**Health and Ethics in Global Crises, Disasters, and Emergencies**

**Philosophy 391**

*Fall 2018*

Founders’ Hall 210

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**Objectives**:

In this class we will examine ethical questions involving crises, disasters, and emergencies with health consequences. Drawing on the resources of moral philosophy students will:

1. learn the ethical origins of response to health and other crises and disasters;

2. examine the historical and philosophical roots of humanitarian response;

3. learn to identify and examine ethical issues that arise in “natural” disasters, war and conflict, migration, and in closing humanitarian health projects;

4. examine post-colonial and feminist critiques of humanitarian response and conceptions of “vulnerability”.

**Course requirements:**

1. Come to class on time for the full session ***with*** the readings, having read them carefully.

2. Complete a research project in four parts:

* Part 1: Proposal. Due **by** **October 4**. (10 points)
* Part 2: Outline. Due **by November 1.** (20 points)
* Part 3: Presentation. Due **November 27, 29** (20 points)
* Part 4: Research Brief. Due **December 11**. (30 points)

*Please see Appendix 1 for further details on each part and helpful resources.*

3. Facilitate part of a class discussion by developing two ethics questions on an assigned reading(s) of your choice**.** (20 points) *Please see Appendix 2 for details.*

**Elective opportunities:**

1. Talks at Mason and in the surrounding area at other universities on relevant issues. In approved cases extra credit is available.

**Reading:** All posted on Blackboard

**Course policies:**

1.All students should adhere to the university’s honor code: <http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html>.

2. Please use your GMU email accounts.

3. Assignments are subject to change. Please keep abreast of developments.

4. Please arrive for class on time and stay for the entire class.

5. Please don’t eat or use mobile phones or laptops in class.

6. If you miss class please consult classmates for announcements and other information.

7. All submitted work must be typed.

8. Writing assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Email submissions must be approved in advance of the due date except in cases of documented emergency.

9. Assignments not submitted directly to me must be signed by another faculty member or Mr. Santos, the Philosophy Department’s Office Manager, noting the date and time.

10. Late assignments will lose points equivalent to a full letter grade for each full day late except in cases approved in advance or in the event of a documented emergency.

11. Plagiarized work will receive a failing grade on the assignment and will result in a referral to the Honor Council. Students are expected to know how to properly document sources and avoid plagiarism.

12. You might want to work with, and may be referred to, the GMU Writing Center staff.

13. Please be aware that Mason offers resources for counseling, disabilities, health care, sexual assault and harassment through the Office of Disability Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, or Student Health Services.

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**Schedule of Class Meetings, Readings, and Other Assignments**

**Week 1: August 28**

**Introductions**

**Weeks 2-3: September 4, 6, 11, 13**

**“Natural” Disasters and Technological Catastrophes: Origins and Meanings**

Paul Farmer, Chapter 1, The catastrophe; Chapter 3, January 12 and the aftermath; Chapter 4, A history of the present illness; Chapter 5, Into the camps, in *Haiti after the Earthquake* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011)

Ted Schrecker, Denaturalizing scarcity: a strategy of inquiry for public health ethics, *WHO Bulletin* 2008; 86 (8): 600-605

Ann Larabee, Chapter 4, Oil and water; Conclusion

(Chapter 5, The Bhopal effect, is optional), in Ann Larabee, *Decade of Disaster* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000)

**Week 4: September 18, 20**

**Disasters and Crises: Definitions and Historical Perspective**

Marie-Helen Huet, Introduction, The nature of disasters; Chapter 1, Enlightenment and the Plague; Chapter 2, The silence of Lisbon; Chapter 3, The reign of cholera, in Marie-Helen Huet, *The Culture of Disaster* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012)

**Week 5: September 25, 27**

**History and Roots of Humanitarian Action in Crises and Disasters**

Hugo Slim, The ethical origins of humanitarian action, in Hugo Slim, *Humanitarian Ethics: A Guide to the Morality of Aid in War and Disaster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2015)

Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, Humanitarianism: a brief history of the present, in Michael Barnett and Thomas G. Weiss, eds. *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008)

Craig Calhoun, The imperative to reduce suffering: charity, progress, and emergencies in the field of humanitarian action, in Barnett and Weiss

**Weeks 6-7 October 2, 4, 11, 16**

**The Migration ‘Crisis’: Health and Global Solidarity and Justice**

Film in class: Ai Wei Wei, *Human Flow*

Lawrence Gostin, Forced migration: the human face of a health crisis

Nora Gottlieb and Nadav Davidovitch. 2017. Migrant health: putting the economic argument into the context of deservingness debates. *European Journal of Public Health* 27(4): 591-592

