

Course Outline

EST 797, Section 02 (#44577)
Adv Topics/ Environmental Studies

RESEARCH ETHICS IN ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

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Department of Environmental Studies

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
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Description

Overview

Training on research ethics combined with cultural diversity will prepare students with new research approaches/methods that are appropriate to field studies, community-based partnerships and research with cultural groups. Students will learn about required human subjects protections, ethical theories, cultural competence theory, and review environmental case studies for community-based, culturally-appropriate approaches.

Schedule and Location

Three weekend, short-course format: February 11-12, March 25-26, and April 15-16. Class meets Fridays, 2:00-4:30 pm, and Saturdays 9:30 am-12:00 pm, in 105 Marshall Hall.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn about the protection of human subjects, key findings of the Belmont Report, and IRB requirements and will review the practical applications of these research ethic guidelines in an environmental research practice.
- Students will learn about essential ethical theories, community-based research and cultural competence theories, to promote more thoughtful moral consideration of research approaches/methods with diverse groups.
- Students will become aware of historical research harms to cultural groups in the US and internationally and learn the human rights histories of various cultural groups.
- Students will gain experience with preparing to interact with diverse groups in the US and abroad through investigating cultural histories and research experiences of these groups and through co-learning strategies and research arrangements used with diverse groups for collaborative projects.
- Students will learn how researchers meet ongoing demands for cultural humility and other virtue-based needs of community/ cultural groups through a review of virtue-based approaches in environmental case studies.

Requirements

- Attend all class sessions;
- Read all required texts;
- Submit two short essays; and
- Prepare a draft plan for protection of human subjects in your planned research.

Grading

Short essays (2):	30%
Final paper:	40%
Attendance and participation:	20%

Communication

<i>Instructor</i>	Dianne Quigley	David Sonnenfeld
<i>Office</i>	TBA	211B Marshall
<i>Hrs.</i>	TBA	TuTh 2-3:30 pm, & by appointment
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Required Text

Course Reader, available at the ESF Copy Center, 4 Bray Hall

Assignments

- Essay #1, Research ethics (2-3 pp.) – hand out, Feb. 11-12; due, Mar. 15
- Essay #2, Cultural competency (2-3 pp.) – hand out, Mar. 25-26; due, Apr. 15
- Final Paper: Draft plan for protection of human subjects (5-7 pp.) – hand out, Apr. 15-16; due, Apr. 30

Schedule of Readings

Friday, February 11, 2010: 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm;

Module One: Cultural Competence Theory and Human Subjects Protections

Required

National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects. 1979. "The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research," April 18.

Schrag, Brian. 2006. "Research with Groups: Group Rights, Group Consent, and Collaborative Research," *Science and Engineering Ethics* 12(3): 511-521.

Matthew, Dayna B. 2008. "Race, Religion, and Informed Consent: Lessons from Social Science," *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 36(1): 150-173.

Appelbaum, Paul S., Charles W. Lidz, and Robert Klitzman. 2009. "Voluntariness of Consent to Research: A Concept Model," *Hastings Center Report* 39(1): 30-39.

Saturday, Feb. 12, 2010: 9:30 – 12:00 pm

Module One (cont'd): Cultural Competence Theory and Human Subjects Protections

Required

Smith, Linda S. 1998. "Concept Analysis: Cultural Competence," *Journal of Cultural Diversity* 5(1): 4-10.

Module Two: Cultural Reflexivity and Belmont Principles

Required

Davis, Sally M., and Raymond Reid. 1999. "Practicing Participatory Research in American Indian Communities," *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 69(suppl):755S-9S.

King, Patricia A. 1992. "The Dangers of Difference," *Hastings Center Report* 22(6): 35-38.

Friday, March 25, 2010: 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm;

Module Two (cont'd): Cultural Reflexivity and Belmont Principles

Required

Minkler, Meredith. 2004. "Ethical Challenges for the 'Outside' Researcher in Community-Based Participatory Research," *Health Education & Behavior* 31(6): 684-697.

Panikkar, Bindu, and Doug Brugge. 2007. "The Ethical Issues in Uranium Mining Research in the Navajo Nation," *Accountability in Research* 14: 121-153.

