

Philosophy 228/228W  
**Public Health Ethics**

Fall 2017  
 Goergen 108, TR 9:40-10:55

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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)  
 Madison Powers and Ruth Faden, *Social Justice* (Oxford)  
 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.* Twice 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:

First paper	Oct 12	120 points
Second paper	Nov 21	120 points
Final exam	Dec 20	135 points
Presentations		30 points each (total: 60)
Reaction papers		10 points each (total: 20)
Participation		100 points

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:

Group A	A-L
Group B	M-Z

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

First paper	Oct 12	120 points
First rewrite	Nov 1	100 points
Second paper	Nov 21	120 points
Second rewrite	Dec 13	100 points
Final exam	Dec 20	135 points
Presentations		30 points each (total: 60)

Reaction papers	10 points each (total: 60)
Participation	100 points

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/](http://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	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Case study 1: Smoking and guns</p> <p>David Hemenway, "The Public Health Approach to Motor Vehicles, Tobacco, and Alcohol, with Applications to Firearm Policy," <i>Journal of Public Health Policy</i> 22 (2001): 381-402</p>
Sep 5-7	<p><i>Groups 4 and B reflections due Sep 4</i></p> <p>Case study 1 (cont'd)</p> <p>CDC Smoking Facts</p> <p>Robert Goodin, "No Smoking: The Ethical Issues," in <i>Public Health Ethics</i>, ed. Ronald Bayer, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 117-26</p> <p>Jacob Sullum, "For Your Own Good: The Anti-Smoking Crusade and the Tyranny of Public Health," in Bayer, et al. 2007, 127-33</p> <p>Norman J. Temple, "Why Prevention Can Increase Health-Care Spending," <i>European Journal of Public Health</i> 22 (2011): 618-19</p> <p>Kristin Voigt, "Smoking and Social Justice," <i>Public Health Ethics</i> 3 (2010): 91-106</p> <p>S Chapman, P Alpers, K Agho, M Jones, "Australia's 1996 Gun Reform: Faster Falls in Firearm Deaths, Firearms Suicides, and a Decade without Mass Shootings," <i>Injury Prevention</i> 21 (2015): 355-62</p> <p>James Childress, et al., "Public Health Ethics: Mapping the Terrain," <i>Journal of Law, Ethics, and Medicine</i> 30 (2002): 170-78</p>

## II. Public goods and collective goods

- Sep 12-14     *Groups 5 and A reflections due Sep 11*  
 Marcel Verweij and Angus Dawson, "The Meaning of 'Public' in 'Public Health,'" in *Ethics, Prevention, and Public Health*, ed. Angus Dawson and Marcel Verweij (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 13-29  
 Russell Hardin, "The Free Rider Problem," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*  
 Derek Parfit, "Practical Dilemmas," *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 53-66  
 Jonny Anomaly, "Public Health and Public Goods," *Public Health Ethics* 4 (2011): 251-59
- Sep 19-21     *Groups 6 and B reflections due Sep 18*  
 Case study 2: Vaccinations  
 CDC Vaccine information (for reference only)  
 Datagraphic: "Why the Decade of Vaccines?" *Health Affairs* 35 (2016): 188-89  
 Angus Dawson, "Herd Protection as a Public Good: Vaccination and Our Obligations to Others," in *Ethics, Prevention, and Public Health*, ed. Angus Dawson and Marcel Verweij (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 160-78  
 Barbara Loe Fisher, "In the Wake of Vaccines"  
 Robert Field and Arthur Caplan, "A Proposed Ethical Framework for Vaccine Mandates: Competing Values and the Case of HPV," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 18 (2008): 111-24  
 Gail Javitt, Deena Berkowitz, and Lawrence Gostin, "Assessing Mandatory HPV Vaccination: Who Should Call the Shots?," *Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics* 36 (2008): 384-95  
 Douglas Opel, et al., "Childhood Vaccine Exemption Policy: The Case for a Less Restrictive Alternative," *Pediatrics* 137.4 (2016)  
 James Wilson, "The Ethics of Disease Eradication," *Vaccine* 32 (2014): 7179-83
- Sep 26             • *Presentations on vaccines*

## III. Public health and individualism

- Sep 28-             *Groups 1 and A reflections due Sep 27*  
 Oct 3             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*  
 Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, "Libertarian Paternalism," *American Economic Review* 93 (2003): 175-79.

