

Disaster & Emergency Management | York University

COURSE OUTLINE | DEMS 3707

ETHICS: Society, the Environment and Disasters

Professor:
Dr. Jennie Phillips

Term: Fall 2019
Class Date/Time: Tuesdays, 7-10pm
Location: To be determined

Professor Contact Info
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Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE OUTLINE TOPICS

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION	2
COURSE PURPOSE	2
LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES	2
READINGS	3
COURSE SCHEDULE	3
TEACHING APPROACH & CLASS FORMAT	6
EVALUATION	6
GRADING	6
ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS	6
NOTES ON GRADING, DEADLINES & LATE SUBMISSIONS	8
DEMS PROGRAM & SOCIAL MEDIA	8
IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS	8
RELEVANT UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS	8

1. CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Explores ethical uncertainties associated with disasters and emergencies and develops a basic understanding of ethical decision-making processes and moral reasoning. Also explores the moral imperatives associated with emergency management in a variety of contexts, locally and globally. Emphasis is on applied ethics, development of moral competence in response to issues, and implications for socially responsive environmental and disaster management.

Prerequisites: AP/ADMS 1000 3.00 and AP/ADMS/DEMS 2700 3.00.

Cross-Listing:: AP/ADMS 3707 3.00

2. COURSE PURPOSE

Contrary to conventional notions of disaster management, there is a growing body of literature that argues all disasters are innately human-made. The decisions we make have the power to prevent or mitigate, but also catalyze and cause disaster. These choices, whether active or passive, are often governed by ethics. We may face questions like: When do we sacrifice one for the benefit of the many? How do we balance the need with surveillance with the right to privacy? When do we control a community response or enable it? Each of these decisions are tipping points with minor to major outcomes, with the power to tip the scale from mass survival to mass devastation, and, in an increasingly connected and populated world, these decisions are becoming even more complex.

This course aims to build mindful decision-making through in-depth study of the engrained and emerging ethical challenges and considerations that face disaster managers and responders today. Students will learn the relationship between personal perception and ethical decision making, the basic theoretical foundations of ethics as a discipline, and explore ethical dimensions through different angles of a disaster response. Topics included for ethical discussion relate to: duty of care, engagement/disengagement, collaboration (including internal organizational, and external collaboration with individuals, communities, industry and global actors), communications and information sharing, and technology, innovation and a complex future.

3. LEARNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- ❑ Describe the theoretical foundations of ethics and the importance of beliefs and personal perspectives on decision making
 - ❑ Define ethics, and describe the relationship and impact between ethics and disasters
 - ❑ Identify prominent moral philosophers in the ethics literature that pertain to disaster & emergency management
 - ❑ Identify and distinguish different ethical theories and their relationship with disasters (e.g. teleological vs. deontological, meta vs. applied ethics, consequentialism & utilitarianism)

- ❑ Describe ethical dimensions and situate their own perspectives on each of the following areas:
 - ❑ Duty of care and the moral obligation to respond
 - ❑ Variations of engagement (engagement to disengagement)
 - ❑ Dimensions of collaboration (Individual, Internal, Industry, Community and the global society)

- ❑ Information, Communications and Data Gathering
- ❑ Complex crises, Humanitarianism and the digital future

- ❑ Apply an ethical approach to existing and emerging challenging cases, and demonstrate the ability to factor ethics into decision making towards a general code of ethics

4. READINGS

Required textbook:

Zack, N. (2009). Ethics for disaster. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. (Paperback)

Book is available to buy on Amazon.ca or the YorkU Library

Book is available for free use as an ebook through YorkU library, or borrowing (circulation and reserve)

Additional readings will be assigned or recommended during the course. These may include book chapters, peer and non-peer reviewed literature, and media articles.

All readings will be accessible online and/or available for download through York University’s Library eBooks or eJournals, as well as via moodle, and will be assigned week to week.

5. COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is a DRAFT schedule of the course structure, topics to be covered, and potential readings to be used. The finalized schedule will be provided during the first class and may evolve over the course.