Gbadegesin, Segun, and David Wendler. 2006. "Protecting Communities in Health Research from Exploitation," *Bioethics* 20(5): 248-253.

Recommended

Israel, Barbara A., et al. 1998. "Review of Community-Based research: Assessing Partnership Approaches to Improve Public Health," *Annual Review of Public Health* 19: 173-202.

Jones, James H. 1992. "The Tuskegee Legacy: AIDS and the Black Community," *Hastings Center Report* 22(6): 38-40.

Saturday, March 26, 2010: 9:30 – 12:00 pm**Module Three: Cultural Knowledge and Skills for Ethical Research Engagement**Required

Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Native Knowledge for Native Ecosystems," *Journal of Forestry* 98 (2000), 4-9.

Meredith Gibbs, "Toward a Strategy for Undertaking Cross-Cultural Collaborative Research," *Society and Natural Resources* 14 (2001), 673-687.

Charles R. Menzie and Caroline Butler, "Understanding Ecological Knowledge," *Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management* (2006), 4-10.

Andréanne Léger, "Intellectual Property Rights in Mexico: Do They Play a Role?," *World Development* 33 (2005), 1865-1879.

April 15, 2010: 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm**Module Three (cont'd): Cultural Knowledge and Skills for Ethical Research Engagement**Required

Flint, Courtney G., A.E. Luloff, and James C. Finley. 2008. "Where Is 'Community' in Community-Based Forestry?" *Society and Natural Resources* 21: 526-537.

Required, Any Three of the Following

Arquette, Mary, et al. 2002. "Holistic Risk-Based Environmental Decision Making: A Native Perspective," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110(suppl 2): 259-264.

Charles, Jennifer C., and Charles A. Menzie. 1998. "Identifying South-east Asian Immigrant Populations in Massachusetts at Risk from Eating Contaminated Shellfish," *Journal of Environmental Management* 52: 161-171.

Coburn, Jason. 2002. "Combining Community-Based Research and Local Knowledge to Confront Asthma and subsistence-Fishing Hazards in Greenpoint/ Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110(suppl 2): 241-248.

Quigley, Dianne. 2006. "Perspective: A Review of Improved Ethical Practices in Environmental and Public Health Research: Case Examples from Native Communities," *Health Education & Behavior* 33(2): 130-147.

Sharp, Richard R., and Morris W. Foster. 2002. "Community Involvement in the Ethical Review of Genetic Research: lessons from American Indian and Alaska Native Populations," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110(suppl 2): 145-148.

Sze, Julie. 2004. "Asian American Activism for Environmental Justice," *Peace Review* 16(2): 149-156.

Recommended

The Akwesasne Research Advisory Committee, "The Good Mind Research Protocol," *Akwesasne Notes New Series* 2, 94-9.

Kimmerer, Robin W. 2002. "Weaving Traditional Ecological Knowledge into Biological Education: A Call to Action," *BioScience* 52: 432-438.

MacQueen, Kathleen M., et al. 2001. "What is community? An evidence-based definition for participatory public health," *American Journal of Public Health* 91: 1929-1938.

Saturday, April 16, 2010: 9:30 – 12:00 pm

Module Four: Cultural Desire/ Humility and Virtue-based Ethics and Course Evaluation

Required

Macintyre, Alasdair. 1984. "The Nature of the Virtues." Ch. 14 in *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Davenport, Mae A., et al. 2007. "Building Trust in Natural Resource Management within Local Communities: A Case Study of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie," *Environmental Management* 39: 353-368.

Foster, Jennifer. 2009. "Cultural Humility and the Importance of Long-Term Relationships in International Partnerships," *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic & Neonatal Nursing* 38: 100-107.

