

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
PUBH 3420 – PUBLIC HEALTH ETHICS  
Course Syllabus – Spring, 2016**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Ethical principles and values are introduced to explore the tension between individualistic notions of human rights and the communitarian concern for the well-being of communities in public health practice.

Pre-requisite(s): Third-year standing (a minimum of 60.0 credit hours)

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Students will be able to:

1. Identify and explore the values underlying public health practice
2. Describe, compare and apply models and theories commonly used in health ethics, such as: utilitarian, deontological, principle-based, justice (distributive and social), relational, multiculturalism, health policy and environmental
3. Identify the interests, values and key ethical tensions at stake in public health activities, cases, programs or policies
4. Identify and evaluate options available in resolving public health dilemmas.
5. Demonstrate critical reasoning skills and ethical problem solving and justification, both individually and in groups.

**APPROACH TO LEARNING:**

This online course utilizes asynchronous forum discussions, and audiovisual and text-based online learning materials to support students in exploring ethical frameworks and ethical decision making. Online discussions are designed to support the development of a community of learners (a virtual group supporting collaborative learning).

To create a community of learner, students must be open to the ideas, thoughts, and experiences of others, and treat all class members with dignity, respect, and consideration. In addition, students are expected to contribute to the learning of others as well as learn from their peers.

**Discussion Forums**

The purpose of discussion forums is to provide students the opportunity to engage in thoughtful reflection, discussion, and debate about aspects of the course content. Weekly discussion forums also support the development of a community of learners.

Ethical theories with their concomitant Youtube videos, text, required readings, and case studies will be posted on Moodle. The examination and discussion of the ethical theories and cases will occur over a one to two week period.

Students are expected to read the case and review the associated course content. Once this is completed, students will then post their responses to the guiding question and to their colleagues' postings in their assigned Moodle discussion space.

**Participation in asynchronous discussions is a required and a substantial part of this online course. Regular and in-depth participation is required to pass this course and to maximize the benefit of the online learning environment.**

Each week, students will:

1. Study all course materials.
2. Work through the case using the 'critical reasoning' framework:
  - *What's going on here?*
    - What is the ethical problem?
    - What is at stake and for whom?
    - What values/beliefs might each stakeholder hold (including you)?
    - What assumptions (taken for granted information) are being made?
    - What necessary information (e.g. data, facts, observations) is needed to make a decision?
    - What is your interpretation of the information?
  - *Options for action*
    - What options exist to resolve the problem?
  - *Evaluate the options using the ethical framework*
    - What is the best choice of action?
    - Why is this choice of action the best choice?
    - How did the ethical perspective inform the best course of action?
3. Prepare their response in a Word document ensuring that their ideas are clear and that there are no grammatical errors.
4. Post their answers to the discussion question (posted by Dr. Sedgwick) by starting a new discussion topic thread. Note that in in-person conversations, the comments we offer do not repeat what has already been said. Rather, they advance the conversation. The same is true for online discussions. **Do not** repeat the same information colleagues have already shared. Instead, provide new insights and understanding. This means that you will have to read what your colleagues have already posted so that you can build on ideas that have already been put forward. You are to use references to support your ideas.

These original posts are to be 250-300 words in length (excluding references). They also need to be written in such a way that the use of the 'critical reasoning' framework is clearly evident. Here's an example of a post:

*In this case, we're asked to consider what Alice might do: turn her back so syringes go missing or encourage inmates to use bleach as the physician does. But perhaps before we identify a course of action, we need to consider what's going on here.*

*In a document addressing the notion of respecting inmate rights in Canadian prisons, the Correctional investigator asks his audience to consider the following questions: "Why care? Why care about hope and dignity? Why care about being humane or compassionate?" He goes on to say that penitentiaries were never meant to be hospitals however, the tensions of providing adequate and appropriate health care in the prison setting are increasing. He further explains that prisons are overcrowded, prison suicides are higher than the average Canadian population, there's a disproportionate rate of Aboriginal people in prison, and that prisons have the largest population of mentally ill people in Canada. It is perhaps not surprising therefore, that HIV is also a health issue in our prisons.*

*Perhaps the issue is not so much what Alice should do, but rather, that the prison environment is a human rights issue. Perhaps we need to evaluate how we treat members of society who are on the fringe? What do you think?*

Monique  
(208)

Reference:

<http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/comm/sp-all/sp-all20130417-eng.aspx>

5. **Respond to two colleagues posts** to the discussion question. These posts should not exceed 100 words and need to professionally *affirm*, *challenge*, and *extend* your colleagues thinking. End these posts by asking a question intended to further everyone's thinking. Given that these responses are the equivalent of participating in small group discussion, if two people have already responded to one original post, please choose another post to which to respond so that rich and in-depth discussion is supported.
6. Respond thoughtfully and succinctly to those who have responded to your posts.

