of code of ethics in providing guidance. Response demonstrates only partial consideration of the main players in the case.
Ethical Dimensions of Alternate Courses of Action	Thoroughly describes the relevance of at least 3 ethical dimensions to the case (i.e., providing a paragraph of explanation on each of the ethical dimensions). Response demonstrates thorough critical analysis of the case.	Thoroughly describes the relevance of at least 2 ethical dimensions to the case (i.e., providing 2-3 paragraphs of explanation on the ethical dimensions). Response demonstrates thorough consideration of at least 2 major ethical dimensions of alternate courses of action.	Fails to fully describe the major public health risks and harms of concern. Does not address at least two ethical dimensions, and any explanation of a particular factor is minimal (e.g., 1-2 sentences to address a particular dimension). Response demonstrates incomplete consideration of the ethical dimensions and alternate courses of action.
Justification for the Action	Thoroughly addresses all five factors for justifying the recommended action, responding to each of the questions in the CDC Ethical Analysis Framework and demonstrating in-depth knowledge of principles covered in the course to date.	Addresses four of the five factors for justifying the recommended action, responding to each of the questions in the CDC Ethical Analysis Framework and demonstrating competent knowledge of principles covered in the course to date.	Addresses fewer than four of the five factors for justifying recommended action; provides incomplete explanation to the questions in the CDC Ethical Analysis Framework. Demonstrates limited knowledge of principles covered in the course to date.
Length of summary	Anticipated 3-5 pages, double spaced, to respond to the CDC Ethical Analysis Framework in an acceptable manner.		
<i>Overall grammar and usage: 2 points are assigned for proper grammar, usage, and punctuation. Point deductions occur for more than 2 typos, misspellings, or instances of incorrect grammar or punctuation usage.</i>			

Expectations for Public Health Ethics Presentation (Final Assignment)

Element	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
	3-4 points	2 points	0-1 points
Relevance of presentation to PH ethics	Topic is directly and clearly related to public health ethics and issues/principles studied in course. Student justifies relevance by linking to the areas of values, code(s) of ethics, ethical and moral principles and elements of selected ethical analysis frameworks.	Topic is related to public health ethics and issues/principles studied in course. Student is able to justify by linking to the areas of values, code(s) of ethics, and ethical and moral principles.	Topic is not directly or only tangentially related to public health ethics. Student can justify only by linking to 1-2 elements covered in the course content.
Summary of case/experience/history item	Fully summarizes topic in a way that enables audience to understand the case history or circumstances and importance of topic/case to public health ethics.	Summarizes topic by covering major points but may leave audience with a few questions needed to understand the topic or circumstances and importance of topic/case to public health ethics.	Summary leaves audience with lack of full understanding of topic or case history and its importance to public health ethics.
Analysis/linking to course material	Presentation critically analyzes 3 or more salient issues from topic linked to public health ethics and addresses questions about and/or arguments for or against main issues or viewpoints. Analysis is clearly and fully explained with evidence from course content or other reliable sources.	Presentation critically analyzes a minimum of 2 salient issues linked to public health ethics and addresses questions about and/or arguments for or against main issues or viewpoints. Analysis is clearly and fully explained with evidence from article or course content.	Presentation provides minimal analysis and/or does not question issues or provide evidence supporting the critique of specific issues or viewpoints. Presentation involves more summary than critical analysis. Links to course content are minimal or superficial.
Length: 15-20 minutes, depending on number of presentations.			

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY POLICIES FOR WHICH STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE

Campus emergency information

What to know and do to be prepared for emergencies at VCU:

- Sign up to receive [VCU text messaging alerts](#). Keep your information up-to-date. Within the classroom, the professor will keep his or her phone on to receive any emergency transmissions.
- Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.
- Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities. Within the classroom, follow your professor's instructions.
- Know where to go for [additional emergency information](#).
- Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234).
- Report suspicious activities and objects.
- Keep your permanent address and emergency contact information current in eServices.

Class registration required for attendance

Students may attend only those classes for which they have registered. Faculty may not add students to class rosters or Blackboard. Therefore, if students are attending a class for which they have not registered, they must stop attending.

Honor System: upholding academic integrity

The VCU Honor System policy describes the responsibilities of students, faculty and administration in upholding academic integrity, while at the same time respecting the rights of individuals to the due process offered by administrative hearings and appeals. According to this policy, "Members of the academic community are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty, ethics and integrity at all times." In addition, "To support a commitment to the Honor System, all members of the VCU community are required to:

- Adhere to the Honor System policy and its procedures;
- Report any suspicion or knowledge of possible violations of the Honor System;
- Answer truthfully when called upon to do so regarding Honor System matters;
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding related to Honor System matters."

More information can be found at in the [VCU policy library](#).

Important dates

You can view important dates for the semester in the [academic calendar](#).

