



**PSY 7250, FALL 2011
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS & STANDARDS**

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Course Description

This course is intended to familiarize psychologists-in-training with the ethics and professional standards of practice in the field of psychology. The course will also provide didactic and experiential opportunities for psychologists-in-training to *think* ethically. Psychologists-in-training include students studying to become clinicians and experimental psychologists, among many other specializations. Students will learn to identify ethical dilemmas in research, teaching, and practice, and the ways in which those dilemmas can be explored and resolved. The course is structured into four distinct modules: Introductory, Research, Teaching and Practice Ethics. For this reason **the course is a variable credit course**. Graduate students in applied programs (Combined-Integrated, School) are required to take all three credits, unless they have prior relevant coursework. Experimental doctoral students are required to take two credits, but may chose to take all three credits. The two credits include attendance, participation, and related papers/homework for the Introductory, Research, and Teaching modules.

Course Objectives

- a) To familiarize psychologists-in-training with the history and philosophical bases of ethics in psychology in the arenas of research, teaching, and clinical practice (including, clinical, counseling, and school settings)
- b) To expose students to diverse ethical codes in primary areas of training (APA code, ACA code, NASP code) and explore the similarities and differences across codes.
- c) To help students become ethical *thinkers* so that they may *flexibly* apply the spirit of the ethical code that fits their area of practice.
 1. Research: To prepare psychologists-in-training to be ethical researchers.
 2. Teaching: To prepare psychologists-in-training to be ethical teachers.
 3. Practice: To prepare psychologists-in-training to be ethical practitioners.
- d) To prepare students to consider ethics codes, laws, and decision-making models as cultural artifacts, and to also understand professionals as cultural beings. The course will support student engagement to actively include these considerations in the recognition, formulation, and solution of ethical dilemmas.

Active participation through class attendance, careful, consistent reading, and critical thinking about course material is expected.

Course Expectations and Evaluation

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend class regularly and read all required materials. All students are expected to contribute meaningfully to class discussions. We meet once weekly and our three hour period will routinely include: (a) discussion of the materials read and (b) active discussion of a specific case (vignette) brought in by the students assigned that week (i.e., Discussion Leaders, see below). These activities provide the opportunity for covering the weekly topic in-depth, as well as provide opportunities for active engagement with ethical decision-making through the vignettes.

Evaluation

Students are evaluated on multiple assignments intended to support the integration of materials read with knowledge regarding ethical codes and ethical decision-making models, in the context of human and cultural diversity. The assignments are described in the “Instructions for Specific Assignments” below and consist of short papers, brief presentations, one long presentation, and one manuscript-length paper.

Grading

Final grades are based on individual performance. Students will have the opportunity to earn a total of 375 (2cr) or 500 (3cr) points. Students who accumulate 92.5% to 100% of those points will earn an A; 89.5-92.4% = A-; 86.5-89.4% = B+; 82.5-86.4% = B; 79.5-82.4% = B-; 76.5-79.4% = C+ and so forth.

Assignments	Points	2 cr	3cr
CITI	25	25	25
Paper Proposal	50	50	50
Final Paper	150	150	150
Paper 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 (select 3 or 4)	150	75	100
Paper 5	25	25	25
Discussion Leader	50	50	50
Paper 8	25		25
Paper 9	25		25
Paper 10	25		25
Paper 11	25		25
Total Possible Points	550	375	500

Course Materials

DropBox. Because I strive to keep this course as current as humanly possible, I typically add new readings to the course. In order to give myself the greatest flexibility in adding those, I don't give you a reading list ahead of time and, instead, will load readings for the course at least one week in advance. I will put PDFs into DropBox. As such, every student is asked to open a DropBox account. You have 2 GB of free storage there. In order to be respectful of the copyright laws and exercise our use “for educational purposes only,” please do not share the DropBox folder with anyone else. I will delete PDFs from our folders as we finish each module and/or at the end of the term. If you wish to

retain copies of the PDFs you must copy the materials to a storage device of your choice. It is critical that you realize that if you delete, change, move articles from there, you will affect everyone's ability to access the articles. And, I am notified by DropBox of who made the changes to the Ethics Course folder.

