



# RUTGERS

## COURSE SYLLABUS

SPRING, 2024

WEDNESDAYS 6:15 PM TO 8:45 PM

**ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR**

**PSYCHOLOGY 18:844:511, ROOM SMH 219**

It is a good idea to retain a copy of this syllabus in your personal files for use when applying for future degrees, certifications, or licensing requirements.

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Joshua Cohen, PhD  
**Email:** dr.jrcohen@rutgers.edu  
**Phone:** 732-648-5238  
**Student hours:** by appointment

### GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

#### Course Description:

This class will explore the values and ethical ideas that guide the professional practice of psychology, including philosophical ethical principles and professional codes of conduct, professional self-definition and self-regulation, and governmental sanctions (judicial, legislative, and executive). Sample areas covered: history and identity of professional psychology; APA's Ethical Standards; informed consent; competence; multiple relationships; confidentiality vs. access to clinical information; the ethics of self-care; practicing ethically within organizational pressures and demands; the ethics of multicultural competence; obtaining licensure as a psychologist, ABA therapist, or counselor, and emergent areas of practice such as telepsychology. Students are expected to enhance their capacities for ethical reflection and decision-making by learning applicable laws and codes, exploring their own values and commitments, then discussing and working through the dilemmas that arise when these come into conflict.

## Course Modality:

This course will be delivered **in person, though there will be some asynchronous elements to be completed online**, which will allow additional time for in-class activities. Additionally, depending on unpredictable issues with regard to weather, illness or other circumstances, we will also be prepared to pivot to synchronous online instruction when necessary. To access the companion Canvas course site, please visit [Rutgers Canvas](https://canvas.rutgers.edu/) at <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/> and log in using your NetID.

## PROFESSION-WIDE COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THE COURSE

Matching up to APA's Committee on Accreditation Standards

Psychology Profession-Wide Competency Elements:

- 2.1:** Demonstrates knowledge of and adherence to APA Ethical Principles, Code of Conduct, and relevant laws, professional standards, and guidelines governing psychological practice.
- 2.2:** Recognizes ethical dilemmas as they arise and applies ethical decision-making processes in order to resolve those dilemmas.
- 2.3:** Conducts self in an ethical manner across professional activities.
- 3.1:** Displays an awareness of how personal bias and cultural history, attitudes, and biases affect understanding and interactions with people different from themselves.
- 4.3:** Engages in self-reflection and professional and personal growth activities to maintain and improve performance and professional effectiveness.
- 5.2:** Demonstrates skills in producing, comprehending, and integrating oral, nonverbal, and written communications that are informative and well-integrated across a range of situations, populations, and systems.

## STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, the student should be able to, in the following domains:

### Knowledge:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical and professional underpinnings of ethical thinking and practice.
2. Describe the current and historical experience of professional psychology, the development of the field and its professional and ethical challenges.
3. Demonstrate a grasp of specific ethical issues, including informed consent, confidentiality, boundaries of competence and multiple relationships.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to apply the APA's *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of legal and regulatory issues, including the New Jersey Licensing Law and other laws governing mental health practice, at both state and federal levels.

**Skills:**

1. Show evidence of knowing and being able to apply a framework for ethical decision-making. This includes the ability to recognize when you are in an ethically challenging situation, and what conflicts are generating the challenge.
2. Demonstrate self-reflection, including awareness of the contribution of your own blind spots, uncertainties, personal and cultural background to the ethical decision-making process.
3. Demonstrate, especially in the work on group projects, further development of abilities in teamwork, accessing and assessing information to produce an engaging presentation that enhances both your own and your colleagues' grasp of important material.
4. Demonstrate, in the way that you work with your colleagues as we grapple with these issues, a growing ability to access your community for support, for guidance and as a source of lifelong learning.
5. Demonstrate an enhanced ability to envision your own future career by hearing narratives of senior practitioners' career development and by applying the framework of the class to the values and preferences that will shape your future professional life.

