

Ethical Issues in Healthcare
Summer 2012: Session Two
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 3:00-4:50 p.m.
Room S134 in South Kedzie Hall

Instructor: Samantha Noll
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No matter if you are a healthcare professional or not, chances are that you will face difficult decisions in a healthcare setting sometime in your life. The aim of this course is to provide you with an “ethical toolbox,” so to speak, that can be used when dealing with ethical issues in healthcare. The course begins by introducing some foundational theories in philosophical ethics and then moves on to consider core issues and cases in the field of bioethics.

Required Texts:

Robert M. Veatch, Amy M. Haddad, and Dan C. English, eds., *Case Studies in Biomedical Ethics: Decision-Making, Principles, and Cases*, 2009

Readings sent by email or handed out in class (A)

Course Promises:

This course makes a set of promises to you (assuming that you honor the expectations below). By the end of the semester, you should be able:

1. To demonstrate an understanding of current ethical issues in the field of healthcare.
2. To use critical thinking skills and philosophical argument when debating and/or deliberating on health care issues throughout life. You will have an ethical toolbox, so to speak.
3. To challenge and refine your own ethical positions through critical reading, scholarly research and writing, and respectful debate

Course Expectations:

This course will only fulfill the above promises if you honor the expectations below:

1. **You need to attend class.** You may miss two classes without penalty. However, each unexcused absence will result in a 2% drop in your grade. This is a "no excuses" policy. With only three exceptions, all absences are considered unexcused. The three exceptions are 1) absences for athletic or academic events (with documentation from the appropriate department), 2) absences due to hospitalizations (yours, not someone else's), and 3) absences for religious

holidays not already incorporated into the academic calendar. Except for hospitalizations, all absences must be excused in advance.

2. **You need to read the assigned material.** The presentations given and group work performed within this class require that you have done the background reading.
3. **You need to participate in class.** This does not mean merely speaking in class, although this is required. Students also need to follow the discussions and actively participate in group work.
4. **You need to complete the required assignments.** You are required to complete the class assignments.
5. **You need to be respectful of your classmates during our discussions.** We will be covering some controversial topics and it's crucial to our learning environment that we remain polite with each other. Reasonable people disagree and much of our class time will be spent debating ethical issues. You may oppose people's positions or arguments. However it is never okay to attack someone personally nor to insult or degrade their positions. Be charitable to your classmates and humbly help one another understand the various positions and perspectives. Keeping an open mind about other positions will help you in articulating and arguing for your own ideas.

Grades:

10% Participation: Participating in class is important. Students need to speak in class, follow the discussion, and participate in group work.

15% Topic Introduction Assignment: Each group will give a brief (10-20 minute) presentation introducing a contested issue within the topic area for the day. Half of the group will present one side of the argument and support it as best they can. Part of being able to defend and argue for a position is being able to understand the other side's argument. You may not agree with it but knowing it will make your argument stronger. A sign-up sheet will be passed around the first day of class to sign up for a particular day/reading.

25% Reflection Papers: 5 very short (one page, one inch margins, double-spaced, no more than 350 words) papers will be due in class once a week (on Monday) beginning the week of July 9th. In these papers students will respond to two of the three questions below:

- (1) What, to your mind, is the most interesting or important *unanswered question* raised in or by the class meeting *prior* to the one on which the paper is due--*and why?*

- (2) What, to your mind, is the most *interesting* or *important* point raised in or by the reading assigned *for* the class meeting on which the paper is due-- *and why?*
- (3) Concerning the topic area for the week prior to the due date, what is the next question we should ask? What question will push the debate further?

These papers are due *at the beginning* of class.

25% Group Presentations: The class will be divided up into groups of four at the beginning of the semester. This will be your working group. At the end of the semester, each group will be required to give a presentation on *one* case study that showcases a debated issue in healthcare (such as genetic manipulation or physician assisted suicide) or an ethical dilemma. You will have to present the case study, outline the ethical issue that it illustrates, describe what you feel would be the best action to do in that particular situation, and give your reasons why. They should be around 20 minutes long and all members of the group must speak during the presentation.

25 % Argumentative Paper: This is the traditional philosophical paper in which you make a claim in response to a bioethical issue, and then support that claim through an organized argument. You may use the course readings as sources, but additionally you'll need at least two outside primary sources. *You may expand upon one of your reflection papers for this project.*

The papers should be 1500-2000 words and properly cited in any accepted style that you are familiar with (such as Chicago Style, MLA, or APA). They should be typed in 12 point font, double spaced, and have 1" margins. Please put your name on the first page—a cover page is not necessary. Late papers will be accepted only in very unusual circumstances and only if cleared with the instructor in advance.