Course Related Resources and Information

Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities who need accommodations in completing requirements or taking part in class in any manner should speak with me during the first week of class to arrange these accommodations. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) at Utah State University (a) evaluates requests for reasonable accommodation from University students to ensure adherence to the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act, (b) provide academic, personal, and career counseling to assist students in the development of personal and financial independence, and (c) provide supportive services to individuals with disabilities, including academic assistance, adaptive equipment, counseling, readers, transcribers, interpreters, and advocacy to ensure equal access to education, employment, and other University programs, among many other things. Students who suspect they may have a disability, who have a disability and have not sought help to contact the DRC for further information and support: (435) 797-2444.

Assignment Make-Up Policy

This course is designed to allow for flexibility in the expectable unexpected events that all of us experience over the course of our lives (e.g., partial credit, "skippable" papers). For this reason, I do not allow make-ups or extensions of assignments. If you are having a particularly difficult semester and cannot complete most assignments, please see me immediately to discuss a possible incomplete or withdrawal.

Classroom behavior

The Golden Rule can be described as an "ethic of reciprocity". Visualize yourself presenting to the class and consider how you would answer these:

- Where would you like students to be looking when you're talking?
- How would you like cell phones set?
- How would you like computers to be present in the room?
- When would you like others to arrive and depart from class?

Whatever those answers are, they will also apply to how others will want you to behave when they are presenting. You can read more about the University's Classroom Civility Policy which can be found on the web at: http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty/student_conduct/classroom_civility.cfm

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is maintained when students generate original work and acknowledge the sources of existing work (whether published or not) in their written or oral communication with others. Academic honesty allows us all the freedom to express our ideas with excitement and without fear. It is the foundation for trust between professionals. I expect students to engage academic honesty thoughtfully and deliberately. Because academic dishonesty shakes the foundation of trust, I consider it a very serious offense. If I understand a student is engaging in academic dishonest behavior, I will approach that student (see APA standard on informal resolutions to ethical violations) and discuss my concerns. Consequences can vary from a verbal reprimand to an "F" for the course grade. In extreme cases, I may report the incident for university-level disciplinary proceedings (see section VI-1 of the

Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University:
<http://www.usu.edu/student-services/pdf/StudentCode.pdf>).

For the sake of providing clear guidance on unacceptable behaviors, here are definitions of particular relevance (from course catalogue, p. 21; direct quotations or paraphrase)

Plagiarism. Representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. Plagiarism also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

Cheating. (1) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually"; (2) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; (4) acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; (5) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity; (6) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or (7) engaging in any form of research fraud.

Falsification. Altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

Topics and Reading Assignments

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
<i>INTRODUCTORY MODULE</i>		
8/31	General orientation and introduction to class	
9/7	# 1: Ethical Foundations	Paper 1: Comparison of Codes
9/14	# 2: Reasoning and Decision-making	Paper 2: Discussion
9/21	# 3: Diversity Issues in Ethics	Paper 3: Discussion
<i>RESEARCH MODULE</i>		
9/28	# 4: Ethical in Human Research	*CITI certification *Final Paper Proposals due
10/5	# 5: Animal Research	Paper 4: Discussion
10/12	# 6: Research Disasters Week	*Paper 5: Research Disasters / Presentation
<i>TEACHING MODULE</i>		
10/19	# 7: Ethical Behavior in Teaching Psychology	Paper 6: Discussion
10/26	# 8: Ethical Issues in Mentoring and Supervision	Paper 7: Discussion
<i>PRACTICE MODULE</i>		
11/2	#9: Utah Law Pertaining to Psychologists	*Paper 8: Law Egg Hunt; *Final Papers Due (2cr)
11/9	# 10: Specialized Organizational Settings: Schools	*Paper 9: Gretchen's assignment
11/16	# 11a: Ethical Issues in Service Provision	*Paper 10: Special Topics / Presentation
11/23	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving holiday	
11/30	# 11b: Ethical Issues in Service Provision	*Paper 11: Special Topic / Presentation
12/7	# 12: Assessment and Testing	*Final Papers Due (3cr)
12/15	NO CLASS – Final Exam Week	

* = required

Instructions for Specific Assignments

All assignments

Please send all assignments electronically to Melanie.Domenech@usu.edu. I will send an e-mail confirming receipt. Use the following naming convention for papers: <yourlastname topic#.docx> (e.g., Domenech topic1.doc), where the topic # is on the “Topics and Reading Assignments” portion of the syllabus in the Topic column (e.g., #7 is ethical behavior in teaching psychology).

Discussion papers

Structure. 1-2 page paper. Short papers are single-spaced, use Times 12 font, and require in-text references (e.g., (Ford, 2007)) but not a reference section.

Content. Based on the assigned readings; focusing and elaborating on a reading-related point of interest, and citing at least 2 readings.

