

MORALITY AND MEDICINE

History & Philosophy of Science (HPS) 0613

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Office hours: M 2:00 – 4:00 pm
and by appointment, in CL 901

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Ethical dilemmas in the practice of health care continue to proliferate and receive increasing attention from members of the health care profession, ethicists, policy makers, and the general public. In this course we will examine a number of ethical issues stemming from medicine, health, and our all too fragile and mortal human bodies. Our topics will range from abortion to euthanasia to medical policy to animal testing and to globalization. We will, whenever possible, attempt to incorporate perspectives from across cultures, religions, and ways of life in order that we might better understand our own lives and choices as it regards health and medicine. This class will cover not only the facts about the issues, but the arguments for all the positions about these issues, in attempt to be not only fair and balanced (sorry Fox News!), but so as to master the skill of reasoning through difficult ethical problems.

Successful students in this course will master the following objectives:

1. Students will learn how to recognize philosophical arguments, read philosophical texts, and identify the issues at play in complex bioethical cases by drawing upon their philosophical proficiency.
2. Students will be able to display their mastery of (1) by producing their own written arguments *and* participating in discussions of historical cases and hypothetical situations.
3. Students will gain new insights into i) the nature of their roles as a future healthcare provider, scientific researcher, healthcare consumer, and/or informed citizen; and ii) the usefulness of employing ones powers of reasoning and deliberation when seeking to understand and act upon complex social issues.

DISABILITY STATEMENT & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (<http://www.drs.pitt.edu/>) at 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity (see <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

All the required readings will be made available in the course reader.

GRADING:

1. **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (24%)**

- a. Each student must come up with TWO discussion questions for each class (except for Week 10).
 - i. The discussion questions should be thoughtful, and not of the form: "What does AUTHOR XYZ say about ISSUE 123?"

2. **FIRST PAPER (26%):**

- a. The paper must be 4-5 pages in length, 12pt font, double spaced.
- b. The paper is due **October 17, at the beginning of class**. Late assignments will be severely penalized.
- c. Respond to the following scenario:
 - i. Suppose you are a physician, and that you have many patients facing end of life issues. You are asked by the government of your country to present an argument about how they should deal with these issues.
- d. Make sure to do the following:
 - i. Identify a specific end of life issue from among those we have studied.
 - ii. Choose a philosophical perspective by which to evaluate it.
 - iii. Using that perspective, evaluate the specific issue you have chosen.
 - iv. Make sure to ARGUE for your position, don't just state your opinion.
 - v. Given your evaluation, make a proposal to your government about how they should deal with this issue.
 - vi. Identify counter-arguments to your position, especially those based on differing philosophical perspectives.

3. **FINAL PAPER TOPIC SELECTION(15%)**

- a. The paper need be no longer than 1 page, 12pt font, double spaced.
- b. The paper is due **November 7, at the beginning of class**. Late assignments will be severely penalized.
- c. For the final paper, you must research a bioethical issue that we will NOT cover in class.
 - i. Select a bioethical issue that WE WILL NOT DISCUSS OVER THE TERM.
 - ii. Indicate the range of responses to the issue, and how you think you might respond
 - iii. Find at least 2 articles dealing with that issue, and give their citations.

4. **FINAL PAPER (35%)**

- a. The paper must be 6-8 pages in length, 12pt font, double spaced. Late assignments will be severely penalized.
- b. The paper is due **December 12, by 5pm**, turned into my mailbox in the HPS Department office, 1017 Cathedral of Learning. Late assignments will be severely penalized.
- c. Your task is to do the following:
 - i. Pick any bioethical issue THAT WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED over the course of the term. Present the issue in detail, making sure to discuss every side to it (since some issues have more than one side!).
 - ii. Then make explicit how you would deal with it by evaluating the issue and the proper response to it by means of an argument.
- d. Make sure to do the following:
 - i. Indicate the full range of possible responses to the issue
 - ii. Make sure to state what philosophical perspective you are using to evaluate the issue.

- iii. When evaluating the issue, make sure you don't just state your opinion: ARGUE for your position.
- iv. Identify counter-arguments to your position, especially those based on differing philosophical perspectives
- v. Identify any assumptions you are making, and briefly defend their reasonableness.

Grading scale for assignments and final grade:

A+	96 - 100 %	B+	87 - 89.99 %	C+	77 - 79.99 %
A	93 - 95.99 %	B	84 - 86.99 %	C	74 - 76.99 %
A-	90 - 92.99 %	B-	80 - 83.99 %	C-	70 - 73.99 %
D	50 - 69.99 %	F	below 49.99 %		

On Reading Assignments

This class requires a lot of reading, some of which is very difficult. I expect you understand the basic arguments and points being made by the authors, and to be able to discuss the readings.

For each reading assignment, I suggest you try to do the following three things:

1. Write down the overall structure and conclusion of the reading. This shouldn't be full of details, but should be a mere sketch or outline of what you read. This will help you remember what the reading was about!
2. Locate one or two main arguments and briefly write down their premises and conclusions. Then think about the following questions: Is the argument convincing? Why or why not? How would you evaluate the argument? Is it rational? Does it involve magical/mystical thinking? How does this argument relate to other arguments and readings we have covered so far?
3. Write down all the terms you don't understand and look up their definitions. Write down any confusions and questions you have about the reading, and bring them to class so that we might discuss them and dispel any confusion.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (AUG 29): INTRODUCTION AND COURSE MECHANICS

What is medicine? What is philosophy? What are (bio)ethics? What role does religion play?