	DATES	TOPIC(S) & DEADLINES	READINGS (tentative)
1	Sept 10	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>This class will provide an overview of the course, discuss class expectations, and establish the need for ethics in disaster management through a discussion-based exercise around a complex humanitarian global emergency</p>	<p>Potential Readings:</p> <p>Zack</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preface to the Paperback Edition (xi) ▪ Preface ▪ Chapter 1 - Introduction and Overview of the Chapters <p>Case study - TBD</p>
2	Sept 17	<p>Introduction to Ethics as a Moral Philosophy</p> <p><i>What are your underlying beliefs about humanity and greater society? Is society a force to be reckoned with or innately utopian? Are humans innately good or evil?</i></p> <p>This class will introduce ethics as a distinct concept from morals and values, discuss the impact of perspective, highlight key moral philosophers, and provide a high-level overview of ethical frameworks.</p>	<p>Potential Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 4 - The Social Contract ▪ Kathleen Geale, S. (2012). The ethics of disaster management. <i>Disaster Prevention and Management: an International Journal</i>, 21(4), 445-462. ▪ Rapaczynski, A. (1987). <i>Nature and politics: Liberalism in the philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau</i>. Cornell University Press.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solnit, R. (2009). A Paradise Built in Hell. Viking Press. (Book excerpt)
3	Sept 24	<p>The Duty to Respond <i>What does it mean to respond? What is our duty and moral obligation? Who should bear the responsibility and when? What is the cost of providing care versus cost of inaction?</i></p> <p>This class will cover explore the duty of care and the moral obligation to respond.</p>	<p>Potential Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3 - Virtues for Disasters Robson, E. S. (2012). Responding to Liability: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 1–65. Beauchamp, T. L. (1977). Paternalism and biobehavioral control. <i>The Monist</i>, 60(1), 62-80. Singer, P. A., Benatar, S. R., Bernstein, M., Daar, A. S., Dickens, B. M., MacRae, S. K., ... & Shaul, R. Z. (2003). Ethics and SARS: lessons from Toronto. <i>Bmj</i>, 327(7427), 1342-1344.
4	Oct 1	<p>Spectrum of Engagement - Part 1. <i>When should we engage or disengage? What ethical factors make this decision difficult? When does our involvement hinder more than help? With whom should we engage and not?</i></p> <p>These two classes (Part I and II) will explore the ethical considerations associated with engagement and disengagement in crisis contexts from different lenses (e.g. humanitarian vs. advocacy, cultural vs. political, acute vs complex disasters, system vs. grassroots)</p>	<p>Potential Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2 - Lifeboat Ethics Palen, L., Vieweg, S., Liu, S. B., & Hughes, A. L. (2009). Crisis in a Networked World: Features of Computer-Mediated Communication in the April 16, 2007, Virginia Tech Event. <i>Social Science Computer Review</i>, 27(4), 467–480. http://doi.org/10.1177/0894439309332302 DuBois, M., Cairns, E., Smith, H., & OCallaghan, S. (2007). Civilian protection and humanitarian advocacy: Strategies and dilemmas (pp. 1–11). Presented at the Civilians in conflict New approaches to Security and protection. Retrieved from https://www.odi.org/events/193-civilian-protection-and-humanitarian-advocacy-strategies-and-dilemmas
5	Oct 8	Spectrum of Engagement - Part 2.	
	Oct 15	READING WEEK	
6	Oct 22	<p>Dimensions of Collaboration - Part 1. The Individual & The Responder <i>When do we control or collaborate? When is collaboration beneficial or detrimental? When do we enforce or relinquish power?</i></p> <p>These three classes (Part I to III) will explore the ethical dimensions linked to internal and external collaboration from the perspectives covered in the section on duty of care.</p>	<p>Potential Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 - Public Policy Chapter 6 - The Disadvantaged and Disaster Freeman, J. (1972). The tyranny of structurelessness. <i>Berkeley Journal of Sociology</i>. http://doi.org/10.2307/41035187