Being able to write clearly is an important skill to develop. One of the goals of the course is to develop your critical thinking and writing skills. To help you with this I am available to meet to discuss your writing, talk about arguments and objections, go over rough drafts, etc. Please email me to let me know if you want to meet early so I can plan enough time for everyone.

Scale for the final course grade is as follows:

4.0: 100 - 93
3.5: 91- 87
3.0: 86 - 82
2.5: 81 - 78
2.0: 77-73
1.5: 72 -67
1.0: 66- 60

Note: especially high quality participation in discussions, along with steady progress in written work, will be taken into account in borderline cases.

Policies on Academic Freedom and Integrity

Do not plagiarize. Anyone caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment and face further disciplinary action. You are expected to do your own work on all assignments. Any written material that is turned must have proper referencing of resources. See this website for the university's official policies on plagiarism:

www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/plagiarism.html

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY), or visit:

<http://www.rcpd.msu.edu/Home/>

SOME RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

The Writing Center offers students opportunity to meet with one-on-one with a consultant while they are engaged in the process of writing class papers and other documents. It also offers consulting on digital writing projects and Grammar Hotline. The Writing Center is located in 300 Bessey Hall. For information about appointments and satellite locations, see <http://writing.msu.edu/>.

The ESL Writing Lab will assist students with all aspects of their work in IAH 206, including understanding of course readings to be used in writing papers, planning and revising papers, and proofreading. For more information and instructions on making appointments, see

http://elc.msu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=171&Itemid=27

The Learning Resource Center, located in 202 Bessey Hall, offers academic support seminars and workshops, consults with students about study and learning styles and time management, and provides one-on-one tutoring in such areas as critical reading. For a more detailed description of LRC services and hours, see <http://lrc.msu.edu/>.

Note: This is a syllabus in progress. I reserve the right to make changes to the readings and schedule during the semester. I will of course notify you of any changes well in advance.

Schedule:

Week One: Basic Ethical Frameworks

July 2—Intro to Ethics and Bioethics, Introductions

July 3—Identifying Ethical Problems

Biomedical Ethics Ch. 1: A Model for Ethical Problem Solving

July 4— Values in Health & What is the Source of Moral Judgments
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 2 and Ch. 3

July 5— Principlism
Gillon (A) – Medical Ethics: Four Principles Plus Attention to Scope
Evans (A) – A Sociological Account of the Growth of Principlism

Week Two: Individual Principles

July 9— Beneficence and Nonmaleficence **Reflection Paper Due**
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 4

July 10— Justice
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 5

July 11—Autonomy
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 6

July 12— Veracity and Fidelity
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 7 & Ch. 8

Week Three: Putting the Ethical Tools into Practice

July 16— Avoidance of Killing **Reflection Paper Due**
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 9

July 17— Abortion, Sterilization, and Contraception
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 10

July 18— Reproductive Rights Continued.

July 19— Class Canceled

Week Four: Putting the Ethical Tools into Practice Cont.

July 23— Genetics, Birth, and the Biological Revolution **Reflection Paper Due**
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 11

July 24— Genetics Continued

July 25— Writing Workshop: Philosophy Papers

July 26— Day off for Writing

Week Five:

July 30— Mental Health and Behavior Control **Reflection Paper Due**
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 12

July 31— Confidentiality and Medical Disclosure of Information
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 13

August 1— July 31— Organ Transplants
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 14

August 2— Health Insurance
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 15

Week Six:

August 6— Experimentation on Human Subjects **Reflection Paper Due**
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 16

August 7— Consent and the Right to Refuse Treatment
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 17

August 8— Death and Dying
Biomedical Ethics Ch. 18
August 9— Group Work Time

Week Seven: Finishing Up

August 13— The Future of Medical Ethics & Group Work Time Continued **Final Paper Due (No Reflection Paper Due)**

Heilig and Lee - A Letter to Future Physicians: One Dozen Important Things You Might Not Learn Enough about During Medical Training - But Should (A)

August 14— Group 1 & 2 Presentations

August 15— Group 3 & 4 Presentations

August 16— Group 5 & 6 Presentations