

PHIL 335: Medical Ethics (Online)

Summer 2018

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Course Description

From questions about the permissibility research on human subjects to the ongoing debate about health care, this course surveys some of the most important social questions of our time: Is an embryo a person? How do our answers to this question inform our views about abortion? Or stem cell research? Is there any moral difference between active and passive euthanasia? Should we experiment on human beings? Do we, as members of an advanced society, have a right to health care? In this class, you will develop a baseline knowledge about issues in biomedical ethics, and you will develop the tools to analyze and evaluate conflicting positions on complex moral issues. In this class, we are not merely interested in what certain people believe, but rather, whether the reasons they give for their beliefs are good ones.

We will study the legal, moral, and philosophical debates surrounding emerging biomedical technologies, policies, and practices. The course begins with a brief introduction to philosophical methodology and then takes up applied and theoretical questions about abortion, autonomy, confidentiality, consent, research, enhancement, reproduction, euthanasia, and healthcare. The study of biomedical ethics, by its very nature, promotes open inquiry from a variety of perspectives. You will learn how to approach ethical issues with analytical precision, moral concern, and reflective judgment. This involves carefully attending to a range of theoretical positions in dialogue with concrete situations and contexts.

Learning Outcomes

After taking this course, you should be able to: recognize and identify moral arguments (and non-arguments), analyze and evaluate moral arguments (and non-arguments), recognize and identify fallacies in moral reasoning, formulate original and coherent moral arguments in a variety of media, and most importantly, actively participate in respectful and critical public discourse about contemporary moral problems. As an upper-division philosophy offering, the course should sharpen your ability to think carefully, read critically, and write clearly.

Required Texts:

Vaughn, Lewis. *Bioethics*, third edition. Oxford University Press. 2017 [BE] Available for purchase at the Duckstore. ISBN 978-0190250102

** All other assigned readings can be found on Canvas [CAN]

Assessment

30% Weekly Responses (6 x 5%)

20% Discussion Participation

25% Midterm (Week 5)

25% Final Paper Exam (Week 11)

Weekly Responses (6 x 5%)

Students will be required to write **6 weekly responses** over the 10-week term. Responses are due by Sunday evening for that week. (I.e., a week 1 response must be handed in by 7/2, a week 2 response by 7/9, etc.) You may choose to write them whichever weeks you wish, **but you may not hand them in late**. You are responsible for keeping track of your progress and making sure you hand in 6 responses over the course of the term.

The format of these responses is flexible, provided they meet the following criteria. **Responses should be between 1 to 2 pages, with a 550-word maximum.** Responses should deal **specifically with reading assigned for that week**. You may want to choose a paragraph you found especially difficult, or remarkable, then explain why you found it so. Alternatively, you may want to argue that one of the authors is right or wrong in making some particular claim. Or you may wish to connect two passages in the reading that illuminate each other. You may even just pick a passage and ask critical and relevant questions about it.

Responses will receive a letter grade with some brief feedback as to how to improve.

Excerpts from your responses may be uploaded to the class discussion page on Canvas and included in the lecture slides, when appropriate. Please take them seriously.

Discussion Participation (20%)

Students will be required to make two posts a week to a class discussion board. Each post should be roughly a single paragraph between 3 to 6 sentences long. One post should raise a question or point in response to the reading or slides. The second post should respond to a question or point that a classmate has made. To ensure that these discussion posts are completed in a timely fashion, the class will be divided into 3 groups with staggered due dates for posts (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday). More details will be posted on Canvas.

Your participation grade is based on your weekly engagement with the discussion posts of your classmates. To receive full credit for the week, you need to make **at least two posts**.

Midterm Exam (25%)

There will be one midterm exam (Week 5). The exam will be based on all of the assigned material up until that point; this includes material covered in the lecture slides and the assigned material not covered in the slides. It will involve both short answer and a few longer essay-style questions. **You must take the exam at a University approved secure testing center sometime during week 5. See details below.**

Final Essay Exam (25%)

The final exam will consist of a choice of 2 from 3 essays that will require you to make a coherent and well developed argument in response to prompts dealing with material from the course. Combined, the final exam will ask you to write approximately 6-8 pages. **The exam is both open- book and untimed, so you do not need to take it at a University approved testing center.**

Grading Criteria:

What kind of work deserves an “A,” “B,” etc.?

The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon:

A - excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B - good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C - OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D - poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F - failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

Grading Scale:

A= 100-93% B+ = 89-87% C+ = 79-77% D+ = 69-67% F = 59% and below

A- = 92-90% B = 86-83% C = 76-73% D = 66-63%

B- = 82-80% C- = 72-70% D- = 62-60%

Important requirements for taking this online course: It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY for making sure you meet the requirements to take this course. In addition to the items below, you should read the FAQ for online courses here: <https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/faq>

1. **You must take the mid-term for this course at a University approved secure testing center. If you cannot make accommodations to take the exams at a University approved secure testing location, you cannot take this course. No exceptions.**
2. **If you have never taken an online course at the University of Oregon, the FIRST thing you need to do is create an account through Distance Education (DE) where you will schedule your exams:**
<https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/wizard/index.html>
3. **If you are in Eugene during this course, you will take your exams at the SSIL testing center in McKenzie Hall (map here:**
<https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/map>).

