SPRING 2017

ENVR 698 Ethics and Environmental Health Interventions
Thursdays, 2:00- 4:30pm in 2301 McGavran Greenberg (3 hrs credit)

Course Instructor  Courtney Woods, Ph.D.  166B Rosenau Hall  courtney.woods@unc.edu  (919)-962-4660
Office Hours  By appointment

Text  There is no textbook for the course. All articles and book chapters are listed on the schedule below and will be made available (as pdfs) on the Sakai course site.

Description  This is a capstone course for undergraduate seniors. The course will cover a range of issues in public health ethics, particularly focused on environmental health. We will begin by reviewing various ethical frameworks relevant to public health. In the remainder of the course, we will use a case-study approach to highlight specific ethical dilemmas, both domestic and abroad. Students will also work won a team-based project over the course of the semester. The projects will be focused on topics that have ethical relevance and will integrate students’ knowledge in environmental health.

Course Objectives  This course is designed to help students identify, analyze and resolve ethical issues within environmental health practice and research. Through their capstone project, students will also enhance written and oral presentation skills involved in ethical analysis.

Learning Objectives  Students in this course will learn how to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical dimensions of public health and environmental interventions on individuals and communities.
- Apply knowledge gained in environmental health BSPH to real-world environmental health problems.
- Analyze information from peer-reviewed literature in public health and environmental sciences to identify evidence-based solutions to an environmental health problem.
- Develop a research question and use secondary data to carry out research.
- Demonstrate leadership competencies and efficacy in meeting facilitation, team building, giving feedback, and conflict management.
- Demonstrate effective written and oral communication.

Grading Scale:  A 100-95  A- 94-93  B+ 92-90  B 89-85  B- 84-80  C+ 79-77  C 76-74  C- 73-70  F 69 & below F

Graded Assignments  In-class Discussion (10%): During in-class sessions, students are expected to contribute substantively to the discussion. To do this, students should review all required readings prior to class. For the class meetings in which community leaders attend, students are encouraged to bring questions from the readings and also think of questions to ask during/after their presentations.

Annotated Bibliographies (25%): Students should prepare an annotated bibliography for each required reading and any additional readings that they are assigned for a given week. These bibliographies will be extremely useful for you as you are preparing your final presentation and final paper. Your bibliographies can be submitted weekly on Sakai by noon on Wednesdays. Please review the UNC Writing Center resource for assistance.
CITI Training (5%): Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) helps prepare individuals who will pursue either social and behavioral research or biomedical research with human subjects. The training is offered online.

Capstone Presentation (30%) and Capstone Paper (30%) Students will complete a capstone project within a groups of 3-4. The project will be in service to a real or hypothetical client and primarily involve a literature review and conduct of limited research using available data.

Honor Code Your work in this course is governed by The University of North Carolina Honor Code (http://honor.unc.edu). The Honor Code states "It shall be the responsibility of every student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity." Instructors are required to report apparent violations to the Student Attorney General. In the past Honor Code violations have resulted in students in online course being dismissed from UNC.

Course Schedule
Jan 12 Introductions & Skills Assessments

Jan 19 Theories in Public Health and Environmental Ethics
- Capstone Teams Assigned

Jan 26 Defining Ethics in Environmental Health (Morality, Justice, Human Rights)
- Gabr, Mandouh. Health Ethics, Ethics and Human Dignity
- Complete the survey on Fairness and save your results http://www.yourmorals.org/explore.php
- Discussion about capstone project with each team

Feb 2 Resource Allocation Priority Setting, Distributive Power, Political Ideology
- Hutton, Guy. Economic evaluation and priority setting in water and sanitation interventions. WHO Water Quality: Guidelines, Standards and Health
- Distributive Justice from Encyclopedia of Social Psychology

Feb 9 Case I: Basic Environmental Health Infrastructure (Amenities)
• Submit Draft of Background for Feedback

Feb 16 Case II: Ethics in Climate Adaptation

Feb 23 Research Ethics (IRB, CITI Training, the concepts of informed consent, risk and benefits, vulnerability, and privacy and confidentiality; COI international ethical issues in research; and responsible conduct of research.

• Resnik, DB, Zeldin, DC, Sharp, RR. Research on Environmental Health Interventions: Ethical Problems and Solutions. Accountability in Research, 12:69–101. DOI: 10.1080/08989620590957157
• Wing, S. Social responsibility and research ethics in community driven studies of industrialized hog production. Environmental Health Perspectives, 110:437-444, 2002

Mar 2 Case III: Household Air Pollution and Cookstoves

• Allen, RW, Barn, PK, Lanphear, BP. Randomized Controlled Trials in Environmental Health Research: Unethical or Underutilized?
• Submit Draft of Literature Review Feedback

Mar 9 Case IV: Environmental Interventions Addressing Infectious Diseases

• Complete CITI Training by Mar 10

Spring Break Mar 10 - 20

Mar 23 Community engagement and public trust in research

• Discuss Research Plan

Mar 30 Case V: Lead Contamination in the US

• Submit Draft of Research Plan for Feedback
Apr 6 Ethical Dilemmas of International Aid and Voluntourism


Apr 13 Cases VI & VII: Unintended Consequences of International Aid in Haiti and Bangladesh

- Submit Draft of Research Evaluation and Dissemination Plan for Feedback

Apr 20 Group Presentations
Apr 27 Final Papers Due and Course Closing

*Any changes to the schedule and additional readings will be mentioned in class and posted on Sakai.

Capstone Project

The capstone project involves investigating an environmental health problem that possesses underlying ethical questions. The environmental health issue will be identified from a broad range of “clients” including domestic or international community groups, county agencies and NGOs. Student teams will select among a short list of potential projects. Students will develop questions and conduct research that may be used by the client to develop a solution to the problem or inform the approaches that the client uses to resolve the problem. Students will review scientific literature, grey literature, public databases and public documents to identify similar cases (if they exist), knowledge gaps and best practices. The analytical tools that students will need to do this will be provided throughout the semester.

Important Resources

Throughout the semester, students will be given important resources for their projects, including theories and frameworks in ethics, review of cases studies relevant to public health ethics, skills for working on teams, information on how to search peer-reviewed literature, how to assess the strength of the published literature and its findings for developing evidence-based solutions and how to conduct various types of research with secondary data. Depending on the project students will also have an opportunity to speak with the client or a proxy to gain more insight into the environmental health issue.
Final Products

Students should submit a final paper (no more than 50 pages, excluding references). Students are expected to research the problem using information that is currently available online (scientific and grey literature, media) and in print. The research that students develop to answer the question should be based on existing sources of data. Students are not expected to collect their own data. The paper and presentation should cover:

- **Background** (statement of the problem and gaps in what is known)
- **Literature Review** (review of relevant publications related to the problem)
- **Methods** (approaches used in your research)
- **Research Findings** (what did you discover)
- **Recommendation** (this should be a description of how you envision your research finding can be used by your client to advance their work)
- **Conclusions** (including limitations of your work, next steps)