

CODE : ENVH 523

TITLE: Ethics & Environmental Health

CREDITS: 3

SESSION : Summer 2014

PROFESSOR : Glenn W. Sinclair, Ph.D.

DESCRIPTION

This **hands on**, *experiential* course is based on a *cognitive-developmental approach* to understanding ethical reasoning.

- *cognitive* because it recognizes that moral education, like intellectual education, has its basis in stimulating the *active thinking* of the individual about moral issues and decisions
- *developmental* because it seems the aims of ethical reasoning is movement through moral stages.

The basic premise is that *a person can not get to moral action if s/he is incapable of moral thought*. The fundamental questions, focussed within the context of the role of the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) are:

- *What is it that makes me think a particular decision is better?*
- *How does a critical decision most consistently get justified when I reflect back on it?*
- *Why do I think I am (or am not) facing an ethical dilemma?*

For purposes of this course **the terms ethical and moral will be interchangeable**. It should also be noted that the major theme/emphasis of this seminar is not to make you more moral or ethical but to enhance your ability to reason through moral/ethical dilemmas/problems!

There are three primary formats for holding discussions in the class:

- **round-table** — when each person will provide comments, input &/or feedback in an orderly fashion, and the invitation of the prof;
- **crossfire** — moderated within the group itself, comments and questions will go back and forth among the participants (the prof will only intervene if he determines too few are dominating the process);
- **conversation** — this is directed toward the prof, but often initiated by questions, queries or concerns raised by group members.

There also will be the occasional lecture by the Professor – sometimes this will be formal and other times questions that arise in the class will lead to a mini-lecture.

Note: *As the Professor has ADHD, it will be important to pay attention to the core themes in any lecture as he may wander at times!!*

<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>To recognize moral dilemmas and their impact in the worlds of Environmental Health.</i> 2) <i>To equip the EHO with an ethical reasoning tool/paradigm to better address the challenges of ethical decision-making.</i> 3) <i>Improve an EHO's ability to apply the appropriate stages of moral reasoning in order to most effectively obtain better ethical choices in dealings with facility operators, politicians, teammates, and others who impact one's daily tasks.</i>
<p>WORKLOAD</p>	<p>There will be a variety of case studies at the centre of the tasks – to be dealt with in diverse ways, including small group and team settings wherein some will be presented in audio/visual format and others in more conventional research modes. Occasional lectures accompanied by directed readings will be balanced by individual research and team presentations (including role plays/debates). There is one [1] common task that will occur at the outset of the course: each student will complete the Defining Issues Test (DIT-1) in order to learn your stage of ethical reasoning (to be scored by the prof, but has no bearing on your grade). Results will be given at course conclusion.</p>
<p>EVALUATION</p>	<p>Class Participation is assessed in two [2] formats: total 20%</p> <p>Professor 10%</p> <p>Peer Review 10%</p> <p>(the <i>peer review</i> enables the professor to discover how well each student performed in small group and team settings where the professor is not present – this review will be conducted using a rubric the professor has developed over many courses taught, and will be confidential – only the total results will be conveyed to each student)</p> <p>Self Evaluation 10%</p> <p>(each student will submit an assessment of the learning journey, using another rubric developed by the professor over many courses taught)</p> <p>Team Tasks 45%</p> <p>(<i>teams will be determined by the prof</i>)</p> <p>Role Play 15%</p> <p>(A case is provided at the end of Module I and the team will present on the second [2nd] day of Module II. The case will involve an ethical dilemma faced by an EHO, and the team will have between five [5] and seven [7] minutes to present the challenge and demonstrate a plausible solution.)</p> <p>Final Debates 30%</p> <p>(Before the end of Module II, each team will be given a common case to use for a practice session. Then at the end of Module II, each team will be given two [2] cases that will be argued as part of the final exam process on the last day of Module III. One case, the team will take the proponent position; the other case will be from an alternate, though not necessarily <i>anti</i> position.)</p>

	<p>Individual Major Case 25%</p> <p>(Each student will have the occasion to display skills at ethical analysis as part of the final exam process in Module III. A major case will be provided for review and analysis – there will be ethical challenges to be identified as well as opportunities to put forward recommended alternatives that would lead to better moral choices. The written component of this task will take approximately one [1] hour, will be open book and completed in the classroom.)</p>
REQUIRED TEXTS	<p>Owen, James P. <i>Cowboy Ethics</i>, Stoecklein Publishing (2004) (this is available at the Concordia University Bookstore)</p>
RECOMMENDED TEXTS	<p>(Some readings may be provided by the professor to supplement specific research tasks – there will be no need for additional purchases of materials or books.)</p>