7	Oct 29	Dimensions of Collaboration - Part 2. Organizations & Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ripley, A. (2009). <i>The Unthinkable</i>. Random House. Slim, H. (2015). <i>Humanitarian ethics: A guide to the morality of aid in war and disaster</i>. Oxford University Press.
8	Nov 5	Dimensions of Collaboration - Part 3. Community & Global Society	
9	Nov 12	Information, Communications & Data Gathering - Part 1 <i>When should citizens be informed in moments of crisis? How do we balance privacy with the need for situational awareness? When is relying on citizen data more risk than benefit?</i> These two classes (Part I and II) will examine ethical considerations linked to information sharing, the use of citizen data, social media usage and connectivity, and information dissemination.	Potential Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball, P., Klinger, J., & Lum, K. (2011, March 17). Crowdsourced data is not a substitute for real statistics. Retrieved April 13, 2017, from http://benetech.blogspot.ca/2011/03/crowdsourced-data-is-not-substitute-for.html Meier, P. (2010, April 25). Crowdsourcing and the Veil of Ignorance: A Question of Morality? Retrieved April 5, 2017, from https://irevolutions.org/2010/04/25/veil-ignorance/ Heide, E. A. (2004). Common misconceptions about disasters: Panic, the “disaster syndrome,” and looting. <i>The First 72 Hours: a Community Approach to Disaster Preparedness</i>. Citizen Lab. (2013). Some devices wander by mistake (pp. 1–44). Citizen Lab.
10	Nov 19	Information, Communications & Data Gathering - Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meier, P. (2015). <i>Digital Humanitarians</i>. CRC Press. Helbing, D. (2019). Societal, economic, ethical and legal challenges of the digital revolution: From big data to deep learning, artificial intelligence, and manipulative technologies. In <i>Towards Digital Enlightenment</i> (pp. 47-72). Springer, Cham. Hay, A., Phillips, J., Cummins, J., & Miazga, T. (2017). Smart city connectivity to support municipal and community resilience (pp. 1–34). Southern Harbour. Laville (2019). Top oil firms spending millions lobbying to block climate change policies, says report. <i>Guardian UK</i>. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/mar/22/top-oil-firms-spending-millions-lobbying-to-block-climate-change-policies-says-report
11	Nov 26	Complex Cases & The Digital Landscape of the Future <i>What are the ethical implications of AI? As innovation moves faster than it can be studied, when are the benefits of innovation outweighed by unforeseen risk?</i> This class will discuss ethical challenges through a complexity lens, where we would look at ethics associated with highly complex environments and an uncertain future. Topics may include: ethics of AI, drone usage and smart technologies, big data, climate change, terrorism and cyberterrorism, etc.	
12	Dec 3	Final Class / In-Class Exam	

6. TEACHING APPROACH & CLASS FORMAT

A seminar-based, participatory approach to teaching is used, where class time is used to encourage discussion around the topics presented, as well as share knowledge, challenge assumptions and affirm best practices.

Most classes will adopt the following format:

- 1st half of Class – Theory - Understanding the Theory/Concept
 - Course readings and key concepts are presented and discussed relating to the topic of the week; students learn about the concept

- 2nd half of Class – Application – Understanding the debate in practice
 - Students will have the opportunity to apply what they've learned and/or learn more about the realities of this concept in the field through any of the following:
 - In-class debate
 - Guest lecture from the field
 - Ethical decision-making workshop
 - Case study of a current event pertaining to the topic of the week
 - Analysis of the concept through the emergency management cycle

7. EVALUATION

GRADING

Below is a draft outline of the course deliverable and how you will be evaluated.

ASSIGNMENT	WEIGHTING	DUE DATE
Class Participation	20%	Ongoing
Article Summary & 3-Minute Presentation	15%	Ongoing
Take-home quiz (The Foundations)	5%	Week 3
In-class debate (Groups of 4) & Debrief	20%	Week 3-10
Ethical Analysis Assignment & Presentation (Ethical Case Study, Done in Pairs)	20%	Week 11
Final Exam	20%	Week 12

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grade distribution profiles. Bonus marks may be earned. Preliminary description of course evaluation criteria is as follows. More detailed information will be provided as the course progresses.

Class Participation

Student participation in classroom discussions and activities is an important component of the course and should be taken seriously. In order to receive adequate participation marks, class attendance is

mandatory, as well as active engagement in class activities, and delivery of mini-assignments. Mark may be calculated, in part, using student logs of their own participation and learning.

