Summer 2017

Philosophy 302—001

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*

Lewis Vaughn

Oxford University Press

ISBN #: 978-0-19-518282-8

**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 15, 2017 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 (<63) |
| A (94—100) | B (84—86) | C (74—76) | D (64—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

May 30 Chapter 1: Moral Reasoning in Bioethics

May 31 Chapter 2: Bioethics and Moral Theories

June 1 Virtue Ethics, Deontology, Consequentialism (PowerPoint on D2L)

June 2 Exam I (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)

Part II: Physician and Patient

June 5 Chapter 3: Paternalism and Patient Autonomy

June 6 Chapter 4: Truth-Telling and Confidentiality

June 7 Chapter 6: Human Research

June 8 Exam II (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)

Part III: Justice and Health Care

June 9 Chapter 11: Dividing Up Health Care Resources

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

Part IV: Life and Death

June 13 Chapter 7: Abortion

June 14 Chapter 10: Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

June 15 Film: *You Don’t Know Jack*

June 16 Exam IV (Available from 12:00am—11:59pm)