

Midwestern State University

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Office Hours (Zoom): Monday 11 AM CST

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Healthcare Ethics

Phil 2103-X10

- Course Description

In recent years, health care ethics has emerged as an area of intense social and academic interest. Abortion, euthanasia, human and animal experimentation, genetic research and cloning, confidentiality issues, business (profit) issues, the allocation of medical resources, questions of technology—the list goes on. While we critically assess these topics, one thing will seem clear: Embedded in such issues are the most important and complex moral questions we can ask.

Although the social, professional and moral importance of these issues is indisputable, other issues also challenge health care professionals and society as a whole. One is treatment of special categories of patients—children, the elderly, the dying, the mentally ill, the poor. Another is the relationship between the health care professional and the health care organization.

In this course students will engage in reading, critically assessing, and debating and discussing moral theory and moral issues within the health care profession. We will attempt to assimilate and strike a balance between theory and practice. I encourage students to see the importance of connecting the theoretical bases or moral theory needed for resolving concrete health care problems.

In addition, students should examine, define, and order their own values and see how they compare/contrast to alternative values and moral perspectives. Please keep an open mind when dealing with competing values and moral theories. There is no final, privileged position on theory or in practice.

This course will consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, student presentations, and debate.

- Learning Objectives

After completing this class, students should be able to do the following:

- Retain factual knowledge about the complex ethical issues facing contemporary health

care providers

- Understand the basic ethical theories and principles that can be employed to analyze moral dilemmas in health care
- Understand the techniques of moral reasoning and argumentation that are needed to analyze moral issues in health care
- Apply general ethical theories and principles to particular cases or practices in health care
- Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view concerning the implications of power, social location, gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and other issues of difference on health care ethics
- Analyze and critically evaluate individual actions in health care settings within a variety of moral frameworks
- Communicate clearly about positions on controversial ethical issues
- Discuss controversial issues with both rigor and respect

- *Academic Integrity*

MSU expects all members of the University community to act in a responsible and ethical manner and to uphold the values, rules, and regulations of the University. The principles of individual honor, integrity, responsibility, and respect for the rights of others are essential to student conduct in both academic and co-curricular life.

A student must always submit work that represents his or her original words or ideas. If any words or ideas are used that do not represent the student's original words or ideas, the student must cite all relevant sources. The student should also make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citations include but are not limited to all hard-copy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. The Student Handbook defines the standards of academic conduct as:

- Intentional or accidental plagiarism in an academic exercise, which includes:
 - Direct or literal copying of a source without proper attribution
 - Paraphrasing of a source without proper attribution

- Resubmission of one's work in another academic exercise without the knowledge of both instructors
- Submission of another's work in whole or part with intent to deceive
- Giving or receiving unacknowledged, inappropriate, or unauthorized aid in an academic exercise.
- Intentional falsification of data, sources, or information in an academic exercise.
- Deceiving or lying to a faculty member or administrator in matters relating to an academic requirement, policy, or procedure.
- Acting in a disorderly or discourteous manner in an academic exercise or to a faculty member or students during an academic exercise.

Any work that violates these principles will receive an automatic "0".

For more information, refer to the MSU student handbook.

- *Class Schedule*

Weeks 1 and 2: Introduction. Major Ethical Theories, 4 Principles of Biomedical Ethics. Childress and Siegler, *Metaphors and Models*. Ackerman, *Why Doctors Should Intervene* and Higgs, *On Telling Patients the Truth*

Weeks 3 and 4: Newton, *In Defense of the Traditional Nurse* and Kuhse, *Advocacy or Subsistence for the Sake of Patients?*. Macklin, *Ethical Relativism*. **First Paper Assigned**

Weeks 5 and 6: Glantz et. al. *Research in Developing Countries* and Brody, *Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials in Developing Countries*. **First Paper Due**

Weeks 7 and 8: Cohen, *The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research*. Hettinger, *The Responsible use of*

Animals in Biomedical Research. Bernat, *Brain Death Remains Optimal Public Policy* and McMahan, *An Alternative to Brain Death*. **Second Paper Assigned**

Weeks 9 and 10: Rachels, *Active and Passive Euthanasia* and Callahan, *Killing and Allowing to Die*. Quill et. al., *Care of the Hopelessly Ill* and Arras, *On the Slippery Slope of the Empire State*. Verhagen and Sauer, *Groningen Protocol* and Kon, *We Cannot Predict an Infant's Future Suffering*. **Second Paper Due. Third Paper Assigned.**

Weeks 11 and 12: John Paul II, *The Unspeakable Crime of Abortion* and Marquis, *Why Abortion is Immoral*. Warren, *On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion* and Thomson, *A Defense of Abortion*. Purdy, *Genetics and Reproductive Risk* and Singer, *IVF*. Buchanan, *Justice*. **Third Paper Due. Fourth Paper Assigned.**

Weeks 13 and 14: Review and Reflection. **Fourth Paper Due.**

-Methods of Instruction

Lectures

Discussion

Video

- Course Practices Required

- Each student will complete 4 papers, minimum length of 1250 words. These papers will respond to prompts that I will distribute in class and require independent research. Alternatively, interested students may complete a 15 page research project **with my approval**. Be warned: standards for this research project are remarkably high. If you have never written an independent research paper in philosophy, you should not pursue this option. Late papers will be assessed a 5 point penalty for each 24 hour period past the due date and time.

- Each week you will respond to 2 discussion questions posted online. You will then need to provide 2 thoughtful responses to other student posts. I expect you to be respectful while responding to others. This is not 4chan, thank all that is just in the world.

- In unusual circumstances such as hospitalization or compulsory military service, I will work with students to determine alternative ways to complete course requirements.

- Instructional Materials

Biomedical Ethics: 7th Edition

Degrazia, Mappes, Ballard

- *Methods of Evaluating Student Progress:*

Papers: 80%, Discussion Questions: 20%

Grading scale: 100-93, A... 92-90, A-... 89-87, B+... 86-83, B... 82-80, B-... 79-77, C+... 76-73, C... 72-70, C-... 69-67, D+... 66-63, D... 62-60, D-... 59-below, F

-*Other Course Information*

Accommodations and Support Services

Students who request accommodations based on a disability, in this or any other course, should contact Disability Services at 940-397-4140 or disabilityservices@msutexas.edu, before the semester begins or as soon as possible after the semester begins.

Discrimination

In keeping with a general policy of tolerance and non-discrimination, all of us (myself included) should strive to listen and give careful consideration to all ideas expressed in class, especially those that are different from our own. We should also strive to avoid using insulting terms or telling offensive jokes when talking to or about individuals or groups. Failure to hold to these principles will result in prompt removal from class.

Communication

I am available during my listed office hours. I am also available by email. When I send you an email message, I expect a response within 48 hours. I will do the same.