Managing stress

Students may experience situations or challenges that can interfere with learning and interpersonal functioning including stress, anxiety, depression, alcohol and/or other drug use, concern for a friend or family member, loss, sleep difficulties, feeling hopeless or relationship problems. There are numerous campus resources available to students including University Counseling Services (804-828-6200 MPC Campus, 804-828-3964 MCV Campus), University Student Health Services (MPC 804 828-8828, MCV Campus 804 828-9220) and the Wellness Resource Center (804-828-9355). 24 hour emergency mental health support is available by calling 828-1234 and asking to speak to the on-call therapist or utilizing the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-784-2433).

Mandatory responsibility of faculty members to report incidents of sexual misconduct

It is important for students to know that all faculty members are mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct/violence (e.g., sexual assault, sexual exploitation and partner or relationship violence). This means that faculty cannot keep information about sexual misconduct/violence confidential if you share that information with them and they must report this information immediately to the university's Title IX Coordinator. In addition, department chairs, deans, and other unit administrators are required to report incidents of sex or gender-based discrimination to the university's Title IX Coordinator. Once a report is made, you will receive important information on your reporting options, on campus and off campus resources and remedial measures such as no-contact directives, residence modifications, and academic modifications. If you would prefer to speak with someone confidentially for support and to discuss your options for reporting, contact:

- VCU's Wellness Resource Center 804.828.9355 | myoptions@vcu.edu | thewell.vcu.edu
- Greater Richmond Regional Hotline (Community program) 804.612.6126 | 24-hour hotline
- VCU's Counseling Services 804-828-6200

For more information on how to help, please [click here](#). The Policy on Sexual Misconduct/Violence and Sex/Gender Discrimination, can be found in the [VCU policy library](#). For more information about the University's Title IX process, please visit equity.vcu.edu.

Military short-term training or deployment

If military students receive orders for short-term training or for deployment/mobilization, they should inform and present their orders to Military Student Services and to their professor(s). For further information on policies and procedures contact Military Student Services at 828-5993 or access the corresponding policies.

Student conduct in the classroom

According to the [Faculty Guide to Student Conduct in Instructional Settings](#), "The university is a community of learners. Students, as well as faculty, have a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment that supports effective instruction. In order for faculty members (including graduate teaching assistants) to provide and students to receive effective instruction in classrooms, laboratories, studios, online courses, and other learning areas, the university expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly and cooperative manner." Among other things, cell phones should be turned off while in the classroom. The Student Code of Conduct also prohibits the possession of or carrying of any weapon. For more information see <http://register.dls.virginia.gov/details.aspx?id=3436>.

Student email policy

Email is considered an official method for communication at VCU because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost-effective, and environmentally aware manner. Students are expected to check their official VCU email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of university-related communications. The university recommends checking email daily. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, university-related communications sent to their official VCU student email account. This policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the university as needed. Mail sent to the VCU email address may include notification of university-related actions, including disciplinary action. Please read the policy in its entirety at the [VCU Policy Library](#).

Student financial responsibility

Students assume the responsibility of full payment of tuition and fees generated from their registration and all charges for housing and dining services, and other applicable miscellaneous charges. Students are ultimately

responsible for any unpaid balance on their account as a result of the University Financial Aid Office or their third party sponsor canceling or reducing their award(s).

Students representing the university – excused absences

Students who represent the university (athletes and others) do not choose their schedules. Student athletes are required to attend games and/or meets. All student athletes should provide their schedules to their instructors at the beginning of the semester. The Intercollegiate Athletic Council strongly encourages faculty to treat missed classes or exams (because of a scheduling conflict) as excused absences and urges faculty to work with the students to make up the work or exam.

Students with disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, require that VCU provide "academic adjustments" or "reasonable accommodations" to any student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. To receive accommodations, students must register with the Disability Support Services Office on the Monroe Park Campus (828-2253) or the Division for Academic Success on the MCV campus (828-9782). Please also visit the [Disability Support Services website](#) and/or the [Division for Academic Success website](#) for additional information.

Once students have completed the DSS registration process, they should schedule a meeting with their instructor (s) and provide their instructor (s) with an official DSS accommodation letter. Accommodation letters will outline the required classroom accommodations. Additionally, if coursework requires the student to work in a lab environment, the student should advise the instructor or a department chairperson of any concerns that the student may have regarding safety issues related to a disability. Students should follow this procedure for all courses in the academic semester.

Withdrawal from classes

Before withdrawing from classes, students should consult their instructor as well as other appropriate university offices. Withdrawing from classes may negatively impact a student's financial aid award and his or her semester charges. To discuss financial aid and the student bill, visit the [Student Services Center](#) at 1015 Floyd Avenue (Harris Hall) and/or contact your financial aid counselor regarding the impact on your financial aid.