## **SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

(subject to changes)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1/17	1	INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW Organization of the Course. The nature of professional psychology and the learning goals of the course. Review of chart of positive and negative sanctions guiding the practice of psychology. Plan for student panels. Ethical genogram.
1/24	2	PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES IN PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY Instructor lecture and class discussion  WHERE DID WE COME FROM AND HOW DID WE GET HERE? HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND THE PSY.D. DEGREE Asynchronous Unit
1/31	3	APA ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVIDER STANDARDS I Instructor lecture and class discussion and activities
2/7	4	LICENSING LAWS AND MALPRACTICE
2/14	5	ETHICS IN RESEARCH Instructor lecture and class discussion

2/21	6	APA ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVIDER STANDARDS II Instructor lecture and class discussion and activities
2/28	7	ACCESS TO INFORMATION I: CONFIDENTIALITY, DUTY TO WARN Student Panel #1  NJ LAW SCAVENGER HUNT
3/6	8	PROFESSIONAL HEALTH I: Introduction to issues of professional impairment  ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
3/20	9	PROFESSIONAL HEALTH II: TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES Student Panel #2  Dr. Erin Mendoza presenting experiential practices for self-care.
3/27	10	INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENT AND PATIENTS' RIGHTS Student Panel #3  ACCESS TO INFORMATION II: INFORMED CONSENT, HIPAA  <u>MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DUE</u> Your choice of 1. Career Role Interview 2. Practicum Agency/School Ethical Review Paper 3. Ethical Genogram Paper 4. Code Comparison Paper <b>Upload on Canvas</b>
4/3	11	ETHICS AND PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT recorded lecture posted to Canvas.
4/10	12	THE ETHICS OF BECOMING A CULTURALLY COMPETENT/HUMBLE PSYCHOLOGIST Student Panel #4:
4/17	13	ETHICAL CHALLENGES OF THE 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: PRACTICING IN THE AGE OF EMAIL, TEXTING, FACEBOOK, SKYPE AND TWITTER

		Student Panel #5
		IN-CLASS JIGSAW GROUP WORK ON FINAL EXAM I
4/24	14	EMERGENT ISSUES: TELEPSYCHOLOGY Student Panel #6
		THE AI REVOLUTION: HOW WILL IT AFFECT PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY? Student Panel #7
		IN-CLASS JIGSAW GROUP WORK ON FINAL EXAM II
5/1	15	ETHICS IN WORKING WITH COUPLES, FAMILIES AND GROUPS
		DUAL RELATIONSHIP AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST Student Panel #8
		SEASONS OF A PROFESSIONAL LIFE Sharing the results of the Career Role Interview and discussing where class members are in their own career thinking.
		COURSE WRAP-UP
		<u>FINAL EXAM DUE</u>

### **Required Texts**

Fisher, C. (2022). *Decoding the ethics code*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications. *This is our core text, which we will be reading in its entirety. Reading this text will give you a solid understanding of the APA Ethics Code and its applications.*

Pope, K.S., et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.  
*This book is particularly focused on the applications to psychotherapy practice.*

New Jersey Licensing Law, available at <http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/psy/psyreg.pdf>

Collection of articles - available on Canvas.

## **COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS**

## **1. Student Panel Presentation**

Each panel will be composed of two or more students who will work together on developing a presentation to the class around a particular set of professional issues, as listed on the syllabus. The goal of the panel is to convey the key issues, concepts, facts or learning points in a way that makes them interesting and accessible to the class. Groups are encouraged to design their presentations to maximize the experiential involvement of the class, for example, through:

- Roleplays of an ethically challenging situation
- Case discussions
- Use of film clips, YouTube, other media
- Quiz or game show formats;
- A structured debate
- Videotaping interviews with knowledgeable subjects

Previous classes have found the development of their presentations an excellent chance to employ creativity, drama, group process skills, and instructional techniques in mastering complex, controversial didactic material. Each group should plan on a time frame of 75 minutes. As we sort ourselves into groups in the first class, some adjustment may be made to this in view of student interest.

The written requirement of this assignment is to develop a document that will serve as a resource on the topic for your peers. These can be "Fact Sheets," containing the salient points in the area in outline form, key definitions, explanations of laws and/or recommended resources and readings, or the PowerPoint you may have prepared. You may have handouts for these, or also feel free to save paper and send them to me for posting on our Canvas site before or after your presentation.

