Course Description

This is a discussion-centered course that will examine selected ethical theories and problems in medical ethics. The purpose of this course is to introduce the basic language, concepts and principles of biomedical ethics. The approach taken is a case-study method, designed to develop skills in the analysis of case problems in clinical medicine and biomedical research.

Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify and describe major ethical theories in attempting to resolve ethical conflicts.
2. Students will be able to identify and describe major ethical principles used in analyzing problems in health care ethics including autonomy, paternalism, beneficence, and justice.
3. Students will be able to access the bioethics literature, identify some of the major contemporary issues in bioethics, and develop awareness of various bioethical perspectives and positions held by ethicists related to current controversies in biomedical ethics.
4. Students will be able to write a research paper that addresses a current bioethical issue: they will define the nature of the issue or conflict, consult and utilize concepts from the literature that addresses the issue, and demonstrate their ability to apply principled reasoning to the issue and its resolution.
5. Students will be able to discuss their perspectives in open class discussion and demonstrate appropriate respect for other students including those whose values and perspectives differ from their own.

Required Texts

Contemporary Bioethics, Pierce & Randels, ed

Additional Reading

Additional articles and essays will be available on the Canvas website under Pages: Reading Assignments

Course Requirements

Weekly Papers: Short weekly papers, approximately one page long, discussing some aspect of the weekly topic. Weekly papers are intended to spark thought, and can include discussion of news items, movies, TV programs, personal experiences, and course readings relevant to the week's topic. 10 papers are required. You are not required to write a paper during the week that you present in class. In addition, you can skip two weeks of your choice. Weekly papers are due on Canvas by noon on Thursday.
Class Presentation: One class presentation on a selected topic. The purpose of presentations is to enumerate the key questions, and to spark critical discussion. You may take a position on controversial issues — you do not have to agree with the position. Presentations should be 15-20 minutes long, and may include slides, video, and other media in addition to the oral presentation. Students are expected to meet with the instructor in advance to discuss the presentation.

Papers: One short analysis paper, 3-5 pages. One research paper 6-8 pages.

Class Discussion
All students are encouraged and expected to participate fully in class discussions, and to bring their personal insights to the discourse. Lively, civil conversation and debate have a long and colorful history in philosophy, and plays a crucial role in the development and refinement of philosophical thinking.

Grading
Grading is based on points. The point scale is fixed, i.e. grading is not based on a curve. Your final grade will be determined by the following:
1) Ten Weekly papers (30% of grade)
2) Papers
   Short Analysis paper (15% of grade)
   Research paper (20% of grade)
3) Class Presentation (20% of grade)
4) Class participation (5% of grade)

Tech’s grading standard will be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Points/ Credit</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93% - 100%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>88% - 92%</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82% - 86%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>76% - 81%</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>Above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70% - 75%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>65% - 69%</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>Below average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% - 64%</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete; given only when a student is unable to complete a segment of the course because of circumstances beyond the student’s control. A grade of incomplete may be given only when approved in writing by the department chair or school dean.</td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Conditional, with no grade points per credit; given only when the student is at fault in failing to complete a minor segment of a course, but in the judgment of the instructor does not need to repeat the course. It must be made up within the next semester in residence or the grade becomes a failure (F). A (X) grade is computed into the grade point average as a (F) grade.</td>
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Policies
Class Attendance
Excessive unexcused absence from class will result in a reduction of your class participation grade.
Late papers and assignments
All papers are due electronically via Canvas by noon on the assigned date. Late assignments will be penalized by one full letter grade for each day (including weekends) they are late. If you know that your paper is going to be late, you must contact me immediately via email to make arrangements for turning your paper in late.

Disabilities
Students with documented physical, learning, or other disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations. An individual with a disability will be expected to meet the course or program standards whether or not an accommodation is needed. An individual with a disability who is capable of meeting these standards in a different way than is customary will be provided with a reasonable accommodation to enable the individual to do so.

Cheating and Plagiarism
Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. A failing grade in this course is the minimum penalty you can expect for academic dishonesty.