Thomas Nys, "Paternalism in Public Health Care," *Public Health Ethics* 1 (2008): 64-72

*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*

Sarah Conly, "Coercive Paternalism in Health Care: Against Freedom of Choice," *Public Health Ethics* 6 (2013): 241-45

Dan Beauchamp, "Community: The Neglected Tradition in Public Health," *Hastings Center Report* 15.6 (1985): 28-36

Oct 19-24 *Groups 4 and B reflections due, due Oct 18*

Case study 3: Obesity

CDC on obesity in children

Jonny Anomaly, "Is Obesity a Public Health Problem?," *Public Health Ethics* 5 (2012): 216-21

Catherine Womack, "Public Health and Obesity: When a Pound of Prevention is Really Worth an Ounce of Cure," *Public Health Ethics* 5 (2012): 222-28

Daniel Callahan, "Obesity: Changing an Elusive Epidemic," *Hastings Center Report* 43.1 (2013): 34-40

Jonathan Herington, Angus Dawson, and Heather Draper, "Obesity, Liberty, and Public Health Emergencies," *Hastings Center Report* 44.6 (2014): 26-35

Mark Votruba, "Trans Fats, the Rational Consumer, and the Role of Government," *Virtual Mentor* 12 (2010): 804-11

Anne Barnhill, Katherine King, Nancy Kass, and Ruth Faden, "The Value of Unhealthy Eating and the Ethics of Healthy Eating Policies," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 24 (2014): 187-217

Desiree Abu-Odeh, "Fat Stigma and Public Health: A Theoretical Framework and Ethical Analysis," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 24 (2014): 247-65.

#### IV. Health care justice

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

H. Tristram Engelhardt, "Rights to Health Care, Social Justice, and Fairness in Health Care Allocations," in *The Foundations of Bioethics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 375-410.

Norman Daniels, "Justice, Health, and Healthcare," *American Journal of Bioethics* 1.2 (2001): 2-16

Oct 31- *Groups 6 and B reflections due Oct 30*

Nov 2 Madison Powers and Ruth Faden, *Social Justice*, chs. 2-5 (pp 15-141)

- Nov 7-9      *Groups 1 and A reflections due Nov 6*  
 Case Study 5: Universal health care  
     Peter Singer, "Why We Must Ration Health Care," *New York Times Magazine*, 15 July 2009  
     Atul Gawande, "Overkill," *New Yorker*, 11 May 2015  
     Paul Menzel, "The Cultural Moral Right to a Basic Minimum of Accessible Health Care," *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 21 (2011): 79-96 (only)  
     Victor Fuchs and Emmanuel Ezekiel, "Health Care Reform: Why? What? When?" *Health Affairs* 24 (2005): 1399-1414  
     David DeGrazia, "Single Payer Meets Managed Competition," *Hastings Center Report* 38 no. 1 (2008): 23-33  
     Sarah Thomson, et al., eds., *International Profiles of Health Care Systems 2013* (for reference)
- 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*  
 Thomas Nagel, "The Problem of Global Justice," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33 (2005): 113-47  
 Joseph Millum, "Global Bioethics and Political Theory," in *Global Justice and Bioethics*, ed. Joseph Millum and Ezekiel Emanuel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17-42  
 Paul Farmer and Nicole Gastineau, "Rethinking Health and Human Rights," *Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics* 30 (2002): 655-66.
- Dec 4-6      *Groups 3 and A reflection due Dec 7*  
 Lisa Fuller, "International NGO Health Programs in a Non-ideal World: Imperialism, Respect, and Procedural Justice," in Millum and Emanuel, 213-40  
 Case study 5: Responding to epidemics  
     Wendy Parmet, "JS Mill and the American Law of Quarantine," *Public Health Ethics* 1 (2008): 210-22  
     World Health Organization, *Ethical Considerations in Developing a Public Health Response to Pandemic Influenza* (2007), chs. 3-4 (pp. 5-11)  
     Lawrence Gostin, Ronald Bayer, and Amy Fairchild, "Ethical and Legal Challenges Posed by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome," *JAMA* 290 (2003): 3229-37  
     Nola Ries, "The 2003 SARS Outbreak in Canada: Legal and Ethical Lessons about the Use of Quarantine," in *Ethics and Epidemics* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006), 43-67

- 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 Epidemic," *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy* 9 (2016): 55-65
  - 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," *Malaria Journal* 14 (2015): 518-25
- Dec 20 • *Final examination, 4:00-7:00*