Grading. Short papers turned in at the beginning of class can earn 25 points; papers turned in within a week of class can only earn 15 points. You are only able to earn full points if you are in attendance. The short papers will be graded as follows: $\sqrt{+}$ = 25 points, $\sqrt{}$ = 21 points, $\sqrt{-}$ = 18 points. A $\sqrt{+}$ represents a superior paper; a $\sqrt{-}$ represents a relatively poor effort (e.g., a straight-up summary). Supremely poorly written papers will earn 0 points.

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for the papers is to set up students for optimal learning by ensuring that materials are read and analyzed in a manner that will maximize students’ in-class engagement. If you are not in class, you cannot engage with the materials in the intellectual forum of the classroom.

Comparison of Codes

Structure. 1-2 page paper; can be prepared as a table or with bullet points.

Content. This paper will focus on a comparison across the three assigned ethics codes. Each student will prepare a table that compares the three codes in scope (e.g., research, practice), specificity, and underlying values. Come to class prepared to discuss the similarities and differences across codes and what might an “ideal” code look like.

Grading. This paper is worth 25 points and will be graded using the “check” system. Students not in attendance at this class period can only earn 15 points.

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for this paper is to have students consider ethics codes as culturally-rooted documents which reflect values of particular groups of helping professionals.

CITI Certification

Structure. Pre-set by CITI course.

Content. Certificate with specific modules taken and grades for each module. You must show evidence of having taken and successfully completed the CITI certification course (<http://irb.usu.edu/htm/training/certification-procedures/>).

Grading. The certificate can be delivered electronically and will be worth 25 points. There is no partial credit for this assignment.

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for this assignment is to give students the opportunity to review important didactic material outside of class which would otherwise need to be delivered in lecture format. I believe a graduate seminar in ethics is intended to promote students’ integration of learned materials and provide an opportunity to actively engage in rehearsals of ethical

decision-making; didactic presentations are outside of that scope and yet important facts need to inform the decisions that we make.

Research Disasters

Structure. One paper and a 10-minute presentation.

Content: Presentation. Students will pair up with one or two other students. The group will sign up for one “research disaster” (list provided by me) and come prepared to present in class (a) background on the disaster, including what occurred, when, and what the consequences were, (b) what the ethical / legal issues involved in this particular disaster were, and (c) what modern day research ethics practices and/or procedures were informed by this event(s). List all of the resources you used in obtaining the information. Be sure to address the demographic characteristics of those affected and provide a commentary how these demographics placed the individuals at risk.

Content: Paper. The group will turn in a short (1-2p) paper reporting on their findings that will serve as a resource to the rest of the class.

Grading. The same grade will be assigned to all group members. The paper is worth 15 points and the presentation is worth 10 points. Each will be graded on the coverage of students on points a, b, and c above. The paper will be additionally graded by the inclusion of relevant references (5 points).

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for this assignment is to give students an opportunity to reach beyond the known generalities of a particular event (e.g., Tuskegee experiments). These incidents occurred in a sociopolitical context, in a particular point in time, and at specific point of development of our discipline. The deeper level of knowledge should support engagement with these critical incidents away from “an example of what not to do” and towards “an example of what could happen” as we continue to be bound by our time, development, and sociopolitical context.

Law Hunt

Structure. One short paper (1-2 pages) and a brief presentation.

Content. The Law Hunt is an exercise in which students will find specific laws and report back to the class on their findings (e.g., what does Utah law say about child abuse reporting requirements for psychologists?). I will provide the questions to each the students the week prior to this class meeting.

Paper. Students will turn in a hyperlink to the law, and the text from the law (cut and paste). In the case of reporting statutes, students will provide contact information to make the report.

Presentation. A brief presentation (5 minutes) will report on the answers to the questions provided by me.

Grading. Each Law Hunt paper is worth 15 points and the presentation will be worth 10 points.

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for this assignment is to give students an opportunity to search for laws so that they may learn how to seek and find this information in the future. Laws are constantly changing and what facts students learn in this class may become quickly outdated; the skills in seeking information will support students’ ability to stay current over time. The presentation will allow for all of us to learn what the content of the law is at this point in time.

Specialty papers

Specialty papers will be assigned during the practice module only.

Structure. Students will work in teams and identify 3-5 substantive relevant references in their assigned area and prepare a presentation of 10-20 minutes on their topic.