## **2. Choice of Mid-Term Assignment**

You have a choice of assignments here. Pick the one that seems more interesting or useful to you. The Career Role Interview gives you the chance to speak with a senior colleague about the course of their career. Students in the past have found this often presents a good opportunity to speak with someone who perhaps has a career path they themselves plan to pursue or are just curious about and has given useful takeaways for thinking about the whole of one's career over the life cycle. The second choice, reviewing and thinking through the challenges of applying the Ethics Code in real-life practice situations you have already experienced, strengthens your capacity for ethical reflection and can also be useful as you prepare for Comps. The third, the Ethical Genogram, will give you the opportunity to further reflect on influences on your own ethical thinking and development. The final one acknowledges that the APA Code is not the only Code that may provide guidance for your career and allows you to compare it with another code relevant to your career path.

Any of the options should result in a paper of 4-6 pages, double-spaced.

### **Option #1: Career Role Interview**

The Career Role Interview is a way of exploring issues of careers and career development in professional psychology. This gives you the opportunity to further tailor the course to your own interests and development by selecting a senior colleague to speak with about his or her career. A format and possible questions for your interview are available on Canvas.

### **Option #2: How Does Your Practicum Agency Measure Up?**

As you are coming to be familiar with the APA Code of Ethics, think about a current or past practicum experience you have had. Describe, in no more than a paragraph each: (a) three ways in which the agency meets the principles and standards of the code, and (b) three ways in which it is challenged in meeting the principles and standards. In a final paragraph or two, reflect on some of the difficulties and issues involved in “ethics in the real world.”

### **Option #3: The Ethical Genogram**

We will have done a brief version of this in class when we discussed personal ethical self-awareness. If you choose to do a deeper dive into this, read the two articles on the Ethical Genogram available on our Canvas site, do a more careful version of your own, and write a paper about what you have learned, with special reference to how your own history may impact your ethical thinking in your work as a psychologist.

### **Option #4: Comparison of APA Code with another code relevant to your career path**

While an expectation of this program, as an APA-Approved program, is that everyone obtains a high level of familiarity with the APA Code, your own path may also be influenced by or even be under the aegis of a different (and additional) Code, for example, the BACB Ethical Code or Sport Psychology Code or the code of psychologists in a different country where you might envision practicing. For this option, compare the APA Code to another code of your choice. Where do the two codes align? Where do they differ? Are there elements in the other code that provides you guidance for your career path that the APA Code does not?

## **3. Self-Assessment Quizzes**

This course requires mastery of a lot of content, some of it on first reading (codes, laws, etc.) somewhat on the dry side. To help in focusing and in the mastery of subject matter that will be important not just for Comps and licensure, but most importantly for your professional practice, we will have several quizzes. These will focus on the laws, codes, regulations and their application to actual practice. These will be on Canvas with immediate scoring and unlimited retakes, so you can check your own growing knowledge base.

## **4. Final Exam**

“Open Book” Take-Home Exam: To aid you in reviewing and integrating the material in the course, and to help you prepare for General Comps, there will be a take-home exam. It is available on Canvas, and please upload your completed exam onto Canvas for submission.

We will be scaffolding this final by having you work on your dilemma scenarios in small groups prior to writing up and submitting your exam.

## **STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY**

The study of ethics naturally involves issues of justice, how we put our values into practice, how we distribute power, how well we take care of the powerless and empower the disempowered. There is controversy in the field of ethics about the universality of ethics, with some ethicists on a quest for a universal moral law, and others who believed that ethics is culture and community specific. An emphasis on the individual is a thread that runs through Western philosophy’s approach to ethics, while a more Eastern emphasis on what is good for the group or the family may lead to different emphases and choices. We have much to learn from each other as we bring together our different cultural understandings of issues of moral choice.

We don’t make ethical decisions in a vacuum. We make them embedded in a time, a culture, from the position of our own group memberships, with both conscious and unconscious bias. Though we can never be fully aware of all of these influences, part of ethical reflection is to work to increasingly understand their impact and to deepen our cultural understanding. It is a part of ethics to educate ourselves on various cultures, identities, values, belief systems, and traditions, and to inform ourselves on social, political, and economic factors that are likely to impact clients.