These requirements represent the *minimal* level of participation.

**Weekly discussions will begin on Monday morning at 0900h, and conclude Thursday evening at 2100h.**

**Ground rules for discussion forums:** So that in-depth and meaningful discussion might occur, participants must feel safe in presenting their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and opinions. This occurs when:

1. Responses and postings are treated with consideration and respect;
2. Postings are respectfully worded; and
3. The contributions of others are recognized and appreciated.

Disagreement and diversity of opinion are expected and welcomed; however, the discussion forum environment must be accepting and appreciative of these differences.

#### **Respecting Web Space: Tricks for Developing Effective Postings:**

- Develop a response in a Word document before posting it. Check it for completeness, clarity, grammar, and tone
- Check the post for length. Long messages do not invite the readers' engagement and participation
- Follow an established thread if adding to the existing idea/discussion
- When introducing a new idea, establish a new thread
- Briefly state at the beginning of the message what the message is about

#### **CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY:**

***The YouTube videos, notes and asynchronous online discussions are NOT to be used or shared for any purpose, or with any person not enrolled in PUBH 3420 this semester.*** The online class environment needs to have the same "what is said in this classroom stays in this classroom" ethos of an in-person course in ethics.

Your registration in this online course constitutes ***implied consent*** to the terms of confidentiality. Any student who is uncomfortable with the participation requirements and delivery method of this course should discuss these concerns with Dr. Sedgwick immediately.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

There is no required text for this course.

Links to the required readings are embedded in the course content.

List of topics and required readings are posted in the document titled 'Class Schedule & Topics.' This document is posted in Moodle.

**EVALUATION STRATEGIES:**

Description of Assignment:	Due Date:
<b>Discussion Forum Participation</b>	
Weekly Postings	ongoing
<b>Critical reasoning assignments</b>	
Critical reasoning schematic #1	January 25, 2016
Critical reasoning schematic #2	February 22, 2016
Critical reasoning schematic #3	March 14, 2016
Critical reasoning schematic #4	April 11, 2016
<b>Tri-Council Policy Statement</b>	
TCPS certificate	April 15, 2016

**1. Discussion Forum Participation (3%/week x 10 weeks = 30% total)**

Student postings will be evaluated each week (excluding the introduction week) using the Weekly Posting Criteria (found below). Note that there are a maximum of 8 marks that can be earned each week.

**2. Critical Reasoning Schematic (55% of total course grade: Schematic #1 is weighted at 10%; Schematic #2 is weighted at 13%; Schematic #3 is weighted at 15%; Schematic #4 is weighted at 17%):**

Critical reasoning is concerned with giving reasons for one's beliefs and actions; analysing and evaluating one's own and other people's reasoning; and devising and constructing better reasoning. Like other skills, critical reasoning skills can be improved and polished with practice. The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with the opportunity to engage in the process of critical reasoning.

To complete this assignment, you will:

- Select a case discussed in the discussion forum (specific cases have been assigned for each schematic. Please see the listings below). Clearly identify which case you will be presenting.
- Use the posts from the discussion forum your colleagues have shared, and following the schematic posted in Moodle, you will insert the relevant information for each section of the critical reasoning framework. A black font will be used to represent the information you and your colleagues have discussed.
- Add to the schematic since the discussion you and your colleagues have engaged in will most likely be incomplete. Insert the new information into the appropriate sections of the schematic using red font.
- Use arrows to indicate which components are linked and how (direction of the arrow(s) will determine how the components are linked).
- Include references you used in your postings and as well as the new references you used in the assignment. APA format is expected.
- Submit the schematic as a pdf file in the appropriate section in Moodle.

Schematic #1:

- Select either the case presented in week 2 (Deontology) or week 3 (Utilitarianism) for your **first** critical reasoning schematic.

Schematic #2:

- Select either the case presented in week 5 (Codes of ethics) or week 6 (Principles in Public Health) for your **second** critical reasoning schematic.

Schematic #3:

- Select either the case presented in week 9 (Feminist) or week 10 (Policy) for your **third** critical reasoning schematic.

Schematic #4:

- Select either the case presented in week 12 (Distributive Justice) or week 13 (Social Justice) for your **fourth** critical reasoning schematic.

### 3. Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 Tutorial:

The TCPS 2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics (CORE) provides an applied approach to understanding and using the Tri-Council Policy Statement. This is an online, self-paced course with eight modules. Each module contains interactive exercises and provides multi-disciplinary examples. Modules vary in length of time to complete. At the end of the course, a certificate of completion is provided.

As members of a healthcare profession, you are required to read, understand, and analyze current research. Foundational to understanding and analyzing research is the appreciation of how ethics influences the research process. Completing this course is intended to help you develop insight into the ethics of conducting research.

