

## MORALITY AND MEDICINE

*HPS 0613 – FALL 2019*

### Instructor

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Office hours: Monday, 3 – 4 PM

Tuesday, 2 – 3 PM

Or by appointment

### Class meetings

Monday, 6 – 8.30 PM

Room CL – 252

### Readings

*Required*

Steinbock, Bonny, London, Alex John, and John D. Arras (2013). *Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine: Contemporary Readings in Bioethics*. Eight Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

All required readings will come from the textbook or will be posted on CourseWeb. Make sure to have completed all required readings before the beginning of class, and to bring them to class in a format of your choosing. We will use them for class activities.

### 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 as health care consumers. In this course we will examine a number of ethical issues that arise in the context of contemporary medical practice and research by analyzing articles and decision scenarios. Topics to be covered include the physician-patient relationship; informed consent; medical experimentation; beginning of life-care and reproductive technologies; end of life-care; and public health policy. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify and analyze different philosophical approaches to selected issues in medical ethics; have gained insight into how to read and critically interpret philosophical arguments; and have developed skills that will enable them to think clearly about ethical questions as future or current health care providers, policy makers, and consumers.

This course is part of a core sequence leading to certification in the Conceptual Foundations of Medicine Certificate Program, and is a companion course to HPS 0612 (Mind and Medicine) but may be taken independently. The course is of particular interest to pre-medical and pre-health care students.

### Course goals

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate basic argumentation skills:
  - Identify the conclusion in a philosophical or popular text;
  - Extract reasons and evidence offered in support of the conclusion;
  - Critically evaluate the reasons and evidence, and their relation to the conclusion.

*Assessment: reading responses, midterm paper, final project*

- Discuss biomedical case studies:

- Summarize case studies and identify possible areas for ethical debates;
- Analyze case studies in light of the principles of bioethics and various ethical frameworks;
- Argue for or against a position in debates about a particular bioethical case study;
- Charitably but critically evaluate multiple viewpoints on a bioethical case study.

*Assessment: midterm paper, final project*

## **Evaluation**

### *Attendance and participation*

You will be allowed one unexcused absence for this course. Any additional unexcused absences will result in 1% deducted from your total grade. Attendance will be determined based on short writing exercises at the end of class (I will ask you to write down one thing you found interesting, learned or an activity you found helpful, and one thing you found confusing or an activity you did not enjoy) – this means that if you leave class early without having arranged so with me, you will be considered absent for that class.

### *Reading responses*

The majority of assignments for this course will consist of weekly reading responses. I will distribute prompts for the reading responses at the end of each class and post them on CourseWeb. Responses are due at the beginning of class in the week in which the reading was assigned. Given the variety of the material covered in class, the types of questions may vary accordingly. Regardless, you should aim your reading responses to be about two paragraphs long. You should write your reading responses *entirely* in your own words, since those reading responses are meant as way to probe how you engage with the readings. Do not quote, but paraphrase (I will be strict about this, given the length of these responses). Each reading response is worth 5%. 10 reading responses will be assigned, but only your 5 highest scores will count towards your final grade.

### *Essay*

You will submit an essay of approx. 900 – 1100 words, in the style of an academic research paper. I will distribute prompts for the essay several weeks in advance, but you are free to propose a topic of your own choice. If you choose your own topic, I recommend you talk it through with me first. The essay is due 28 October 2019. In preparation for your essay, we will have several short writing workshops in class – for which you will be required to complete some preparatory assignments: developing a thesis statement (due 14 October), and writing a paper outline (due 21 October). These assignments will be graded as part of your essay grade.

### *Final project*

This course is intended to give you a primer on biomedical ethics. The weekly reading responses and the essay prepare you to engage with bioethical case studies and to analyze them in light of ethical principles and frameworks. For your final project, you will apply those skills to analyze a case study of your own choosing (not previously discussed in class) in greater depth than the brief writing assignments, and to connect it to some of the philosophical debates discussed in class.

You will present your analysis in a format of your own choosing, e.g. an essay, a science-journalism article, a class presentation, a poster presentation, an extended blog post, a podcast, a video, a board game etc. If you have a different idea for a final project format, or if you would like to pursue a group project, you are welcome to discuss it with me.

Your grade for the project will be based on the submitted project proposal (5%; due 11 November 2019), the project itself (27.5%), and your personal reflection (2.5%). The project and the personal reflection can be submitted any time between you receiving feedback on your project proposal and the final deadline (9

December). Note that, given the flexibility for this part of the course, it will be crucial that we communicate about expectations for the project. I invite you to discuss ideas for your project with me and with your peers before you develop a proposal, although you will also receive feedback on that proposal.