Isabella Alexander, The EU looks to offshore its migrant ‘crisis’, *National Public Radio* (July 29, 2018)

<https://www.npr.org/2018/07/29/630245607/opinion-the-eu-looks-to-offshore-its-migrant-crisis-thats-a-horrifying-prospect>

IFRC, New Walled Order: How Barriers to Service Become a Humanitarian Crisis (2018)

<http://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/07/180628-Migration-policy-report-A4-EN.pdf>

Christine Straehle, Refugees, asylum, and responsibilities for health, forthcoming *Hastings Center Report*

**Week 8: October 23, 25**

**War and Conflict**: **Ethics and Humanitarian Power**

Hugo Slim, Persistent ethical problems, in Slim

Didier Fassin, Humanitarianism as a politics of life, in Didier Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011)

?Hurst et al. Allocating resources in humanitarian medicine, in Benatar and Brock

**Weeks 9-10: October 30, November 1, (6) 8**

**“Vulnerabilities” and Justice/Injustice in Crises and Disasters**

Evelyne Durocher et al. 2016. Understanding and addressing vulnerability following the 2010 Haiti earthquake: applying a feminist lens to examine perspectives of Haitian and expatriate health care providers and decision-makers. *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 8(2): 219-238.

Ryoa Chung and Matthew R. Hunt, Justice and health inequalities in humanitarian crises: structured health vulnerabilities and natural disasters, in *Health Inequalities and Global Justice*, eds. Patti Tamara Lenard and Christine Straehle (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012)

Sarah Bradshaw, *Gender, Development and Disasters* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Press, 2013), Chapters 1, 3, 5: What is a disaster?; Gender, development and disasters; Humanitarianism and humanitarian relief.

Ayesha Ahmad, Lisa Eckenwiler at al. 2018. Identities, intersectionalities and vulnerabilities: a response to Slim, Humanitarian Law and Policy, ICRC Blog (March 1)

<http://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2018/03/01/identities-intersectionalities-vulnerabilities-humanitarian-operations-response-slim/>

Paul Harvey and Jeremy Lind, Dependency and humanitarian relief: a critical analysis, *Humanitarian Policy Group Report* 19, 2005

**Week 11: November 13, 15**

**Ethics of Closing Projects**

TBA Hunt

TBA Bradshaw

**Week 12: November 27, 29**

**Presentations**

**Final meeting: December 18**

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**APPENDIX 1**

**RESEARCH PROJECT**

Your project will explore and critically analyze an ethical issue or philosophical problem of your choice concerning an ethical question or concern related to crisis, disaster or emergency in health practice, policy, or research.

***a) PROPOSAL***

**Important to note:**

1. Value: 10 points

2. Recommended length: 3-5 sentences.

**Description:**

Your proposal should explain what your intended topic is and what specific questions or concerns plan to examine. There are many ways to go about this and I am open to your ideas. In general, I recommend taking one of the following three approaches:

1. Focus on an ethical concept or principle (for instance, justice) and how it should be understood and how it might guide the future provision of health care services, the formulation of health policy, or the conduct of research with humans in a global context.

2. Analyze a particular policy or practice with a focus on ethical concerns.

3. Examine the moral experience of patients (such as aid recipients or indigenous people), or particular kinds of health professionals (such as nurses in humanitarian settings) or decision makers (such as health policy leaders in government, managers of global health programs).

***PROPOSAL EVALUATION***

1. topic area

2. your ethical questions or concerns

3. syntax, diction, spelling, punctuation

***b) OUTLINE***

**Important to note:**

1. Value: 20 Points

2. Recommended length: 1 page, with subheadings and bullets for each element (1-2 sentences) following the introduction, and a separate page for references.

3. References: four, annotated and complete.

**Description:**

Your outline should present the basic structure for your research paper and presentations.

In most cases it should follow this basic structure:

*1. Introduction*

a. What issue do you intend to focus on?

b. What specific ethical question(s) or concern(s) do you intend to analyze?

*2. Ethical concerns and arguments in the literature*

a. Present what others have said about the issue in the literature you have reviewed:

What are their various ethical positions? What reasons do they give for their views?

*3. Your ethical concern(s) and tentative argument*

Present your view and defend it with strong reasons. What is your argument?