You will access the following website and complete the course. Once you have completed the course, send a copy of the certificate to the instructor. You will then be awarded 15% toward your final course grade.

<http://www.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS:

- 1) All students should familiarize themselves with the Academic Regulations and Policies of the University of Lethbridge (see 2015/2016 U of L Calendar). Of particular interest are the policies pertaining to Student Misconduct, Academic Offenses, and Accommodations for Students with a Disability. *This is an ethics course: academic integrity is simply not negotiable.*
- 2) All assignments must be submitted electronically to the assignment drop box in Moodle.
- 3) Assignments are due at the specified time and date. As per FOHS policy, **marks on late assignments will be deducted 5% per day (including weekdays, weekends and holidays)**. This deduction will accumulate up to 7 days following the original due date, at which time the assignment **will not be marked and a 0% grade will be assigned**. Exceptions are allowed at the discretion of the instructor, may require proper documentation (i.e., letter from a nurse, counsellor, or physician, or other documentation as above) and must be negotiated within **72 hours** of the assignment due date.
- 4) It is expected that university students are familiar with correct spelling and grammar rules. If you feel that you need help in these areas, you are strongly advised to obtain and use dictionaries and style guides, and/or take advantage of the assistance offered to students by the university writing centre.
- 5) Your work *may* be checked for plagiarism. Submission to Turnitin.com will be used to verify originality.
- 6) Academic results will be posted in your confidential grades section on Moodle.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN:**

The grading system for this course is consistent with that established in the Faculty of Health Sciences, effective May, 2002.

Letter	GPA	Percent	Letter	GPA	Percent
A+	4.0	95 - 100%	C+	2.3	71 - 74.9%
A	4.0	91 - 94.9%	C	2.0	67 - 70.9%
A-	3.7	87 - 90.9%	C-	1.7	63 - 66.9%
B+	3.3	83 - 86.9%	D+	1.3	59 - 62.9%
B	3.0	79 - 82.9%	D	1.0	55 - 58.9%
B-	2.7	75 - 78.9%	F	0	0 - 54.9%

**PLAGIARISM STATEMENT:**

The University of Lethbridge subscribes to Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection service. Please be advised that student work submitted for credit in this course may be submitted to this system to verify its originality. Students must be able to submit both electronic and hard copy versions of their work upon request.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY:**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. If you have been diagnosed with a disability, there is no need to face the challenge of University without support. Please contact the Counselling Services/Accommodated Learning Centre at 403.329.2766 <http://www.uleth.ca/ross/counselling/index.html> to set up an appointment. After registering with the Accommodated Learning Centre, your instructor will be notified by a formal letter of any accommodations you require. In addition, students are responsible for requesting accommodations from the instructor at least \*two weeks\* in advance of the evaluation date. The instructor and student are jointly responsible for arranging the resources needed for the evaluation process.

**COPYRIGHT STATEMENT:**

All University of Lethbridge students, faculty and staff must comply with Canadian law and institutional license agreements pertaining to copyright. At the same time, keeping abreast of our copyright obligations and options is a complex task as copyright matters locally and globally are in flux and are likely to remain so for at least the near future.

The University's Copyright website ([www.uleth.ca/copyright](http://www.uleth.ca/copyright)) is a source of current copyright information that includes:

- answers to common copyright questions (see the [FAQs](#)),
- guidance on whether you need permission or a license to copy a particular work (see the [Copyright Permissions Flow Chart](#)),
- guidance on assessing whether fair dealing may apply to specific instances of copying you wish to undertake (see the [Guidelines for Copying under Fair Dealing](#)), and
- a [permissions look-up tool](#) to help you determine the kinds of copying and other uses permitted by the Library's license agreements covering specific online journals and other online resources.

You are encouraged to contact the University Copyright Advisor ([copyright@uleth.ca](mailto:copyright@uleth.ca)) for assistance with any copyright questions or issues.

