

**Morality and Medicine**  
Cathedral of Learning 116  
University of Pittsburgh  
Fall 2018

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**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; termination of treatment; euthanasia; resource allocation; disability and well-being; race-based medicine; and health care reform. 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.

**Course Objectives** The issues discussed in this course are often life and death matters of concern to healthcare professionals, policy-makers, and patients—i.e., everyone. By the end of this course, we should be able to think clearly about often emotionally difficult decisions that healthcare professionals, policy-makers, patients and their families have to face. A second objective of the course is to put you and your classmates in a position to *read philosophically*. This involves developing an understanding of the underlying assumptions and argumentative strategies used in texts that present ethical arguments directed at medical practice and research. If we have learned how to *read philosophically*, we will also have learned how to *do philosophy*, for successful reading involves evaluating and making arguments.

Along the way, you will also develop general philosophical ability. By the end of the course, you should be better able to inquire about underlying assumptions and argumentative strategies in contexts outside bioethics. In combination with other courses taken at this university, this should leave you better able to judge whether or not you agree with a philosophical position taken by another.

This course satisfies the Dietrich School general education requirement E4 of a course in philosophical thinking or ethics.

**Required Texts**

- Steinbock, London, and Arras (ed.). (2013). *Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine: Contemporary Readings in Bioethics*. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill. [SLA]
- \*\*All other additional required readings will be made available over Courseweb.

**Recommended Texts**

- Caplan and Arp (eds). (2014). *Contemporary debates in bioethics*. Wiley. E-book available through Pitt.
- Pence, G. E. (2015). *Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. McGraw-Hill. On reserve.
- Pence, G. E. (1998). *Classic Works in Medical Ethics*. McGraw-Hill. On reserve.

**Grading**

50% Exams (2 x 25% each)  
 25% Final paper (guidelines to be provided later in the course)  
 25% Participation

Participation will be evaluated through homework. Though the homeworks will not be corrected, students are expected to complete them, bring a paper copy with them to class and be prepared to discuss them in class. The assignments will be collected at the end of each class and assessed by me. I will grade the homework as a contribution to the participation grade according to (1) its degree of completion and (2) whether an honest effort has been made to answer the questions.

**Homework**

Two kinds of homework will be assigned. Please consult the syllabus for each week's assignments.

Most of the course will consist of readings in bioethics. Students will be expected to write an approximately 1-2 page (double-spaced) reaction to one or more of the readings for each week. The ideal way to write a reaction is to give a one paragraph summary of the point of the author, on which you intend to comment, followed by a one paragraph comment on that point. Examples of types of comments include criticisms, questions, or expansions on the author's point.

Another part of the course will consist of an introduction to informal logic, which is the kind of reasoning employed in everyday argumentation and in the bioethical debates we will be studying. For this part, we will be working through several chapters in Copi & Cohen's *Introduction to Logic, 12<sup>th</sup> ed.* (Prentice Hall, 2005) [CC]. Readings from this book will be posted on Courseweb. The homework for this part of the course will consist of exercises from the book.

**Misconduct and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. If you commit an act of plagiarism you will fail the course and will be reported to central administration. Are you unsure about what is plagiarism? Look at [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org).

