

Moral and Social Problems in Health Care Sample Syllabus

Contact: Professor Sample McSampleface; email@tbd.com; office hours t.b.d.

Course Description: This course consists of three units. The first unit addresses ethical questions about the doctor-patient relationship: focusing on questions about consent, autonomy, and trust. The second unit addresses a range of specific issues in medical ethics. Students will select topics in medical ethics of greatest interest from the following (non-exhaustive) list: alcoholism, euthanasia, disability, motherhood, transhumanism. The third unit addresses some political and economic issues surrounding medical ethics, including but not limited to: inequality and exploitation; privatization; and markets on the margins.

Reading: Everything on this syllabus has been carefully chosen. Read each piece a few times. Read once, quickly, to get the structure of the argument, the main claims, and the conclusion(s). Read a second time to study the argument more carefully, to formulate the argument in your own words, to think up your own examples to illustrate the main claims, and to think of counterexamples to these claims. Read a third time to soak up any remaining details. Some excellent reading advice can be found online here:

www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading

You are encouraged to read anything else that interests you. In general, the more you read, the better a sense you will have of the strengths and weaknesses of prominent views in any given topic, and of typical forms of argument in the area.

Texts: All texts for this class are available online (e.g. jstor.org) or in the library or on the course website.

Writing: An important goal of this course is for you to develop your skills in philosophical writing. I will distribute a guide to writing philosophical essays in the first class. The assessments are designed to help you develop these skills. Please also read Jim Pryor's 'Guide to Writing Philosophy Papers,' Strunk & White's *The Elements of Style*, George Orwell's 'Politics and the English Language,' and Angela Mendelovici's 'A Sample Philosophy Paper.'

Evaluation: There will be one quiz, two short essays, and one longer essay. The essays are designed to train you to write about complex issues clearly and compellingly. The first essay (3 pages) will be worth 20% of your grade; the second (5 pages) will be worth 30%; the third essay (5-7 pages) will be worth 35%. The quiz will be worth 10% of your grade. (I reserve the right to add short writing assignments and quizzes; these will not affect your grade.) The remaining 5% of your grade is for your participation in class. There will be plenty of opportunities for questions and discussion based on the reading and lectures.

Submission: Submit your essays in .docx (preferred) or .pdf to tbd@gmail.com by 11.59pm on the due date. Late fees (10% deduction per day) will accrue to essays late, unreadable, not properly uploaded, etc.

Attendance: You will lose 5% of your grade if you miss more than one class without a formal explanation (e.g. note from your doctor saying that you broke your leg). Arriving more than ten minutes late for class, or leaving more than ten minutes early, without a formal explanation, that counts as missing the class.

Electronics Policy: Phones and Laptops are not permitted in class without a formal explanation.

Email: Please be professional, and avoid asking anything you can find out without asking. Keep your questions brief and accept my apologies in advance for terse replies. Please send a short follow-up email if you do not receive a reply within two business days.

Honor Code: All students are expected to abide by the honor code: <insert link>. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. It is in your interest to keep a careful record of any resources you use in research and writing. Always cite any resource that you use. Do not re-use papers written for past classes.

Unit One: The Doctor-Patient Relationship

The Hippocratic Oath

Read the Hippocratic Oath (versions on course website)

Peter Tyson, 'The Hippocratic Oath Today'

Emily Woodbury, *The Fall of the Hippocratic Oath: Why the Hippocratic Oath should be Discarded in Favor of a Modified Version of Pellegrino's Precepts*

The Doctor-Patient Relationship

Edward Shorter, 'History of the Doctor-Patient Relationship'

Crues et. al., 'Professionalism-An Ideal to be Sustained' *Patient-Physician Relationship, AMA Code of Medical Ethics*

Informed Consent

Read: *Schloendorff v. Societ of New York Hospital*

Onora O'Neill, *Autonomy and Trust in Bioethics* (Chapter 7)

Gerald Dworkin *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (Selections)

Daniel Wikler, 'Persuasion and Coercion for Health: Ethical Issues in Government Efforts to Change Lifestyles,' *Milbank Quarterly* 56(3), 1978 306-317

Autonomy

John Christman, 'Autonomy in Moral and Political Philosophy.'

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (selections)

Onora O'Neill, *Autonomy and Trust in Bioethics* (selections)

Trust

Onora O'Neill, *Autonomy and Trust in Bioethics* (selections)

Victoria McGeer, 'Trust, Hope, and Empowerment'

Unit Two: Some Specific Issues in Medical Ethics

Alcoholism

Gregory Pence, *Ethical Issues in Treating Alcoholism*:
<http://straighttalkmd.com/podcast/ethical-issues-treating-alcoholism-gregory-pence/>

Euthanasia

David Velleman, 'Against the right to die.'

Disability

Elizabeth Barnes, *The Minority Body* (selections)

On Caring for People with Disabilities

Eva Feder Kittay, Licia Carlson, *The Personal Is Philosophical Is Political: A Philosopher and Mother of a Cognitively Disabled Person Sends Notes from the Battlefield.*

On Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Mothering

Simone de Beauvoir, 'The Mother' (pages 524-570 of *The Second Sex*)

Iris Marion Young, 'Pregnant Embodiment'

Transhumanism

Watch *Gattaca*.

Nick Bostrom, 'Transhumanist Values.'

Ronald Sandler, *The Ethics of Species*, chapters six and seven (optional: also eight).

Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature* (selections)

Frances Kamm, 'What is and is not wrong with enhancement.'

Unit Three: Political and Economic Issues in Medical Ethics

Inequality, Exploitation, and Health Care

Kate Pickett & Richard Wilkinson, *The Spirit Level*

Marcia Angell, 'The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World'

Allan M. Brandt, 'Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment'

Susan Lederer, 'The Tuskegee Syphilis Study in the Context of American Medical Research'

Privatisation

Atul Gawande, 'McAllen, Texas, and the high cost of healthcare.'

Allen Buchanan, 'Privatisation and Just Healthcare.'

Avihay Dorfman & Alon Harel, 'The Case Against Privatization.'

N. Daniels, 'Is There a Right to Health Care and, if So, What Does It Encompass?'

Milton Friedman, 'How to Cure Health Care'

Schlomi Segall, 'Affirmative Action in Health'

Markets on the Margins

Peter Jaworski, et. al. Senate Hill hearing on Bone Marrow (transcript)

Janet Radcliffe-Richards et al., 'The Case for Allowing Kidney Sales'

Jason Brennan & Peter Jaworski, *Markets Without Limits*

Brookes Brown and Barry Maguire, 'Markets and their Limits'

On Whether the FDA murders thousands every year:

Jessica Flanigan, 'Patient-Driven Drug Development'