Ethics and social responsibility in research
– An introductory course

When: 17th and 20th August 2009

Where: Kumpula campus, rooms to be confirmed

Course Coordinator: Dr Henriikka Clarkeburn [henriikka.clarkeburn@gmail.com]

"A competent academic can discuss and justify ethical and social questions arising from his/her research, and observe and identify ethical challenges in personal research agenda as well as in research as a social activity. This introductory course provides young academics with concepts and practice to analyse research from a social and ethical perspectives. This will equip participants with skills to manage their research agenda in the wider social context. The course is built using independent e-learning as well as collaborative learning workshops."

So what does all that mean in practice? This course outline should answer most of your questions about course structure, expectations, workload, materials and where to get help. So keep reading.

Course structure

This introductory course is divided into five components:

Component	Approximate workload
Independent e-learning	20hr
Pre-workshop assignment	10hr
Collaborative workshop	16hr
Group work	10hr
Final assignment	24hr
Sum	80hr

Independent e-learning

Prior to collaborative workshops you are expected to read an article 'Making Good Decisions' outlining basic ethical theory for decision-making using research-based examples. This article is supported by recorded lectures. The article and accompanying audio files are available for downloading on the course website: http://groups.google.com.au/group/ethics_in_research_kumpula_2009?hl=en.

By registering in this course you will be automatically made a member of the group and sent an invitation after registrations close 1st June. If you have not received an invite by 7th June, please send an inquiry to henriikka.clarkeburn@gmail.com.

On the course website you will also find an 'Ethical Theory' Discussion Area, which is your forum to ask questions regarding the theoretical base outlined in the article and lectures. The better you understand the theory prior to the collaborative workshops, the more you will enjoy and benefit from them.

Pre-workshop assignment

The pre-workshop assignment has two parts:

1) At least two weeks prior to commencing the workshop (i.e. <u>by 3rd August 2009</u>) you are expected to post your most challenging ethical/social research challenge to date on the 'Ethical challenge' discussion area. This posting should be about 1-2 pages long and include enough detail for others to be able to place the challenge in context. It may be helpful to include a short description of your research project with your posting – even your formal research plan as an attachment.

2) You should comment on <u>two other challenges</u> of your own choosing. Your comment should be a thoughtful contribution sharing similar challenges, suggestions on solving the challenge, or analysing the challenge using a theoretical framework. You should post your comments a week before the workshops commence i.e. <u>by 10th August 2009</u>.

Collaborative learning workshop

The two-days we spend together are structured around working together as opposed to you listening to a talking head. There will be short lecture sessions on theory, but most of the workshop is spent on working on challenges and applying theory in a meaningful way. This structure is chosen as research suggests listening is the worst form of learning when you measure it by what the students can remember after a few months. On the other hand discussing and teaching results in the best learning outcome. Also, the questions on ethics and social responsibility are by their nature ambiguous and a discussion approach is a natural way of learning.

The workshop activities will focus on the key research ethics and social responsibility themes. The actual programme is open to change based on specific questions and outcomes from pre-workshop collaboration.

<u>Day 1</u>

• Theory block based on pre-workshop material and assignments
• Ethical questions in research funding
• Ethical questions of evaluating research
• Social responsibility of research

<u>Day 2</u>

• Ethical questions in research publication
• Research ethics legislation and codes of conduct
• Meaning of research
• Supervision and personal ethical challenges

Group work

Between the two workshop days you are expected to work on a practical assignment in small groups allocated in the workshop. The assignment will require you to make decisions on an ethical matter and produce an outcome, which will be incorporated as part of Day 2 workshop. The group can choose to meet either in person or utilising the shared online learning space.

Final assignment

After the workshops you are expected to submit a 4 page (approx. 2000 words in English) essay outlining what you think is the most important ethical challenge either in your own research or in your field, and suggest a reasoned solution to it. This assignment is due <u>17th September 2009.</u> Please submit your assignment by email to <u>henriikka.clarkeburn@gmail.com</u>.

Passing the course

The course will be marked using pass/fail. In order to pass you need to complete all course components satisfactorily, including attendance at the workshops. If unsatisfactory work is submitted, a re-submission is requested.

Learning outcomes

This course is designed to develop the following skills in its participants, which are below mapped with different course components:

Learning outcome	Corresponding course components
Ability to discuss ethical and social issues in research	Pre-workshop assignment Collaborative workshops Group work
Ability to justify ethical and social decisions in research	Group work Final assignment
Understanding basic ethical theory and discourse	Independent e-learning Collaborative workshops
Broadened perspective of research in the social context	Collaborative workshops Group work Final assignment