Pedagogical rationale. The pedagogical rationale for this paper is to give the students an opportunity to seek relevant information about important ethical topics in psychology practice so that they may seek similar information in the future when faced with a potential ethical dilemma.

Content. Specialty papers are “cheat sheets” that have references of interest and main points of information for a given specialty topic (e.g., burnout).

Grading. Students are to put the PDFs for each article/chapter/report in the appropriate DropBox folder for the class to access. Each paper is worth 25 points and will be graded according to check system used in discussion papers. The presentation will be worth 10 points and will be graded on coverage of the topic in a thorough yet succinct manner. Excellent presentations will earn 10 points; adequate presentations will earn 7 points; poor presentations will earn 5 points.

Discussion leadership

Structure. Student will lead discussion during one class period on the assigned readings. Topics will be distributed and selected during the first class period; students select their discussion co-leaders.

Content. Discussion leaders will work in groups and be prepared to present at least one vignette for the class to discuss and analyze using the APA Ethics Code, other relevant ethics codes, and the assigned readings. The vignette must present an ethical dilemma for the class to discuss. Please review the difference between a dilemma and an ethical violation. The discussion leaders will be prepared to present (after the class discussion) the arguments for and against the possible courses of action, citing the appropriate ethics codes and integrating the assigned readings. Discussion leaders will apply and present an ethical decision making model (from those discussed in week #2; see calendar) to tackle the vignette or they may lead the class in a discussion that uses a decision-making model. If you have questions about the vignette’s suitability, check with the professor well in advance (i.e., at least one week prior to your assigned presentation date).

Grading. The exercise is worth 50 points and it will be graded as a group (i.e., all group members receive the same grade). Discussions are graded on the quality of the vignette (i.e., whether it was a true dilemma, whether it provided sufficient detail for a nuanced discussion), the applicability and thoroughness of the ethical issues identified, and the ability of the co-leaders to manage group discussion in manner that facilitates productive ethical decision-making. Discussion Leaders do not turn in a paper on the week they are presenting. If there are significant difficulties in collaboration, please notify the professor as soon as problems become apparent.

Pedagogical rationale. The purpose of this exercise is to promote students’ active engagement with ethical decision-making. Leading a discussion presents co-leaders with the opportunity to wrestle with identifying a true ethical dilemma as well as leading a group decision-making session which can mirror the steps one engages in when seeking consultation on a difficult situation. Participating in the discussion provides an opportunity to engage the process actively from a consultants’ perspective.

Final Paper Proposal & Draft.

The final paper will be on a topic of interest to the student and related to ethics. This is the student’s opportunity to go into greater depth in a particular area of ethics inquiry where they can tie in materials from the course but also bring in new materials. The purpose of this paper is to give you an opportunity to think about how you can contribute to scholarship on ethics as part of your program of research. Students are encouraged to engage an empirical research project, so long as it is feasible within the time-frame of the semester. Empirical papers can vary tremendously, for example:

Topic 1: An analysis of the ethical violations reported to DOPL over time to figure out the extent to which the kind, intensity, and frequency of violations has changed over time

Topic 2: Content analysis of films / TV show that deals with ethical issues in a specific area of professional psychological functioning. Compare and contrast how these images are at par with real guidelines of professional practice.

Topic 3: Experimental examination of ethical decision-making where two groups are given either a decision-making model or an ethics code. Ask both groups to study a specific ethical dilemma (one without a solution) and see who come up with a better process and/or solution.

Paper proposals will be worth 50 points and will identify the topic of interest, the purpose of the paper, and provide a brief outline. Proposals will be graded on their inclusion of a topic that is related to ethics scholarship, a clear statement of purpose, and a logical outline of the paper content. It is expected that topics will change or evolve based on feedback from the professor.

Final paper drafts will be, at most, 25 pages (including tables and references) in APA style, with particular attention to double spacing, proper in-text citations, proper reference style, and proper use of headers. Final papers will be worth 150 points. Papers will be graded on their clarity (i.e., clear purpose, clear tie to ethics), methodological soundness (i.e., clearly described methods, replicable, procedures carried out without apparent error), data analytic soundness (i.e., analyses carried out correctly, analyses appropriate to research questions asked), and logical conclusions (i.e., generalizability of findings limited to that which the authors found, clear limitations, recommendations for future research and/or implications for practice/policy provided).

Students who write exceptionally papers will be encouraged to submit their work for the Graduate Student Ethics Prize (<http://www.apa.org/about/awards/ethics-grad.aspx>) and/or for publication in a professional journal.