APPENDIX: Module Descriptions

Module One - Overview of Cultural Competence Theory and Human Subjects Protections

- Overview of Human Subjects Protections – Belmont Report, International Recommendations (1.5 hours)
- Cultural Diversity and Human Subjects Protections – Review of Case Studies, Cultural Competence Theory (1.5 hours)

Cultural competence theory emphasizes these critical areas of learning: cultural reflexivity, cultural knowledge, cultural skill and cultural desire. Students will read about various approaches to cultural competence theories and practices. These learning objectives will be integrated with the training requirements of the Belmont Principles: beneficence, nonmaleficence, respect for autonomy and justice for researchers working with culturally-diverse communities. In this module, we will train researchers on the traditional requirements of the Belmont Principles but describe how they become more challenging in diverse settings and need a culturally-sensitive approach. For example, beneficence and nonmaleficence will require that we rebuild trust with cultural groups who have suffered from previous research harms of exploitation or disrespect; new, culturally- appropriate engagement strategies that may be community-

based or collaborative in nature may be required. In the field, we may need to develop new agreements about research procedures, recruitment, reporting and decision-making controls not traditionally required by Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). The respect for autonomy (persons) may involve more than just securing signed written consent forms but cultural understandings on individual autonomy, family/community decision-making traditions, appropriate language and communication needs, and an accounting of some critical contextual conditions. In this module, we will provide the full, traditional training on human subjects protections and cultural competence theory but underscore the need to meet these requirements within culturally-based models for environmental research. Students will be given an overview of these challenges in each rule of the Belmont Principles.

Module Two – Cultural Reflexivity and the Belmont Principles

- Preparing for Working with Diverse Cultural Groups: Overview of Past Research Harms, Human Rights Histories of Diverse Groups (2 hours)
- Ethical Theories/Practices of Justice with Cultural Groups: Review of theories and new practices, Student Reflections on Personal Approaches with Cultural Groups (2.5 hours)

Researchers who may engage culturally-diverse community members for environmental studies projects may have very little interaction with some diverse cultural groups: Latino, African-American, Native American or Asian-American communities in the US. Internationally, they may not be aware of important case lessons learned for working with indigenous communities or other diverse ethnic groups in various environmental projects. In this module, we will prepare researchers for the demands of cultural reflexivity (assessing one's attitudes, beliefs, biases and prejudices toward distinct cultural groups; understanding how certain academic interaction styles may be intimidating or culturally-inappropriate toward certain groups). We will engage practitioners in this self-assessment through providing training on types of media and other cultural stereotypes that have been both historical and current in the US for cultural groups who they may work with. Forms of racism will be discussed through readings and films, including color-blind racism and institutional racism. A special emphasis will include case studies/applied ethics articles that discuss previous research harms to culturally-diverse groups. Additionally, human rights histories/conflicts in the US for African-Americans, Native Americans, Latino and Asian groups will be provided as critical background information to students/faculty. Case studies such as Tuskegee Syphilis Study, the Navajo Uranium miners, Marshall Islanders exposed to nuclear tests provide deep reflections on how racially/culturally-diverse groups have been exploited through researcher ignorance, through a lack of genuine respect for persons with racial/cultural groups and through little positive engagement with those groups for building beneficent interventions. These cases inform us of deep harms that can occur without attention to our own preparation for dealing with radical differences among cultural groups.

Ethical theories need to be reviewed for developing individual moral approaches to these problems: postmodern/postcolonial theories of otherness, participation, inclusion and justice (Levinas and the Other, Freirian approaches, participatory research approaches (PRA), (Hall), feminist approaches/ethics of care (P. Collins, C. Gilligan); CBPR (Israel, Minkler, Chen); Kantian theory of individual moral autonomy, deontological approaches to justice (rational, distributive justice), communitarian ethics (community-based organizing and decision-making) and ethics of care or relational ethics (building relationships, more altruistic approaches) (20). Students will reflect in writing exercises and through small group discussions how these training resources are helpful to areas of cultural tension and conflict that they may fear in their research engagement; how they may adapt their personal approaches to traditional requirements of

beneficence, nonmaleficence, respect for persons and justice with these perspectives on working with diversity and cultural relativity.