Schedule of topics and assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>§ 1: Introduction to Bioethics</th>
<th>§ 4: The end of life</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jan 9:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feb 1:</strong> B: 426-439; C: Stein</td>
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<tr>
<td>[No weekly paper] What is a bioethicist? Are science and medicine ethical domains?</td>
<td>CASE: Age-based rationing (481)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jan 11:</strong> B: Chapter 1: The ethical foundations</td>
<td><strong>Feb 3:</strong> B: 447-454: Should we limit care for self-inflicted illness?</td>
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<td><strong>Jan 13:</strong> B: 53-63 The case of Mary Northern (handout). The bioethical principles.</td>
<td>CASE: Pat Summerrall’s new liver (485). Should alcoholics get liver transplants?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jan 16:</strong> MLK holiday; no classes</td>
<td><strong>Feb 6:</strong> [No weekly paper] B: 455-460; 465-477</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>§ 1:</strong> Doctors and patients</td>
<td>CASE: Matchmakers (485). Should priority for organ transplant be given to organ donors?</td>
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<td><strong>Jan 18:</strong> Student presentations start. First Weekly papers due Thursday at noon.</td>
<td>Feb 8, 10: Winter Carnival, no classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>B: 29-44, 45-52: CASE: Can a killer be a doctor? (p111)</td>
<td><strong>Feb 13:</strong> B 460-464 CASE: Should we be allowed to sell our organs?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jan 20:</strong> C: tba; CASE: Pillow Angel (p113)</td>
<td><strong>§ 4:</strong> The end of life</td>
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<td><strong>Jan 23:</strong> CASE: Who’s in charge? When doctors disagree with patients (C: tba)</td>
<td><strong>Feb 15:</strong> B: 115-129; 130-146; 155-163; CASE: Not Dead Yet—Pt I (237)</td>
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<td><strong>Jan 25:</strong> B: 300-304: Conscientious objection; CASE: What’s Plan C? (364)</td>
<td><strong>Feb 17:</strong> B: 163-169; CASE: Don’t mess with Texas: Cancer, custody, and Katie (242)</td>
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<td><strong>§ 3:</strong> Access, allocation, and rationing of healthcare resources</td>
<td><strong>Feb 20:</strong> CASE: The Texas advance directives act (241)</td>
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<td><strong>Jan 27:</strong> B: 371-386, 386-404: Is there a right to healthcare? CASE: The health of nations (477)</td>
<td><strong>Feb 22:</strong> B: 187-197; CASE: Not dead yet — Pt III (243)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jan 30:</strong> B: 412-419 CASE: Should illegal immigrants have access to health care? (479)</td>
<td><strong>Feb 24:</strong> B: 206-226; CASE: The Groningen Protocol — Euthanasia for newborns (244)</td>
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Feb 27: B 227-237: CASE: A friend in need (245)

§ 5: Life worse than death?

Feb 29 CASE: Helga Wanglie's Ventilator (C: Cranford)

Mar 2 B 169-176; CASE: Terri Schiavo (1-2; 239-240)

Feb 29: CASE: Robert Wendland (C: Wendland)

Mar 2: B 177-186; CASE: Baby Doe (C: Baby Doe)

Mar 5-9: Spring Break, no classes

§ 6: The beginning of life

Mar 12: B 245-265 CASE: A person, no matter how small? (367)

Mar 14: B 305-321; CASE: Amber Alert (367)

Mar 16: C: tba. CASE: Where the boys are (363)

Mar 19: B 330-341; CASE: Surrogacy: Building a Baby (C: building a baby; B: 368-369)

Mar 21: C: tba. Is infertility a disease? CASE: Should health insurance pay for infertility treatment? (C: tba)

§ 7: Genetic dilemmas


Mar 26: B 594-611: CASE: Is there something wrong with perfection?

Mar 28: B 619-625; CASE: Be more than you can be (659-660)

Mar 30: B 625-639: CASE: Better brains through chemistry (657)

Apr 2: B 639-651: CASE: Williams Syndrome and PGD (656-657)

Apr 4: CASE: Savior siblings — is it wrong to create a donor baby? (C: tba)

Apr 6: CASE: Prenatal screening to prevent disability (C: tba)

§ 8: Biomedical research

Apr 9: B 487-519: CASE: Orphan diseases (574-575)

Apr 11: B 519-530; CASE: Medicare requires heart patients to enlist in research (572-573)

Apr 13: B 556-571; Research on animals; CASE: In Defense of Animals (IDA) urges NIH to halt animal nicotine experiments (575-576)

Apr 16: CASE: Dying patients and the right to try experimental drugs (578-579)

Apr 18: CASE: Pharmacological research on pregnant women (576-577)

Apr 20: Research papers due by noon

Testing the limits of medicine: the strange case of BILD. B: 101-106; C: Ryan; CASE: Amputating healthy limbs