Please note that this document provides only core course information. A complete syllabus will be available on Canvas to enrolled students.

**Issues of Life and Death**

**LEAP 1101, Section 1: T/Th 12:25-1:45, BU C 301**

*Social/Behavioral Science Exploration-3 credit hours (BF)*

**Meg Harper, Ph.D.**
Phone/Text: 801-557-8153  Email: m.harper@utah.edu
Office: 148 Sill Center  Office Hours: TBA

**Course Description**

Do humans act in their best interests? How can citizens in a developed or developing society evaluate and favor scientific evidence over beliefs, assumptions, and myths? How do individuals balance demands from various communities—families, schools, workplace, neighborhoods, cities, regions—to which they belong? As we create new solutions, we are often confounded by both expected and unpredictable problems that arise. This course aims to examine contemporary issues of life and death through multifaceted approaches to problem solving and ethical dilemmas. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of challenges we face in the 21st century and, in teams, will develop a researched action plan in response to a societal problem. Topics for study and class discussion will focus on local, national, and global issues: welfare and government assistance; the vaccine debate and disease control; the opioid epidemic; euthanasia; animal rights; jobs of the future; global climate change; food supply for a global population.

**There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be available on Canvas.**

In our discussions we will consider the following questions:

- What is a society or community?
- How can individuals shape society through ethical choices and behaviors?
- How do individuals’ beliefs, opinions, assumptions, and habits conflict with societal change or progress?
- How can individuals determine what is ethical while making decisions within different communities (as citizens, parents, consumers, leaders, employees, etc.)?
- What role do social scientists play in influencing public debate and policy?
- How do social scientists study human behavior and gather data on demographic trends? How can institutions develop policies that align with analysis of scientific evidence?
- How can individuals and societies analyze and respond to issues of globalization?
Grading and Assignments 100 Points

Homework (10/11) 30
Undergraduate Experience Map 5
Midterm 15
Library Classes 10
Attendance 10
Team Action Plan and Presentation 15
Critique and Self-Reflection 15

Grade Scale

A = 93 and above  
A- = 90-92  
B+ = 87-89  
B = 83-86  
B- = 80-82 
C+ = 77-79  
C = 73-76  
C- = 70-72  
D+ = 67-69  
D = 63-66  
D- = 60-62 
E = 59 or below

Attendance: Number of Absences = Points for attendance grade

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Policies on Assignments and Coursework

- Late assignments will be penalized 2 points.
- Team assignments require collective collaboration, effort, and organization for a team grade. Any team member may receive a different grade based on absence or lack of equal work on the project.
- Library sessions are designed to assist you in successfully completing your team project in stages. Points for the library portion of the final grade are based on attendance and participation in these sessions.
- Readings and homework should be completed for class on the specified date. Homework will be checked by your Peer Adviser at the beginning of class, and will not be accepted late.
- Directions, guidelines, and grading criteria for written assignments, including homework, will be explained in class and posted on Canvas.

Extra Credit

You may earn up to 3 extra credit points (1 point per event) through the following opportunities:

- A LEAP activity or service event, including Peer Advisor Workshops
- Films and readings assigned as extra credit
- Any pre-approved event, lecture, conference or activity that you can relate to course topics.
To receive credit for any of these options, you must submit a typed, printed response (about 1 page) that describes the event, your participation, and what you gained from the experience. Extra credit is due on or before the last class.

**Learning Objectives for Arts LEAP**

1. Critical Thinking  
   a. reading for main ideas  
   b. assessing issues from different perspectives  
   c. discussing topics in a thoughtful manner  
   d. evaluating arguments and evidence

2. Teamwork  
   a. collaboration  
   b. negotiation and compromise  
   c. building leadership skills

3. Information literacy  
   a. social and ethical implications of problems and policies  
   b. knowledge of specific issues and relevant evidence  
   c. overview of local, national, and global challenges to human populations  
   d. quantitative and qualitative information and analysis

4. Communication  
   a. professional communication skills  
   b. practice and improvement in writing and oral argumentation

5. Research  
   a. search strategies and familiarity with databases in the social sciences  
   b. evaluation of internet sources  
   c. integration of library resources into a team research project  
   e. use of APA citation style

6. Personal development  
   a. exploration of campus activities, organizations, and opportunities in service and leadership  
   b. integration and sense of belonging in the university community  
   c. friendships and social networks  
   d. engagement within the LEAP learning community—with classmates, peer adviser, faculty