• Note: you cannot schedule your exams more than two weeks in advance and you must bring your student ID. For more information about on campus testing policies, see here:

https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/on_campus

4. If you are not in Eugene during the course, it is **your responsibility** to make arrangements to schedule your exams at a University approved testing center. In addition to the items below, you should read the off-campus testing policies here:

https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/off_campus

- If you are in Portland, there is a University approved testing center in the White Stag building (more info here: <https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/portland>)
- If you are not in the Eugene or Portland area, you **MUST** obtain a remote proctor who is willing to administer the test through the DE website
- The University will only verify ONE remote proctor per term for you to take all of your tests through. Please find a proctor that you can use throughout the term. This must be done before the end of the second week of the term. If no proctor can be established, the student must drop the class. If the class is dropped after the first week, the student will NOT receive a full refund. **Begin this process as soon as possible.**
- A list of previously approved proctors is here:
https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/remote_sites
- **If none of these proctors will work for you, it is up to you to find a proctor.** Searching the websites of academic institutions near you is often an effective way to find out if someone there is willing to proctor students. The NCTA website also has a large list of proctors, **but be aware that often these remote sites have sizable fees.**

- For more information about remote proctors, see here:
https://distanceeducation.uoregon.edu/information/off_campus

Accommodation for a Disability: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please inform me as soon as possible.

Course Policies

You are expected to follow the rules of academic honesty. Failure to do so will result in failure of the whole course (“F”).

- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts. In order to find out how to avoid plagiarism, see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>
- **Fabrication:** Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.
- **Cheating:** Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student’s work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one’s work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

Assistance and Resources

• **Accessible Education Center (AEC):** coordinates services, provides advocacy and support to students with documented physical, learning, and psychological disabilities and provides assistance to the general campus community in responding appropriately to requests for accommodations based on disability. Location: 164 Oregon Hall Web page: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-1155. Email: uoaec@uoregon.edu

- **Teaching & Learning Center (TLC):** TLC provides numerous resources (including courses, workshops, and tutoring) to help UO students succeed. They work with a diverse studentbody with a wide range of needs. If you are unsure which resources would work best, they are happy to answer questions and share suggestions. Location: 68 PLC. Web page: <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-3226.
- **University Counseling and Testing Center (UCTC):** The UCTC provides comprehensive mental health care and testing services to the University of Oregon campus. The primary mission of the UCTC is to provide quality clinical/therapeutic services, psychological testing and assessment, psychoeducational workshops and outreach as well as emergency services. Location: 2nd floor, University Health, Counseling, and Testing Center Building Web site: <http://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/> 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 541-346- 3227
- **Discrimination and Sexual Harassment:** The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346- SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments
One	Moral Theories	Vaughn, "Chapter 1: Moral Reasoning in Bioethics" (BE, pp. 3-30); "Chapter 2: Bioethics and Moral Theories" (BE 34-52) (49 pages)	Weekly Response + Discussion
Two	Abortion	"Chapter 7: Abortion" (BE 309-324) Thompson, "A defense of abortion" (BE 326-336); Marquis, "Why abortion is immoral" (BE 336-348); Sherwin, "Abortion through a feminist lens" (BE 388-395) (44 pages)	Weekly Response + Discussion
Three	Autonomy & Paternalism	"Chapter 3: Paternalism and Autonomy" (BE 81-90); Dworkin, "Paternalism" (BE 94-103); Goldman, "The Refutation of Medical Paternalism" (BE 104-109) (23 pages)	Weekly Response + Discussion
Four	Informed Consent	"Chapter 5: Informed Consent" (BE 196-207); Katz, "Informed Consent-must it remain a fairy tale?" (BE 213-222); Brody, "Transparency: Informed Consent in Primary Care" (BE 223-229) (26 pages)	Weekly Response + Discussion

Five	Human Subjects Research	<p>“Chapter 6: Human Subjects Research” (BE 239-258); “The Nuremburg Code (1946)” (BE 259-60); “The Belmont Report (1979)” (BE 263-266); Marquis “How to Resolve an Ethical Dilemma Concerning Randomized Clinical Trials” (BE 282-284) (25 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p> <p>Midterm Exam</p>
Six	Genetic Enhancements	<p>Harris, “Enhancing Evolution: The Ethical Case for Making Better People” [CAN 19-35]; Habermas, “The Future of Human Nature” [CAN 16-37]; Savulescu, “Genetic Interventions and Enhancements” (BE 605-613) (45 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p>
Seven	Human Reproductive Technologies	<p>“Chapter 8: Reproductive Technology” (BE 409-428); Singer, “IVF: The Simple Choice” (BE 429-432); Brock, “Cloning Human Beings: An Assessment” (BE 520-530); Kass, “The Wisdom of Repugnance” (BE 504-519) (49 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p>
Eight	Euthanasia	<p>“Active and Passive Euthanasia” (BE 525-542); Callahan, “When self-determination runs amok” (BE 658-662); Arras, “A tragic view” (BE 663-677); “One man’s quest to change the way we die,” <i>New York Times</i> (Jan. 3, 2017) [CAN 22 pages] (57 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p>
Nine	Gender & Race	<p>Rebecca Dresser, “What Bioethics can learn from the women’s health movement” (15 pgs) [CAN]; Davis, “Racism, Birth Control, and Reproductive Rights” (81-91) [CAN] (25 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p>
Ten	Health Care & Justice	<p>“Chapter 11: Dividing Up Health Care Resources” (BE 719-732) Daniels, “Is there a right to healthcare? (BE 736-742); Buchanan, “The right to a decent minimum” (BE 743-748); Engelhardt, “Rights to healthcare: frustration” (BE 749-757) (32 pages)</p>	<p>Weekly Response + Discussion</p>

Eleven	Finals Week		Final Exam due by Sunday
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