Article Summary & 3-Minute Presentation

Over the term you must select one week to summarize and present on a peer-reviewed article linked to ethics in disaster and emergency management. This will be a written assignment, submitted in blogpost format. Writing must be informal and intended for a lay audience. Literature must be sourced, but in standard blog formatting. Follow [this resource](#) in terms of how to source properly for blog posts.

Presentations will follow the 3 minute thesis format, 3 minutes, one slide, to present your ideas. As outlined [here](#) (UToronto, School of Graduate Studies), rules that must be followed include:

- A single, static PowerPoint slide is permitted (no slide transitions, animations, or "movement" of any description are allowed), and the slide is to be presented from the beginning of the oration and remain in view for the duration of the oration.
- No additional electronic media (e.g., sound and video files) are permitted.
- No additional props (e.g., costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are to be spoken in standard oratory prose (i.e., no poems, raps or songs, other than those that may be the target of research).
- Presentations are to commence from the stage or at the podium.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through movement or speech.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Take-home Quiz

After the second class (week 2), you will be given a take home quiz to ensure you have acquired a basic understanding of the foundations of ethics. This will most likely be an online open-book quiz available for 24 hours to complete.

In-class debate

Groups of 4 choose a week they would like to study and debate on, divided into two sides. They would have to research their side in-depth, and argue their perspective in class. The aim is to examine (and evaluate) how well you can think critically about the topics discussed in the course, rationalize decision making, argue your case while also considering other perspectives. A poll will be taken before and after every debate to see which side wins. All students will be evaluated by the professor and the class. Student will also be responsible for writing up a debate debrief, to reflect on and highlight the key lessons learned and takeaways from the student debate.

Written Assignment

You will submit one written assignment over the the term specific to the content of the course. This assignment will be done in pairs. You must work with your partner to conduct an ethical analysis of a case study of a current event, each partner chooses a side. The final paper will present both sides of the analysis, a synthesis of these findings to generate a code of conduct specific to this case study that merges both sides. A paper, executive summary or briefing note, and presentation may be assignment deliverables.

Final Exam

This course will include a final exam on the last day of classes. It will consist of short and long answer/essay type questions, and potentially be offered online. Details to be provided later in the course.

NOTES ON GRADING, DEADLINES & LATE SUBMISSIONS

Grading – Grades will be calculated as a percentage.

Submissions – All assignments must be uploaded to Moodle before the due date and time.

Late submissions – Assignments received after the midnight deadline will be penalized 10 grade points (10%) per day. After the 5th day, students will receive a zero. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be entertained by the course Instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter) and sufficient notice if applicable of 3 days prior.

Academic Referencing – All written assignments are expected to conform to the guidelines and reference formats specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (<http://www.apastyle.org/>).

Refer to for guidelines for referencing and citation guidance if needed:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

8. DEMS PROGRAM & SOCIAL MEDIA

The DEMS Program is on Social Media! You can share your experiences, work you're proud of, photos, etc. on either channel. Just contact one of the course directors:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/YorkDEM/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/DEM_York

9. IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) on: <http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/CourseInformationForStudentsAugust2012.pdf>

- Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and the Academic Integrity Website
 - Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
 - Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
 - Student Conduct Standards
 - Religious Observance Accommodation
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10. RELEVANT UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

Attendance: Full attendance is expected in all courses.

- Only in specific, unavoidable situations are absences excused from class:
 - Personal emergencies, including, but not limited to, illness of the student or of a dependent of the student, or death in the family;

- Religious observances that prevent the student from attending class;
 - Participation in University-sponsored activities, approved by the appropriate University authority, such as intercollegiate athletic competitions, activities approved by academic units, academic field trips, and special events connected with coursework;
 - Government-required activities, such as military assignments, jury duty, or court appearances; and
 - Any other absence that the professor approves.
- Students are responsible for all material covered in classes they miss, even when their absences are excused.
 - If possible, students should notify their course professor or instructor, in advance, if they are going to be absent for any reason and discuss the possibility of alternate arrangements for the completion and grading of any missed assignments, tests, or other evaluative tools as stipulated in the course outline.
 - Students must make arrangements with instructors to complete missed assignments, labs, examinations or other course requirements.
 - A student who is absent from three (3) or more classes **without providing written justification to the course instructor and doing independent work** to make up for the missed classes will receive a failing grade in that course.
 - Students missing **more than three (3) classes**, regardless of whether their absences are avoidable or unavoidable, will be considered unable to meet the “learning outcomes” of the course, unless in the judgement of the course director the student has done sufficient makeup work to compensate for these absences.
 - A student may make up missed work only at the discretion of the course professor or instructor. Missed assignments, tests, or other evaluative tools could result in the forfeiture of grades as described in the course outline.
 - It is expected that students will arrange their work schedules with their employers in such a way as to enable them to attend all classes as scheduled. If, however, a student must miss a class because of workplace demands, the student will be entitled to submit alternative work to demonstrate their mastery of the missed course material, and to have that alternative work treated as this policy requires.

