Summer 2018

Philosophy 302—002

Ethics and Medicine

**Instructor**:

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**Course Information:**

Administered through D2L

“In nothing do men more nearly approach the gods

than in giving health to men.”

Seneca

**Course Description:**

Ethics is the philosophical study of the nature of right and wrong, virtue and vice, and good and evil. Biomedical ethics is a narrower branch of ethics, and in particular applied ethics, focusing on the morals which guide the medical profession. Paternalism, autonomy, beneficence, utility, and justice are a few of these guiding principles. One of the most intriguing parts about this field is that these guiding principles often come into conflict with one another. How should we adjudicate such conflicts? This course will provide a systematic analysis of these topics through the lens of a constellation of issues and cases prevalent in the medical field.

Some of the questions to be examined in this course will be:

1. What are the ethical principles that govern the health care profession?
2. How do we make moral judgments and moral arguments?
3. What is the relationship between paternalism and patient autonomy?
4. What are the limitations of truth-telling, confidentiality, and informed consent?
5. Is medical research on humans ethically permissible?
6. What are the philosophical issues concerning abortion and euthanasia?
7. Is there a “right” to health care?

**Text:**

For Rental:

*Bioethics: Principles, Issue, and Cases 3rd Ed.*

Lewis Vaughn

Oxford University Press

ISBN #: 978-0-19-025010-2

**Course Goals:**

By carefully examining the guiding moral principles which guide the medical profession, students will develop critical thinking skills by engaging, analyzing, and evaluating texts in order to write well and argue persuasively.

**Grading Criteria:**

Final grades will be based upon (1) *four exams* worth 25% each. There is also an optional (2) extra credit essay associated with the film, *You Don’t Know Jack*.

1. Each exam will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and brief essay. In grading your essays, I will consider whether you have a sufficient understanding of the relevant texts, have answered the questions *clearly, concisely, and thoroughly*, and have argued your position persuasively. Exams will be taken from material given in both the textbook and the PowerPoints. Exams have a time limit of 75 minutes. You may use your notes and text on the exams, but you may not receive help from other peers. Because of the limitations on time, my suggestion is to read the text and take notes *before* opening the exam.
2. For up to 5% extra credit to your overall grade, please watch the film, *You Don’t Know Jack*. Although there is a day set aside in the course schedule to watch the film, you may access it and watch it anytime during the course term (I would recommend reading Chapter 10 of the text first though). There will be a link to watch the film posted in the “Content” tab on D2L. In one single spaced page, answer the following question in relation to the film: Was Jack Kevorkian *morally (not legally)* permitted to help his patients die? Why? Why not? The essay must be submitted to D2L via the DropBox by June 29, 2018 at 11:59pm.

Overall grades in the course will be based upon the following scale.

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| **A Range**  **(90—100%)** | **B Range**  **(80—89%)** | **C Range**  **(70—79%)** | **D Range**  **(64—69%)** | **F Range**  **(0—63%)** |
|  | B+ (87—89) | C+ (77—79) | D+ (67—69) | F (<60) |
| A (94—100) | B (84—86) | C (74—76) | D (60—66) |  |
| A- (90—93) | B- (80—83) | C- (70—73) |  |  |

**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty could result in severe disciplinary action including, but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from the University.

**Expectations:**

Students are expected to complete all of the necessary readings for the course and to check in regularly with D2L to look for class updates, submit assignments, take exams, etc.

**Course Schedule:**

Part I: Principles and Theories

June 11 Chapter 1: Moral Reasoning in Bioethics

June 12 Chapter 2: Bioethics and Moral Theories

June 13 Virtue Ethics, Deontology, Consequentialism (PowerPoint on D2L)

June 14 Exam I (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)

Part II: Physician and Patient

June 15 Chapter 3: Paternalism and Patient Autonomy

June 18 Chapter 4: Truth-Telling and Confidentiality

June 19 Chapter 6: Human Research

June 20 Exam II (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)

Part III: Justice and Health Care

June 21 Chapter 11: Dividing Up Health Care Resources

June 22 Chapter 11: Dividing Up Health Care Resources

June 25 Exam III (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)

Part IV: Life and Death

June 26 Chapter 7: Abortion

June 27 Chapter 10: Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

June 28 Film: *You Don’t Know Jack*

June 29 Exam IV (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)