## **STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

## **STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University’s academic integrity policy, to which this class will adhere, can be reviewed at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/>

## **GRADING**



Grades in this course are weighted according to the table below.

<b>Activity or Major Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Grade %</b>
<b>Class Participation</b>	Throughout	10%
<b>Exercises, Quizzes and Discussion Posts</b>	Throughout	10%
<b>Midterm</b>	October 24	20%
<b>Panel Presentation</b>	Variable	25%
<b>Final Exam</b>	December 12	35%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## READINGS

Readings beyond the required text should be available on Canvas or by a link to a web site. Over the course of this class, students will have the opportunity to read most of the material recommended for General Comps preparation for the “Ethical and Legal Issues” question. There is a large amount of potential reading, some of it core for everyone, and some that you may choose to focus on according to your own career path.

## READING ASSIGNMENTS BY WEEK

### Class #1

#### Introduction and Overview

Pope, K.S., & Vasquez, M. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 1: Helping Without Hurting, pp. 3-11.

Peluso, P. R. (2003). The ethical genogram: A tool for helping therapists understand their ethical decision-making styles. *The Family Journal*, 14(3), 286-291.

*We will have a class activity based on this.*

In general, obtain and begin your reading of the required texts, Decoding the Ethics Code and Pope & Vasquez’s Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling. We will be focusing on specific pages and chapters for specific classes, but reading through these at your own pace, with specific attention to parts that relate to your own career path, will help you get the core knowledge of the APA Ethics Code under your belt and give you a better framework for integrating the course material. They will also serve as a resource for your panel presentations.

## **Class #2**

### Philosophical Issues

**Required:** Fisher, C. (2022). Decoding the Ethics Code, Chapter 4

Watch brief video on Canvas site on “Moral Life of Babies”

**Recommended:** Bloom, P. (2010). The moral life of babies. The New York Times. May 5, 2010.

Pinker, S. (2008) The moral instinct. The New York Times Accessible online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/magazine/13Psychology-t.html>. *A fascinating look at recent research and thinking on the evolutionary biology of our moral sense.*

Rogerson, M.D., Gottlieb, M.C., Handelsman, M.M., Knapp, S., & Younggren, J. (2011). Nonrational processes in ethical decision making. American Psychologist, *66*, 614-623.

## **Class #3**

### APA Ethical Principles and Provider Standards, Part I

A major goal for this week is to continue your reading of the Fisher Book, ideally to be completed by Class #6. There will be online activities, especially quizzes, to help you work through this and check your knowledge. The chapters below orient you to the overall background and structure of the Code:

Fisher, C. (2022). Decoding the Ethics Code. Chapters 1-3.

*Look through the code itself (tab on the Canvas site, also in your books), familiarizing yourself with its general structure and the general and particular issues it addresses. We will be doing some basic familiarization exercises in class as well.*

American Psychological Association. (2017). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct* (2002, amended effective June 1, 2010, and January 1, 2017). <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>

## **Class #4**

### Licensing Laws and Malpractice

New Jersey Licensing Law and Regulations (available on Canvas and also on the Board’s website as a PDF File: <http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/psy/psyreg.pdf>)

Knapp, S., Younggren, J., VandeCreek, L., Harris, E., & Martin, J. (2013). Assessing and managing risk in psychological practice, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Rockville, Md: The APA Trust. pp. 11-30.

Habben, C.J. (2013). Obtaining a license to practice psychology. In M. Prinstein (Ed.), The portable mentor: Expert guide to a successful career in psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (pp. 227-234). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

## **Class #5**

### Ethics in Research

Fisher, C. (2022). Decoding the Ethics Code. Chapter 12  
*Have completed the IRB online course and read the relevant parts in the text. This is also a requirement in your Advanced Statistics course and will be needed for your dissertation.*

## **Class #6**

### APA Ethical Principles and Provider Standards, Part II

*Finish your reading of Decoding the Ethics Code.*

Take a look at the list of APA-Approved Standards and Guidelines at:

<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/approved-guidelines>

These are separate from the Ethics Code, and do not have the same force/mandate, but are meant to provide guidance, ideas of current best practice in a variety of specialty areas. You don't need to read any of them at this point (unless you find one that catches your attention), but be aware of their existence as a resource, particularly in dealing with specific populations or specialties.

