



School of
Management
Leadership for Life



DISASTER ETHICS

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June 21 – July 2 | Monday - Friday (6:00 pm – 9:00 pm) *Saturday (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 m.)

ON-CAMPUS - PM

DESCRIPTION

There is a difference between knowing the practicalities of crisis management/response and knowing what should be done, ethically speaking. This course will provide students with the following: an appreciation of ethical theory/principles; the skills to apply ethics in a crisis and make justifiable decisions; an ability to critically analyse/advise professionals on the application of ethics in crisis scenarios.

OBJECTIVES

To provide background, context, structure, and the ability to analyse ethics in crisis situations from varied professional perspectives.

By the end of the module, students will be able to:

1. Examine and apply ethical theory in crisis scenarios.
2. Critically consider the type, magnitude, etc. of ethical issues within crisis situations recognising the significance of multicultural, international, and global norms and contexts.
3. Appraise the role of ethics in different organisational and professional settings undergoing a crisis or emergency.
4. Offer viable ethical solutions in crisis situations to/as professionals.

METHODOLOGY

Research suggests that people resort to what they know in a crisis situation. All disciplines and professions will face a crisis at some point and students should be prepared to respond functionally (using their discipline knowledge) and ethically, accounting for the activities, interests and needs of others.

Students are often not exposed to problems/issues/crises from different disciplines. By considering the intersection of ethical concepts, in disaster/crisis contexts, across disciplines, students are able to understand that their discipline might not have the only ethical fix to an issue. They may also need to face that their discipline/profession might cause ethical issues in a crisis with which their classmates (and future colleagues) will then have to deal.

Sessions will cover a range of disaster/crisis ethics topics. Many of the topics covered under the umbrella of disaster ethics are distinct disciplines in themselves – climate justice, environmental ethics, humanitarian response, normative ethics – and will serve as an interdisciplinary bridge for students coming from different disciplines or backgrounds. Students will learn how to examine and apply ethics in a crisis scenario, considering the conflicting and overlapping priorities of different disciplines and thus learn to articulate and act on professional responses. Understanding commonalities, interests, priorities, across disciplines ahead of a crisis will prepare those responding to interact with colleagues and pursue cohesive and ethical outcomes.

I will split the 3-hour sessions into lectures and interactive activities. I take a playful learning approach to teaching and with that I provide students a chance to challenge principles, debate with classmates and become accustomed to working across disciplines in a crisis. Details of the playful/interactive activities will be outlined in the session-by-session schedule below.

Most of the readings are short and come in the form of newspaper articles, blogs or organization websites (and some videos). This should be manageable in an evening/morning, even if students are working alongside the module. Where there are additional, longer readings listed, I have noted (and will reinforce in-class) that they do not have to read all of those proposed; readings will depend on their own interest related to the subject matter.

EVALUATION

There will be two assignments: (A) one portfolio (60%) and (B) one essay (40%). Assessment A will encourage students to apply ethical theories to real-world emergency situations. This assessment

takes a playful learning approach and with that encourages multisensory, multimedia and inclusive learning.

Assessment B will test the students' ability to navigate the intersecting dilemmas faced by those affected by emergencies and assess whether certain crisis response planning is/was ethical. It will also give students a holistic understanding of what other professions are doing during an emergency, beyond the focus of their own professions. Whilst the topic of their essay may be 'playful' the actual assessment will require critical and deep analysis about ethical issues in a crisis.

Students should pick two options from Assessment A (30% each) and complete Assessment B (60%).

The evaluation system can be subject to changes.

PRE-REQUISITES

None

Given the uncertainty related to Covid-19, the time schedule and delivery mode of the courses can be subject to changes according to government and institutional regulations.