Module Three – Building Cultural Knowledge and Skills for Ethical Research Engagement

- Building Cultural Knowledge for Research Ethics (US and International): Review of texts, databases, articles and co-learning approaches. (2 hours)
- Intercultural Approaches: Review of CBPR and TEK Case Studies and Applied Articles (2 hours)
- Student Review of Research Approaches with Anticipated Projects (1 hour)

Cultural Knowledge is defined as seeking and achieving a sound educational foundation regarding a variety of cultural races and world views. *Cultural Skill* stresses an understanding on diverse cultural perceptions, beliefs, practices and values on aspects of the research process; requiring skills development that is focused, systematic and evaluative in areas of problem-solving and communication (21). In this module, we will review US-based, cultural groups (Native American, Latino, Asian-American, African-American) and select among many international cultural groups (from African, India, Australia, Malaysia, Central and South America) and provide a template for investigating a distinct culture and its history, world views/beliefs and how this cultural knowledge interfaces with the goals of academic research projects. Cultural knowledge can be gained through anthropological/sociological texts and field studies but it can also be gained in co-learning and cultural sensitivity workshops with representatives of culturally-diverse communities being studied. We will equip students with the methods/resources needed to gain cultural knowledge about the specific cultural groups that they will encounter in their research careers. US-based, culturally-diverse representatives will be recruited for presentations in this module.

The project team will demonstrate through field studies how cultural skills can be achieved in the research ethics and research methods. In CBPR, PRA and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) case studies, we have rich models of intercultural engagement that increased beneficence, nonmaleficence, respect for culturally-diverse persons and social justice through creative research designs/methods. For example, in developing research designs and methods, mixes of qualitative methods (story-telling, oral histories, observational knowledge and culturally-based traditional knowledge) with quantitative methods (survey/questionnaire results, participant recruitment numbers, other population data sources needed for statistical analyses, field measurements, and instrument records) have enhanced scientific veracity while providing more community-based benefits/justice to cultural groups.

Similarly, we will teach new approaches in applied ethics articles, regulatory guidelines and field reports on culturally-based forms of on data management, issues of data ownership and reporting, intellectual property rights and models of tribal/community research agreements between research ethics committees, community advisory boards, and research teams. How to work successfully with community advisory boards and review committees is another major challenge to partnership approaches to research. Advice on recruitment of community representatives, capacity-building for research oversight activities, sharing decision-making and funding resources will be crucial training areas for students and faculty. The team will provide more in-depth training on cultural approaches to informed consent and the assessment of risks and benefits with diverse communities of study. We will train students with new methodological approaches to these challenging research ethics/designs and methods requirements.

Students will review and provide oral and written analyses on all these resources. They will be asked to review their personal research projects/dissertations for the potential applications of new strategies of

research ethics engagement and intercultural research methods/approaches used to expand their skills in conducting culturally-appropriate and sensitive research.

Module Four – Ongoing Demands for Cultural Desire/ Humility and Virtue-based Ethics

- Ongoing Ethical Challenges in Research: Past and Recent Virtue-based Approaches and Review of recent CBPR, TEK and Other Case Studies for Virtues Needed (2 hours)

Cultural desire is the motivation of the practitioner to want to engage in the process of becoming culturally-aware, skilled, knowledgeable. Desire involves the concept of caring, passion to be open and flexible with others, “cultural humility (22).” Cultural humility transcends cultural competence by stressing how cultural competence is not static or achieved with a set of cognitive skills, it requires an ongoing critical self-consciousness about racism, sexism, ethnocentric privilege, stereotypes, and other oppressive behaviors for members of other cultures. In this module, we will prepare students/faculty for ongoing attention to research relationships with cultural groups in their research experiences. An excellent opportunity for this ongoing review is through an examination of virtue ethics in their practices. Virtues are involved in Belmont Principles, in Greek and various theological traditions, in writings of A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, and physicians and social scientists who write on virtues in their practices. After providing an overview of virtue ethics/theories relevant to medical/scientific research, we will provide selected case studies now published in environmental studies and CBPR on the need for trust, respect, mutuality, discernment, flexibility, openness, and other identified virtues. In each of these case reports, researchers describe how their engagement styles, communication, language, research designs/methods all were altered or adapted through an iterative ordering of academic virtues and community, culturally-based virtues. Students will be asked to assess how virtues were discussed, ordered and negotiated in a culturally-based research process. Also, students will review how these negotiations occur over the entire research period and require ongoing attention and adaptations by researchers

Course Evaluation

- Oral and Written Review of Course (.5 hours)