***OUTLINE EVALUATION***

1. Introduction

2. Presentation of others’ ethical arguments

3. Presentation of your tentative position and moral reasons

4. Organization, syntax, diction, spelling

5. References

***c) PRESENTATION EVALUATION***

1. Introduction: explanation of issue and selected ethical questions/concerns

2. Presentation of others’ ethical arguments

3. Presentation of your tentative position and moral reasons

4. Raise good questions for others.

***d) RESEARCH BRIEF***

**Important to note:**

1. Value: 30 points

2. Recommended length: 2-3 pages single-spaced (12-inch font) not including references

3. References: five, appropriate and complete

**Description:**

Here you integrate your research with your own reasoning and integration of ethical reasons for your argument(s) for how to understand and respond to the question(s) or issue(s) you are concerned with. Imagine yourself presenting an extended argument to professionals who are bright but know little about your particular concerns and even less about ethics. Enlighten them and give them new knowledge about the issue and its ethical significance—what is at stake in terms of health and ethics. Please follow this structure unless we agree otherwise:

*1. Introduction*

a. What issue do you intend to discuss?

b. Why is it morally pressing according to the literature you have examined?

c. What position do you intend to argue for and what are your reasons?

d. Give a concise summary of how the paper will be organized to get to your conclusion.

*2. Background information*

a. Present any relevant background information (case law, statistics, existing or developing law, policy) to help orient the reader to the issue, its scope and significance.

*3. Ethical concerns and arguments identified in the literature*

a. Present what others have said about the issue in the literature you have reviewed. Give ethical positions that differ equal presentation.

*4. Your ethical concerns and argument*

a. Present your view in as much detail as possible.

b. Defend it with as many strong moral reasons as you can.

*5. Objections and Responses*

a. Identify at least one and ideally, two or three possible criticisms or objections.

b. Respond to these, explaining why the position you defend is the better one.

*6. Implications*

a. Explain how policy, practice, or research should be changed, in light of your argument.

*7. Conclusion*

***RESEARCH BRIEF EVALUATION***

1. Introduction: statement of issue, selected ethical concerns/questions, thesis

2. Presentation of others’ ethical arguments

3. Presentation of your position and support with ethical reasons

4. Objections and clarification of why your moral reasons are more persuasive

5. Discussion of recommendations for policy & practice

6. Organization of the argument

7. Syntax, diction, punctuation, spelling, paragraphing

8. References

***RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH PROJECT***

The following journals are health ethics journals and so include articles that count as scholarly ethics literature:

*Bioethics*

*Developing World Bioethics*

*Hastings Center Report*

*International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*

*Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*

*Journal of Health Policy, Politics and Law*

*Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics*

*Journal of Medical Ethics*

*Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*

*Journal of Public Health Ethics*

*Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*

These journals - some philosophy and some health sciences - also contain useful scholarly articles. Articles that focus explicitly on ethics count as scholarly ethics literature:

*American Journal of Public Health*

*British Medical Journal*

*Bulletin of the World Health Organization*

*Globalization and Health*

*International Health*

*Journal of the American Medical Association*

*The Lancet*

*Medicine, Conflict, and Survival*

*New England Journal of Medicine*

*Science*

*Social Science and Medicine*

Other excellent resources that can count as scholarly ethics literature:

*\*Encyclopedia of Bioethics,* 4th edition (available online through the GMU library)

\**Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (available online)

\*Publications and reports of governmental or non-governmental organizations and agencies engaged in research, practice, and policy work in global health and/or ethics. For example: Centers for Disease Control (CDC), International Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC), World Health Organization (WHO), Nuffield Council on Bioethics, etc.

\*Policy statements or other ethics documents from international health and/or humanitarian organizations such as the International Committees of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC), Doctors without Borders (MSF), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Word Health Organization (WHO), and many others.

**APPENDIX 2**

**LEADING CLASS IN DISCUSSION**

**Important to note:**

1. Due: You decide

2. Value: 20 points

**Description:**

You should identify two salient ethical questions that will support your fellow students’ understanding of ethical issues you note as pressing or especially interesting. Please give me (in class or via email) the two questions you are interested in raising (and an additional one or two if you wish) **two weeks prior** to the class when we will discuss the issue you have chosen.

I’ll give you guidance on shaping them further if needed and we’ll coordinate on when/how to raise them in class.

***EVALUATION***

The grade will be a combination of students’ and instructor’s assessment on these criteria:

1. Understanding: Articulated author’s thesis accurately and clearly

2. Ethical perception and reasoning: Identified salient ethical questions and concerns

3. Synthesis: Integrated earlier topics/discussions where appropriate, identifying connections

4. Style: Presented material in an engaging manner and used time well