Most health care ethics focuses on the individual decisions about treatments, but many ethical questions have implications for society at large. The demands that individual health decisions make on the system may create collective problems, and conversely, the needs of society may limit the freedoms that individuals think they should have. Public health ethics then, lie at the intersection of medicine, political philosophy, and public policy. This course will examine the values of health, social needs, and freedom through a systematic examination of situations in which these conflicts arise. We will examine the issues by looking at it through three levels: through theoretical readings in philosophy, through readings in the broad issues of public health, and by considering case studies.

**Required Texts:**
John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett)
Readings on Blackboard

**Course Requirements:**

*Class participation* is worth a significant portion of your grade. The class is based on student discussions, not on lectures. You are expected to come to class, and you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings – if only to ask relevant questions about them. Most of your class participation grade is based on regular, substantive participation in class discussions.

*Reflection papers.* Twices during the term, you will be expected to write a brief one-page *reaction paper* to the week’s reading, due the day before the first date listed for the assignment at 9:00 p.m. These papers should respond to some specific arguments or position in the readings by explaining why you agree or disagree with it. For these reaction papers, the class is divided into six groups, determined by the first letter of your last name:

- **Group 1** A to Be
- **Group 2** Bh to D
- **Group 3** E to J
- **Group 4** K to N
- **Group 5** O to Sh
- **Group 6** Si to Z
Reflection papers will be submitted using the journal tool on Blackboard: Just click the “Reflections” button, and create a journal entry under your group’s number and the date.

Presentations will be two group activities at two designated times in the course. Each group will be given a problem to address and then to assemble a brief presentation to the class. Each group will collectively present the facts, discuss the ethical alternatives, and argue for a particular solution.

Papers will constitute two of the three major assignments in the course. About 10-14 days before the paper is due, I will give you a several sets of questions, each of which will ask you to consider particular texts or a particular case or both. You will choose one set of questions and write a 6-8 page argumentative paper answering those questions. You will take a position on the issues, construct an argument supporting your position, and then consider and answer objections to it.

Final exam. The last assignment will be a final examination on December 20, 4:00-7:00. On the exam, you will be expected to write three long essays, selected from a list of questions I will give you before the end of classes.

The course grade is divided into 555 points, apportioned as shown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First paper</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second paper</td>
<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Dec 20</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 points each (total: 60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction papers</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 points each (total: 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who get 520 points will get an A in the class (not A-, but A). A B requires 465 points; a C, 410 points.

Writing students: Students taking the course for upper-level writing credit will do most of the assignment with the rest of the class. So, they will be graded on class participation as above, and they will write the two papers and the final examination with the rest of the class and worth the same number of points.

In addition, each student must rewrite each of the major papers for the class, due two weeks after the original paper is returned. The rewrite will be graded as a rewrite (so if you turn in the same paper, the grade is a 0). Each rewrite will be worth 100 points.

Finally, writing students will have a different schedule for the reaction papers, so they will turn in a total of six reaction papers, each worth 10 points, for a total of 60 points. Writing students have their own group assignments, divided into two groups based on their last names:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-L</td>
<td>M-Z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the total number of points for the writing students will be 795 points, and an A will require 745 points, apportioned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First paper</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First rewrite</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second paper</td>
<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second rewrite</td>
<td>Dec 13</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final rewrite</td>
<td>Dec 20</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 points each (total: 60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academic honesty: The Honor Pledge will be required on the papers and on the final for the course. I expect the work on these assignments to be your own; all quotations and ideas from others that are used in your work must be properly cited. The reflections papers are more informal, so I do not expect rigorous citations or the Pledge, but I do expect the work to be your own. This is an ethics course, and I take a particularly dim view of violations of academic honesty. Please consult the College’s policy at www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the instructors of this class.

Schedule of Readings

This schedule is tentative (especially for topics later in the course). However, any changes will be announced on Blackboard, and an up-to-date copy of the syllabus can always be found on Blackboard. All readings, except those in the required books for the class, are on Blackboard.

I. Introduction

Aug 31
Introduction
Case study 1: Smoking and guns

Sep 5-7 Groups 4 and B reflections due Sep 4
Case study 1 (cont’d)
CDC Smoking Facts
II. Public goods and collective goods

Sep 12-14  Groups 5 and A reflections due Sep 11

Sep 19-21  Groups 6 and B reflections due Sep 18
Case study 2: Vaccinations
CDC Vaccine information (for reference only)
Barbara Loe Fisher, “In the Wake of Vaccines”

Sep 26  • Presentations on vaccines

III. Public health and individualism

Sep 28- Oct 3  Groups 1 and A reflections due Sep 27
John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, chs. 1, 3-5 (pp. 1-14, 53-113)

Oct 5  Groups 2 and B reflections due Oct 4
Gerald Dworkin, “Paternalism,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Fall break, No class Oct 9

Oct 12  
• *First papers due, 11:00 a.m. (No class)*

Oct 17  
*Groups 3 and A reflection due Oct 16*

Oct 19-24  
*Groups 4 and B reflections due, due Oct 18*
Case study 3: Obesity
CDC on obesity in children

IV. Health care justice

Oct 26  
*Groups 5 and A reflections due Oct 25*

Oct 31-  
*Groups 6 and B reflections due Oct 30*
Nov 2  
Nov 7-9  Groups 1 and A reflections due Nov 6
Case Study 5: Universal health care

Nov 14-16  • Presentations on universal health care

Nov 21  • Second papers due (No class), 11:00 a.m.
  Thanksgiving break (No class, Nov 23)

V. Global health justice

Nov 28-30  Groups 2 and B reflections due Nov 27

Dec 4-6  Groups 3 and A reflection due Dec 7
  Case study 5: Responding to epidemics
  World Health Organization, *Ethical Considerations in Developing a Public Health Response to Pandemic Influenza* (2007), chs. 3-4 (pp. 5-11)
Dec 12  Case study 5 (cont’d)
    MO Folayan, BG Haire, and B Brown, “Critical Role of Ethics in Clinical
    Management and Public Health Response to the West Africa Ebola
    Solomon Benatar, “Explaining and Responding to the Ebola Outbreak,”
    *Philosophy, Ethics, and Humanities in Medicine* 10.5 (2015)
    Euzebiusz Jamrozik, et al., “Ethical Aspects of Malaria Control and Research,”

Dec 20  • *Final examination, 4:00-7:00*