*Grading breakdown*

Attendance & participation	10*1% =	10%
Reading responses	5*5% =	25%
Essay	1*30% =	30%
Final project	1*35% =	35%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

*Note on late assignments*

Assignments are due in class (except for the final project) on the date listed below in the tentative course schedule. Late assignments will be penalized by a reduction of 5% of your grade per day (including weekends!) that the assignment is late.

*Note on anonymous grading*

I will grade your assignments anonymously. Please put your PeopleSoft number instead of your name on your assignments. The reason to grade anonymously is to eliminate the possible effects of implicit biases. For an introduction to implicit bias, take Project Implicit’s “Implicit Association Test” (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit>) or read the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy’s article on Implicit Bias (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/implicit-bias/>).

**Tentative course schedule** (subject to revision)

*I expect you to have completed the required readings before the beginning of class. Class activities will refer to them without you having time to re-read them in class. Optional readings are indicated by \* – these readings primarily serve as guides for further research in light of your essay or project.*

*Readings indicated SLA can be found in the required textbooks; readings indicated CW will be posted on CourseWeb.*

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
UNIT 1: PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND			
1	8/26	Introduction; Primer on arguments	N/A
2	9/2	<i>Labor Day – No class</i>	
3	9/8	Ethical frameworks and the principles of bioethics	Steinbock, London, Arras – “Introduction: Moral Reasoning in the Ethical Context” (SLA 1 – 41)
UNIT 2: AUTONOMY IN PRACTICE AND RESEARCH			
4	9/16	Informed consent and experimentation on human subjects	Beauchamp (2011) – “Informed Consent: Its History, Meaning, and Present Challenges” (CW 515 – 523) Jones – “The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment” (SLA 721 – 733)  *The Belmont Report (SLA 734 – 740) *BBC Witness History: <a href="#">“The Tuskegee Syphilis Study”</a>
5	9/23	Randomized clinical trials	Hellman & Hellman – “Of Mice but Not Men” (SLA 744 – 748) Freedman – “A Response” (SLA 749 – 752)

			*Markman – “Ethical Difficulties with RCTs Involving Cancer Patients” (SLA 741 – 744)
6	9/30	Physician – patient relationship <i>Guest speaker: Dr. Robert Arnold</i> <i>Paper Instructions Distributed</i>	Emanuel & Emanuel – “Four Models of the Physician-Patient Relationship” (SLA 76 – 94) Blackhall, Frank, Murphy & Michel – “Bioethics in a Different Tongue” (SLA 91 – 99)  *Carel & Kidd (2014) – “Epistemic injustice in healthcare: a philosophical analysis” (CW 1 – 32)
UNIT 3: BEGINNING OF LIFE			
7	10/7	Abortion	Marquis – “Why Abortion is Immoral” (SLA 556 – 563) Jarvis Thomson – “A Defense of Abortion” (SLA 564 – 574) Excerpts of Roe v. Wade ruling (CW, 162 – 178)  *Excerpts of Roe v. Wade ruling (CW, 129 – 162) * <a href="#">The Abortion Diary</a> collects testimonies from people who have undergone an abortion (Warning: these are heavy)
8	10/14	Genetic testing and selective abortion <i>Paper thesis due</i>	Asch – “Prenatal Diagnosis and Selective Abortion” (SLA 609 – 618) Steinbock – “Disability, Prenatal Testing, and Selective Abortion” (SLA 619 – 627)  * <a href="#">Unmute Podcast</a> interview on disability * <a href="#">PhilosophyTV discussion</a> on disability between Barnes and Stramondo
9	10/21	Designer babies and CRISPR <i>Paper outline due</i>	Ledford – “CRISPR the Disruptor” (CW 20 – 24) Zimmer (2019) – “Genetically Modified People are Walking Among Us” (CW 1 – 4) Kolata & Belluck (2018) – “Why Are Scientists So Upset About the First CRISPR Babies” (CW 1 – 5) Topol (2018) – “Editing Babies” (CW) Doudna – “How CRISPR Lets Us Edit Our DNA” ( <a href="#">TEDTalk</a> )  *Savalescu – “Genetic Interventions” (SLA 818 – 828) *Sandel – “The Case Against Perfection” (SLA 829 – 838)
UNIT 4: END OF LIFE			
10	10/28	Physician-assisted suicide <i>Project instructions distributed</i>	Brock – “Voluntary Active Euthanasia” (441 – 454) Arras – “Physician-Assisted Suicide: A Tragic View” (SLA 455 – 461)  *Battin – “Euthanasia The Way We Do It, The Way They Do It” (SLA 467 – 483) * <a href="#">Maynard’s CNN OpEd</a> (2014) – “My Right To Die With Dignity At 29” * <a href="#">NPR Story</a> (2015) – “Family Struggles With Father’s Wish To Die”
11	11/4	Competency <i>Midterm paper due</i>	Buchanan & Brock – “Deciding for Others: Competency” (SLA 332 – 341) Dresser & Robertson – “Quality of Life and Non-Treatment Decisions for Incompetent Patients” (SLA 398 – 408)