## **Class #7**

### Access to Information: Confidentiality and Duty to Warn

Pope, K.S., et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 21, pp. 246-263. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

*Review the relevant Fisher sections if you haven't already.*

## **Class #8**

### Professional Health I: The Impaired Professional

Complete the online unit of videos, quiz and discussion board.

### Role of Professional Organizations

Dodgen, D., Fowler, R., & Williams-Nickelson, C. (2013). Getting involved in professional organizations. In M. Prinstein (Ed.), *The portable mentor: Expert guide to a successful career in psychology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (pp. 257-267). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

*Spend some time browsing the APA Website. You may also want to browse some specialty websites as well, such as APA Divisions relevant to your career goals.*

## **Class #9**

### Professional Health II: Ethics of Self-Care

Pope, K.S., et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 17, pp. 196-205.

McWilliams, N. (2004). *Psychoanalytic psychotherapy: A practitioner's Guide*. New York: Guilford. Chapter 12: Self-Care, pp. 285-303.

*This chapter is a thoughtful reminder of things we need to be aware of to take care of ourselves in our in our emotionally demanding profession.*

### Ethics and Practice Development

Barnett, J., and Henshaw, E. (2013). Training to begin a private practice.

In M. Prinstein (Ed.), *The portable mentor: Expert guide to a successful career in psychology*,

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. (pp. 203-214). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

## **Class #10**

### Involuntary Commitment and Patients' Rights

Readings TBA

### Informed Consent, HIPPA

Pope, K. et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Chapter 16, pp. 175-195.

## **Class #11**

### Dual Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

Fisher, C. (2022). Decoding the Ethics Code. pp. 171--189.

Pope, K. et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Chapter 26, pp. 357-379.

### The AI Revolution: How will it affect psychology and psychotherapy?

Readings TBA

## **Class #12**

### Ethics of Becoming a Culturally Competent Psychologist

American Psychological Association. (2017). Multicultural guidelines: An ecological approach to context, identity, and intersectionality. Retrieved from:

<http://www.apa.org/about/policy/multicultural-guidelines.pdf>

These more recent guidelines are far more extensive than previous versions of *Multicultural Guidelines*. Familiarize yourself with this. Minimally read over the basic list of guidelines on pp. 4-5 and the Chart on p. 97. The rest the document expands on these. There are also case studies in the appendix.

Pope, K. et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Chapter 23, Supporting Human Rights and Addressing Oppression in Psychotherapy, pp. 288-305.

### Recommended:

Fowers, C.B., & Davidov, B.J. (2006). The virtue of multiculturalism: Personal transformation, character, and openness to the other. *American Psychologist*, *61*, 581-594.

## **Class #13**

### Ethical Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Pope, K. et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Chapter 24, pp. 306-326.

APA. (2021). Guidelines for the optimal use of social media in professional psychological practice. Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/guidelines-optimal-use-social-media.pdf>

Take a look at this website: <http://drkkolmes.com/> and see what you think. Dr. Keely Kolmes is well known in our field for her making available a lot of material and thoughts on issues of practicing in the era of social media.

In-Class Jigsaw Group work on Final Exam:

We will be doing in-class joint work on the ethical dilemmas for the final exam in both this class and next week's class. Have ready for class the dilemma you have created to analyze for the final in this class. No need to have completed the entire exam, as this is an opportunity to work in groups to further your thinking about the dilemma and to have an opportunity to consult with your peers (something we all need to do when faced with dilemmas).

**Class #14**

Telepsychology

Pope, K. et al. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Chapter 24, pp. 306-326. (same as last week, as chapter deals with both telepsychology and social media)

APA. (2013). Guidelines for the practice of telepsychology. Retrieved from  
<http://www.apapracticecentral.org/ce/guidelines/telepsychology-guidelines.pdf>

In-Class Jigsaw Group work on Final Exam:

We will be doing in-class joint work on the ethical dilemmas for the final exam, continuing our work from last week.

**Class #15**

Seasons of a Professional Life: Sharing the Results of the Career Interviews

No readings. Work on final exam.