Deferred Exams: Deferred standing may be granted to students who are unable to write their final examination at the scheduled time or to submit their outstanding coursework on the last day of classes. Details can be found at <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/deferred-standing>

Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a “Doctor's Note” will not be accepted.

DSA Form: http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred_standing_agreement.pdf

Attending Physician's Statement form: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>

In order to apply for deferred standing, students must register at <http://apps.eso.yorku.ca/apps/adms/deferredexams.nsf>

Followed by handing in a completed DSA form and supporting documentation directly to the main office of the School of Administrative Studies (282 Atkinson) and add your ticket number to the DSA form. The DSA and supporting documentation must be submitted no later than five (5) business days from the date of the exam. These requests will be considered on their merit and decisions will be made available by logging into the above mentioned link. No individualized communication will be sent by the School to the students (no letter or e-mails).

Students with approved DSA will be able to write their deferred examination during the School's deferred examination period. No further extensions of deferred exams shall be granted. The format and covered content of the deferred examination may be different from that of the

originally scheduled examination. The deferred exam may be closed book, cumulative and comprehensive and may include all subjects/topics of the textbook whether they have been covered in class or not. Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.

Academic Honesty: The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies considers breaches of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty to be serious matters. The Senate Policy on Academic Honesty is an affirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. As a clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship, the policy recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards. Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist.

Students should review the York Academic Honesty policy for themselves at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

Students might also wish to review the interactive on-line Tutorial for students on academic integrity, at:

<https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/>

Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy: The grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) shall be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and, under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade, with the following exceptions:

Note: Under unusual and/or unforeseeable circumstances which disrupt the academic norm, instructors are expected to provide grading schemes and academic feedback in the spirit of these regulations, as soon as possible. For more information on the Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy, please visit:

<http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=86>

In-Class Tests and Exams - the 20% Rule: For all Undergraduate courses, except those which regularly meet on Friday evening or on a weekend, tests or exams worth more than 20% will not be held in the two weeks prior to the beginning of the official examination period. For further information on the 20% Rule, please visit:

<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/limits-on-the-worth-of-examinations-in-the-final-classes-of-a-term-policy/>

Reappraisals: Students may, with sufficient academic grounds, request that a final grade in a course be reappraised (which may mean the review of specific pieces of tangible work). Non-academic grounds are not relevant for grade reappraisals; in such cases, students are advised to petition to their home Faculty. Students are normally expected to first contact the course director to discuss the grade received and to request that their tangible work be reviewed. Tangible work may include written, graphic, digitized, modeled, video recording or audio recording formats, but not oral work. Students need to be aware that a request for a grade reappraisal may result in the original grade being raised, lowered or confirmed. For reappraisal procedures and information, please visit the Office of the Registrar site at:

<http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/grade-reappraisal-policy>

Accommodation Procedures: LA&PS students who have experienced a misfortune or who are too ill to attend the final examination in an ADMS course should not attempt to do so; they must pursue deferred standing. Other students should contact their home Faculty for information. For further information, please visit: <http://ds.info.yorku.ca/academic-support-accomodations/>

Religious Accommodation: York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. For more information on religious accommodation, please visit: <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Senate Policy)

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder. For more information, please visit the Counselling and Disability Services website at <http://www.yorku.ca/dshub/>

York's disabilities offices and the Registrar's Office work in partnership to support alternate exam and test accommodation services for students with disabilities at the Keele campus. For more information on alternate exams and tests please visit <http://www.yorku.ca/altexams/>
Please alert the Course Director as soon as possible should you require special accommodations.