**Late Work** If you are having trouble finishing the work on time, contact me before the due date and we can discuss arrangements and penalties for late work. Unless serious misfortune befell you, I will not accept late work if you don't approach me beforehand.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Homework Due</b>
Aug 30	Introduction: Moral reasoning in the medical context	SLA Introduction 1-20	In-class exercise
Sep 6	1. How to read philosophy 2. Introduction: Moral reasoning in the medical context cont.	1. Concepció "How to read philosophy" 2. SLA Introduction 20-41	1. In-class exercise cont. 2. Reaction to SLA Introduction
Sep 13	1. Basic logical concepts 2. Foundations of the health professional-patient relationship	1. CC Chapter 1 2. SLA Hippocratic Oath 59; Goldman, "The refutation of medical paternalism" 60-68	1. CC exercises pp. 9-12 (2, 5, 10, 15, 20), p. 20 (1, 3, 5, 7, 8) 2. Reaction to Goldman
Sep 20	1. Analyzing arguments 2. Justice, health and health care	1. CC Chapter 2, 21-37 2. SLA Sade "The moral and practical superiority of free market reforms" 193-209.	1. CC exercises pp. 28-31 (2, 4, 10), pp. 38-44 (part I, 1, 5, 10 and II, 5, 10, 15, 20) 2. Reaction to Sade
Sep 27	1. Analyzing arguments cont. 2. Justice, health and health care cont.	1. CC Ch. 2, 44-55 2. SLA Daniels "Equal opportunity and health care" 182-185; Kawachi "Why the United States is not number one in health" 222-230.	1. CC exercises pp. 46-51 (5, 10, 15, 20, 25), pp. 56-59 (1, 2, 4, 5, 10) 2. Reaction to Kawachi or Daniels
Oct 4	Justice, health and health care cont.	1. Should the USA adopt universal healthcare? Pro arg. Caplan pp. 297-313 (Courseweb) 2. Universal healthcare cont. Con argument. Caplan pp. 314-333 (Courseweb).	1. Reaction to pro argument 2. Reaction to con argument

Oct 11	1. Allocating scarce resources 2. <b>EXAM 1</b>	<b>SLA</b> Cappelen et al. “Responsibility in health care: a liberal egalitarian approach” 247-253.	Reaction to Cappelen et al.
Oct 18	1. The uses of language 2. Organ transplantation: gifts versus markets	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 3, pp. 69-86 2. <b>SLA</b> Radcliffe-Richards et al. “The case for allowing kidney sales” 277-280; Joralemon et al. “The case against compensating for transplant organs” 281-287.	1. <b>CC</b> exercises pp. 75-79 (part I, exercises 1, 5, 10 and II, ex. 1, 5, 10, 15), pp. 87-91 (1, 5, 10, 15) 2. Reaction to <b>SLA</b> reading (Radcliffe-Richards or Joralemon)
Oct 25	1. Fallacies 2. Poverty, health and justice	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 5, 125-135 2. <b>SLA</b> Pogge “Responsibilities for poverty-related illness” 289-294; Risse “Do we owe the global poor assistance or rectification?” 302-307	1. <b>CC</b> exercises pp. 136-140 (part I, 1-9 odd; part II, 1-9 odd) 2. Reaction to <b>SLA</b> reading (Pogge or Risse)
Nov 1	1. Fallacies cont. 2. Experimentation on human subjects I: deprivation and less than the best standard of care	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 5, 140-163 2. <b>SLA</b> London “Clarifying ‘standard of care’ arguments in international research” 771-780.	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 5, pp. 152-154 (ex. 1, 5, 10), pp. 164-170 (part I, ex. 1, 5; part II, ex. 1, 5, 10, 11, 15, 20) 2. Reaction to London
Nov 8	1. Experimentation on human subjects II: the origins of U.S. research ethics 2. <b>EXAM 2</b>	<b>SLA</b> Jones “The Tuskegee syphilis experiment” 721-733.	Reaction to <b>SLA</b> readings (Jones)
Nov 15	1. Analogical reasoning 2. Race and medicine 3. Final paper guidelines	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 12, 442-448 2. <b>Courseweb</b> Roberts “Debating the cause of health disparities” 332-341	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 12, exercises pp. 448-451 (even) 2. Reaction to Roberts
Nov 22	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>		
Nov 29	1. Analogical reasoning cont. 2. The morality of abortion	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 12, 452-457, 463-465 2. <b>SLA</b> Marquis “Why abortion is immoral” 556-563; Thomson “A defense of abortion” 564-573	1. <b>CC</b> Ch. 12, pp. 457-463 (even), pp. 465-468 (2, 5, 8) 2. Reaction to <b>SLA</b> readings (Marquis or Thomson)
Dec 6	1. Animal rights 2. Review of course	1. <b>Courseweb</b> Singer “Animal liberation”	1. Reaction to Singer
Dec 13	<b>FINAL PAPER DUE</b>		

