



ETHICS IN SOCIAL STUDIES

Instructor:

Dr. Jonathan Stieglitz (jonathan.stieglitz@iast.fr)

Course Description:

This course focuses on the ethics of social science research. It will cover some examples of the troublesome history of scientific research and institutional policies designed to prevent harm to individuals and communities. The course will also cover subtle ethical dilemmas that occur in designing experiments and surveys and conducting fieldwork with vulnerable populations. Case discussions and ethics evaluations of various research designs, including some proposed by students, will complement lectures.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

Active participation and engagement in this course should enable students to:

- Recognize ethical issues in conducting social science research
- Evaluate the ethics of various research designs
- Design a study (e.g., experiment) that can be conducted according to ethical research standards
- Develop a submission for review by an ethics board for human subjects research
- Critically reflect on the options for ensuring ethical treatment of participants in human subjects research

Course Outline:

Weeks 1-2: Introduction; Consent

Weeks 3-4: Vulnerable subjects; Privacy and confidentiality

Weeks 5-6: Balancing harms and benefits; Science in Society

Weeks 7-8: Novel ethical issues

Weeks 9-10: Student presentations (individual or group projects)

Assessment:

Your grade will be based on the following components:

- Take-home exam (45%)
- Individual or group project: Ethics board submission for a scientific study involving human subjects (45%)
- Contributions to class discussions (10%)