			The Case of Vincent Lambert (CW)  *Wolfson – “Erring on the Side of Theresa Schiavo” (SLA 369 – 372)
UNIT 5: RACE AND MEDICINE			
12	11/11	The role of race in medical practice <i>Project proposals due</i>	Roberts (2012) – “Debating the Cause of Health Disparities: Implication for Bioethics and Racial Equality” (CW, 332 – 341) Velasquez-Manoff (2017) – “What Doctors Should Ignore” (CW, 1 – 5)
UNIT 6: STUDENT CHOICE			
13	11/18	Student Choice 1	For the final two classes of the semester, students can vote for their preferred two topics out of the list of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The opioid crisis</li> <li>• Vaccination</li> <li>• Allocating scarce resources and global justice in healthcare</li> <li>• Organ donation</li> <li>• Disability and healthcare</li> </ul>
14	11/25	<i>Thanksgiving break – No class</i>	
15	12/2	Student Choice 2	See 11/18
16	12/9	<i>Finals week – No class</i> <i>Final projects due!</i>	

## Course policies

### *Classroom decorum*

Philosophy happens in dialogue. It is therefore essential to the success of this course to cultivate a respectful and collaborative atmosphere in the classroom. Please do your best to contribute to a productive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for yourself and your peers. Please refrain from personal attacks or comments. That said, speaking respectfully does not mean you will never disagree with your instructor or your classmates. If at any time during the course you have concerns related to classroom climate, you are strongly encouraged to raise them with me or with another trusted member of the university community.

### *Electronics policy*

As class will be discussion-based, the use of laptops is discouraged. Most people overestimate their ability to multi-task. Further, research has shown that students taking notes electronically tend to type the lecture or discussion verbatim rather than processing the information. In general, hand-written note takers have a better conceptual understanding of the material than electronic note takers (see for example <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>).

### *Writing center*

Effective written communication is important to philosophy and academic discourse. You are encouraged to exchange drafts of assignments with your peers for feedback, and to make use of the Writing Center:

317B O'Hara Street Student Center

412-624-6556

<http://www.composition.pitt.edu/writingcenter/index.html>

### *Support*

The university has resources to help you if you experience mental health problems. Please consider reaching out to the University Counseling Center (UCC) at Pitt: call 412-648-7930 or walk into the Wellness Center (<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/frequently-asked-questions/>), located in Nordenberg Hall. The walk-in hours of the Wellness Center are Monday through Friday, 9 AM – noon, 1 – 4 PM.

### *Policy on non-discrimination*

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. The University also prohibits and will not engage in retaliation against any person who makes a claim of discrimination or harassment or who provides information in such an investigation. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission.

### *Disability services*

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services (DRS), call (412) 648-7890 (Voice or TTD), 412-228-5347 for P3 ASL users, [drsrecep@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu), to schedule an appointment. The Disability Resources and Services office is located in 140 William Pitt Union on the Oakland campus.

### *Academic integrity policy*

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://provost.pitt.edu/faculty-resources/academic-integrity-freedom/academic-integrity-guidelines>). For the purposes of this course, academic integrity is refraining from any form of plagiarism for assignments. Plagiarism makes it impossible for me to fairly assess your work, and you prevent yourself from practicing your philosophical skills. Note that plagiarism applies both to written work and oral presentations.

There will be zero tolerance for violations of academic integrity; any offence will result in a minimum sanction of a zero score on the assignment, without the chance to re-do that assignment. In addition, 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 mentioned above. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

The Hillman library has an online module on understanding and avoiding plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with usual ways to prevent plagiarism, I highly recommend you complete the module before you commence any written assignments (available here: [https://bts.library.pitt.edu/eLearning/Captivate/Understanding\\_Avoiding\\_Plagiarism/multiscreen.html](https://bts.library.pitt.edu/eLearning/Captivate/Understanding_Avoiding_Plagiarism/multiscreen.html)). If you have any questions about how to properly use, cite or paraphrase sources after completing this module, I will be more than happy to help you *before* the assignment is due.

### *Email communication policy*

Each student is issued a University e-mail ([username@pitt.edu](mailto:username@pitt.edu)) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The university provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on Edit Forwarding Addresses, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, please go to [www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html).)

*Copyright notice*

Course materials may be protected by copyright. United States copyright law, 17 USC section 101, et seq., in addition to University policy and procedures, prohibit unauthorized duplication or retransmission of course materials. See Library of Congress Copyright Office and the University Copyright Policy.

*Statement on classroom recording*

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.