

Course Syllabus  
University of California, Berkeley  
Fall Semester 2007

**Course Title: Ethics and Public Health in an Age of Terrorism**

Number: PH 298

Unit Value: 3 Units

Course Meeting Times: Tuesday

Location of course presentations: TBD

Fifteen Week Ethics Course

**Instructor:** Professor Tomas Aragon, MD, PhD with assistance from Harvey Kayman, MD, MPH

**Assistant Instructor Contact Information:**

850 Marina Bay Parkway  
Richmond, CA 94804-6403  
Email: hkayman@dhs.ca.gov  
Phone: 510 620 2986  
Fax 510 620 3774

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Texts:** No text required. Articles will be posted on line or available in the manual. Please include readings that can be found in the manual.

**Prerequisites:** Enrolled student in a UCB undergraduate or graduate program. Skills that will lead to successful completion of the course include class participation, presentation, concept synthesis, writing, creative thinking, and group interaction/collaboration.

**Overview:** Terrorism, whether biological, chemical, or nuclear, presents special challenges to caregivers, health-care institutions, community organizations, and government agencies. Finding one's way ethically is particularly problematic. Issues of professional conduct and responsibility, of civil rights and civil liberties, of conscience, are bound to appear. Preparation for facing these is necessary particularly since if and when a terror event occurs, decisions will have to be made rapidly under anxiety filled and emergency conditions. The goal of this course is to prepare caregivers and others for response to the moral dimensions of a terror event.

**Course description:** Role of public health in addressing various ethical, emotional and legal dilemmas posed by planning for and responding to terrorist attack and emerging infectious diseases.

**Course objectives:** By the end of the semester, participants will:

List and define the basic ethical principles and concepts.

Recognize the tension between individual needs and liberties, and collective action for the common good.

Recognize the difference between individually oriented medical ethics and community oriented public health ethics

Compare and contrast the method of comparing rights and entitlements, to consequences, to universal precepts.

Demonstrate knowledge of the ethical issues surrounding each of the topical areas covered (e.g. civil liberties, risk communication).

Demonstrate knowledge of the core public health emergency competencies.

Demonstrate capacity to apply knowledge through informed discussions

Demonstrate capacity to apply knowledge through the preparation and presentation of a quality community project on ethics in a time of terrorism.

**Class session description:**

- 1) Introduction -- how does this module connect to the goals of this course, to the other modules in the course? [10 minutes]
- 2) Scenario/Case – Subject expert, instructor, and/or assistant instructor will present the subject of the module via an actual or created case that highlights the issues and concerns which this module is intended to address. [10 - 15 minutes; methods may include role-playing, audio-visual materials, etc.]
- 3) Analysis and discussion of scenario/case. Faculty, students and guest participants will review: What ethical issues does this case present, what ethical choices and decisions face the participants in the situation, e.g. care-givers, government agencies, police, citizen's groups, etc? [40 minutes; methods may include debate, panel discussion, etc.]
- 4) Presentation -- lecture, question and answer, discussion --What is known about the issues, problems presented in this module; what can we learn from various humanistic and scientific disciplines in dealing with the ethical issues it presents? [1 hour]
- 5) Resources and References -- What resources exist for understanding the issues presented by this module -- research, case studies, prior experience, etc. Review of readings. [15 minutes]
- 6) Discussion and wrap-up. What are the short and long term effects of a terror or severe biologic event on individuals, communities, and institutions and what are the ethical consequences of these effects? Include suggestions for further study, for possible projects, etc. [30 minutes]

**Educational Objectives for Each Module:**

**Ethical Toolbox** – understanding principles of biomedical ethics, public health ethical concerns, and ethical dilemmas

**Legal Toolbox** – understanding procedural justice-due process

**Civil Liberties** – understanding liberties we take for granted, freedom of association, property rights, and bodily integrity, and fair distribution of benefits and burdens

**Law Enforcement and Jurisdictional** – understanding of the scope of roles and responsibilities (public health powers act); how public health and law enforcement interface

**Psychological, Sociological, and Anthropological** – understanding altruism versus self-interest and the impact of individual belief system on resolution of ethical issues

**Spiritual/Cultural** – understanding how individual beliefs and backgrounds shape one's understanding, behavior, and decision making when faced with a public health emergency

**Political Issues** – understanding how policy is formulate, transformed into legislation, regulation, and action; ethical guidelines to formulate policies

**Risk Communication Toolbox** – understanding how much and when to give information to the public and how to balance; creating and maintaining public trust

**Allocation of Resources** – understanding taxation and distributive fairness of resources

**Medical Resources** – Personnel, surge capacity; threats to routine function, readiness, problems and access

**Obligations** – understanding the tension between personal, family, professional, and societal obligations and tensions associated with attending to these issues

**Quarantine** – understanding the difference between quarantine and isolation, good enough quarantine, mathematical modeling for contagion, and responses in community/households with quarantine

**Agriculture** – understanding the risks to agriculture, seizure and destruction of property/animals issues; emotional and preparedness levels of rural versus urban communities

### **Requirements:**

Participation: The majority of learning in class will come as a result of consistent participation in class. A portion of each student's grade will be based on his/her contribution to the overall enrichment of class learning and preparation for class by reading the assigned articles.

Mid-Term and Final Examination: Students will be responsible for all assigned reading and class content. Examinations will cover this information. The final examination will be comprehensive.

Group Project: Students will be organized into groups to work on a community outreach project. This project will include a presentation to a community group, a group paper and presentation with accompanying handout to fellow students. The project paper should be no more than five pages, typed, double-spaced and in 12-point font. Each group will make a ten to fifteen-minute presentation based on its review. Presentations may include overhead transparencies or PowerPoint and provide a handout for classmates. Student materials will not be returned.

Evaluation:

Class Participation	25%
Midterm	15%
Final	30%
Group Project	30%

Grading scale:

A	90-100	C	70-74
B+	85-89	D	60-70
B	80-84	F	<60
C+	75-79		

**Course Schedule**

Readings and details of assignments are attached. These should be completed prior to class.

1 <sup>st</sup> Week	Ethics Toolbox
2 <sup>nd</sup> Week	Legal Toolbox
3 <sup>rd</sup> Week	Civil Liberties
4 <sup>th</sup> Week	Psychological and Sociological Issues
5 <sup>th</sup> Week	Spiritual and Cultural Issues
6 <sup>th</sup> Week	Political Issues
7 <sup>th</sup> Week	Risk Communication/Public Information and Media Toolbox
8 <sup>th</sup> Week	Allocation of Resources
9 <sup>th</sup> Week	Allocation of Resources Continued
10 <sup>th</sup> Week	Medical Resources
11 <sup>th</sup> Week	Quarantine
12 <sup>th</sup> Week	Law Enforcement
13 <sup>th</sup> Week	Agriculture
14 <sup>th</sup> Week	Professional Obligations
15 <sup>th</sup> Week	Summation, presentation of projects, and final

**\*Syllabus/schedule subject to change**