NO CLASS MONDAY SEPTEMBER 5

I: PHILOSOPHY OF MEDICINE

WEEK 2 (SEPT 12): THE MEANING OF HEALTH AND DISEASE

Required Reading

1. Nordenfelt – “The Concepts of Health and Illness Revisited”
2. Rosenberg – “What is Disease? In Memory of Owsei Temkin”

II: WHAT IS BIOETHICS?

WEEK 3 (SEPT 19): HISTORY AND CULTURE IN BIOETHICS

Required Reading

1. Kuhse and Singer – “What Is Bioethics? A Historical Introduction”
2. Gbadegesin – “Culture and Bioethics”
3. Benetar – “Global Health Ethics and Cross-cultural considerations in Bioethics”

WEEK 4 (SEPT 26): PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO BIOETHICS

Required Reading

1. Childress – “A Principle Based Approach”
2. Hare – “A Utilitarian Approach”
3. Oakley – “A Virtue Ethics Approach”
4. Arras – “A Case Approach”

III: THE END OF LIFE

WEEK 5 (OCT 3): ISSUES AT THE END OF LIFE: RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Required Reading

1. Brock – “Medical Decisions at the End of Life”
2. *Lancet* “Viewpoint” on the end of life:
 - a. A Catholic View
 - b. Jewish Perspectives
 - c. The Buddhist View
 - d. The Hindu View

- e. The Humanist View
- f. The Islamic View
- g. The traditional Christian View

WEEK 6 (TUES OCT 11): ISSUES AT THE END OF LIFE: PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

*****REMEMBER THERE IS NO CLASS MONDAY 10TH, CLASS IS ON TUESDAY 11TH*****

Required Reading

1. Hartogh – “Slippery Slope Arguments”
2. Stoffell – “Voluntary Euthanasia, Suicide, and Physician Assisted Suicide”
3. Hooker – “Rule Utilitarianism and Euthanasia”
4. Vellman – “Against the Right to Die”

III: THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

WEEK 7 (OCT 17): PERSONHOOD AND SEVERE DISABILITY

*******FIRST PAPER DUE!*******

Required Reading

1. Tooley – “Personhood”
2. Kluge – “Severely Disabled Newborns”

WEEK 8 (OCT 24): ABORTION

Before reading these articles, write down what you think about abortion, and why you believe that. After reading the material below, consider these questions: Did your opinion change? What are the arguments for the morality of abortion? What are the arguments against it? Are there other arguments for or against abortion? What do you think causes a person to believe in the morality or immorality of abortion?

Required Reading

1. Thompson – “A Defense of Abortion”
2. Marquis – “An Argument that Abortion is Wrong”

WEEK 9 (OCT 31): REPRODUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY

Required Reading

1. Arras - Reproductive Technology
2. Harris - Cloning
3. Clarke - Genetic Counseling, Testing, and Screening

WEEK 10 (Nov 7): SICKO (2007)

During this class we will watch the documentary SICKO (2007). We will do an activity concerning what you think about health care access before and after watching the movie.

*******FINAL PAPER TOPIC DUE!*******

V: RESOURCES, EXPERIMENTS AND TOOLS

WEEK 11 (NOV 14): RESOURCES AND SOCIETY

Required Reading

1. Engelhardt, Jr. and Iltis – “Allocation of Medical Resources”
2. Wikler and Marchand – “Society’s Allocation of Resources for Health”

WEEK 12 (NOV 21): ARE ANIMALS RESOURCES?

Are animals ethical beings? What duties, if any, do we have to them? Do you think animals should be used in experiments? Why or why not? If they should be used, how should they be treated? Are their limits to how we can use animals? Does it depend on the type of animal?

Required Reading

1. Rollin – “The Moral Status of Animals and Their Use As Experimental Subjects”
2. McMahan – “Animals”
3. Singer—“The animal liberation movement” (<http://www.utilitarian.org/texts/alm.html>)

WEEK 13 (NOV 28): EXPERIMENTATION AND HUMAN BEINGS

Required Reading

1. Luna and Macklin – “Research Involving Human Beings”
2. Macneill – “Regulating Experimentation in Research and Medical Practice”

VI: GLOBAL AND POPULATION LEVEL ISSUES

WEEK 14 (DEC 5): WORLD HUNGER, DEVELOPMENT AND ANTHROPOLOGY OF FOOD

Required Reading

1. Singer – “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” (www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/1972----.htm)
2. LaFollette – “World Hunger”
3. McElroy and Townsend – “Agriculture and Food Anthropology”
4. McElroy and Townsend – “Costs and Benefits of Development”

WEEK 15 (DEC 12): EXAM PERIOD NO CLASS

*****FINAL PAPER DUE AT 5PM!*****

**Final exams are to be placed in my mailbox in the HPS Department office,
1017 Cathedral of Learning**