**PUBH 3420 Public Health Ethics**  
**Spring, 2016**  
**Weekly Posting Criteria**

Criterion	0	1	2
<p><b>Preparation:</b>            Deep reflection upon course readings/materials. Draws on additional relevant evidence in response to discussion questions. Resources and references are properly cited using APA format. Expression of ideas is clear and succinct. Logical development of ideas. No grammatical or spelling errors.</p>	<p>Preparation prior to posting is clearly lacking. Minimal understanding of the ethical concepts is evident. Further, postings are poorly written with frequent misspellings and/or improper use of terminology. Posted guidelines for using Moodle are inconsistently followed.</p>	<p>Satisfactory preparation prior to posting is evident. Satisfactory understanding of the ethical concepts is evident. Postings are generally clear however, misspelling and/or improper use of terminology is noted. Minor APA format errors.</p>	<p>Superior preparation prior to posting is evident. Superior understanding of the ethical concepts is evident. Expression of ideas is clear and succinct. Logical development of ideas. No grammatical or spelling errors. Resources and references are properly cited using APA format.</p>
<p><b>Contribution:</b>            Uses appropriate resources and materials to advance the discussion. Actively and consistently discusses the strengths and limitations of materials and resources brought into the discussion. Actively and consistently uses the critical reasoning framework. Consistent use of personal insights, experiences, and/or examples as evidence of personal engagement with colleagues.</p>	<p>Postings contribute minimally to forum discussions. Inappropriate resources are used. Inconsistent discussion of the strengths and limitations of materials and resources. No new insights are brought forward to advance the discussion with inconsistent use of the critical reasoning framework. Postings generally simply agree with comments already made. Postings inconsistently invite dialogue.</p>	<p>Postings contribute to forum discussion. At times, inappropriate resources are used. Frequent discussion of the strengths and limitations of materials and resources. New insights are sometimes brought forward that advance the discussion using the critical reasoning framework. Some postings simply agree with comments already made while others invite further exploration of alternate points of view. Most postings invite dialogue through questioning and providing thoughtful comments.</p>	<p>Posting consistently contributes to forum discussion. Uses appropriate resources. Actively and consistently discusses the strengths and limitations of materials and resources brought into the discussion. New insights are consistently brought forward and advance the discussion through consistent use of the critical reasoning framework. Postings are thoughtful; they invite exploration of alternate points of view. Postings consistently invite dialogue by posing relevant questions and comments.</p>
<p><b>Respect:</b>            Responses to colleagues are professional, affirming, and challenging with the aim to extend the thinking of others. Highly respectful of others. Offers constructive feedback. Responds to colleagues questions. Considerable and consistent engagement with colleagues' ideas, opinions, and viewpoints.</p>	<p>Postings at times lack courtesy. Tone of postings at times incorporates slang, is unprofessional, lacks clarity, and does not consider readers' perceptions and experiences. Constructive feedback is seldom given. Inconsistently responds to colleagues questions.</p>	<p>Postings are frequently courteous. Tone of postings frequently invites others to respond, i.e. professional, clear, and considerate of readers' perceptions and experiences. Posted guidelines for using Moodle are frequently followed. Frequently provide constructive feedback. Responds to most questions posed by colleagues.</p>	<p>Postings are always courteous. Tone of postings invites others to respond, i.e. professional, clear, and considerate of readers' perceptions and experiences. Posted guidelines for using Moodle are consistently followed. Consistently provides constructive feedback to colleagues. Responds to all questions posed by colleagues.</p>

Criterion	0	1	2
<p><b>Dedication:</b> Responds to two peers on two different occasions.</p>	<p>Postings are frequently not on time and with the posting timeframe. Postings demonstrate low to moderate level of engagement throughout the week. Required number of postings per week is frequently not followed.</p>	<p>Postings are mostly on time and in the posting timeframe. Postings demonstrate engagement throughout the week. Required number of postings per week is frequently followed.</p>	<p>Postings are always on time and in the posting timeframe. Postings demonstrate a high level of engagement throughout the week. Required number of postings per week is consistently followed.</p>
<p><b>TOTAL MARK</b></p>			<p>___/8 x 3% = ___/3</p>

**Critical Reasoning Schematic**  
**PUBH 3420 – Public Health Ethics**  
**Spring, 2016**

<b>Criteria:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Thoroughness of information</b>	Information is inaccurate/incomplete	Information provided is simply what was discussed in the discussion forum.	Information provided is comprehensive and includes new information not previously discussed in the discussion forum
<b>Insightfulness</b>	Lacks insight	Discussion of the values and assumptions elements are somewhat superficial.	Discussion of the values and assumptions elements demonstrate new and relevant insights.
<b>Application of ethical framework</b>	No ethical framework is applied	Ethical framework application is superficial in discussing the best course of action and justification elements	Ethical framework application demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the framework (nuances of the framework are applied) in the discussion of the best course of action and justification elements
<b>Process of critical reasoning is demonstrated</b>	Critical reasoning processes are illogical, scattered, or incomplete	Demonstration of the process (i.e. use of arrows) used for critical reasoning lacks flow.	Logical and comprehensive demonstration of the process (i.e. use of arrows) used for critical reasoning is demonstrated.
<b>APA; Spelling and grammar</b>	APA format is not used. Grammatical and spelling errors throughout document.	Some APA errors made. Some grammatical and spelling errors noted.	APA format is flawless. Grammar and spelling are flawless
<b>Total</b>	/10		

**Total:** /10 x appropriate weighting (i.e. either 10%, 13%, 15% or 17%) = your mark