

**Philosophy 480.500: MEDICAL ETHICS**  
**TTH 12:45am-2:00pm**  
**O&M 103**

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**Course Description:**

This course aims to introduce students to some of the ethical issues that arise in medicine. Among the questions we will address in this course are: How should we think about the inequalities in the opportunity for health care and the quality of health care available? Is health care a right or a privilege? If a right, to what kind of care are individuals entitled? How should the allocation of medical resources be decided? How should health care priorities be set? What moral constraints should apply to medical research, in particular research that relies upon human-subjects? When, if ever, is euthanasia permissible? When, if ever, is abortion permissible?

**Course Prerequisites:**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Required Text:**

*Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine*, Bonnie Steinbock, John D. Arras, Alex John London (eds.), 6<sup>th</sup> edition (EIMM)

**Course Requirements and Expectations:**

Attendance *	15%
Participation & Short Assignments*	15%
Mid-term Exam	30%
Final Paper	40%

**\* Note about Attendance:**

Students will be allowed \*one\* unexcused absence per semester. Every unexcused absence after that will result in the reduction of the attendance component of a student's overall grade by 5% out of a possible 100%. For a list of university excused absences see <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm>. Satisfactory documentation will be required for all excused absences. Excused absences will not affect the attendance component of a student's grade.

**\* Note about Participation & Short Assignments:**

Short assignments will include unannounced reading quizzes, in-class written assignments, and take-home short written assignments.

**Grading Scale:**

In this course, course has a grading scale of 90%=A, 80%=B, 70%=C, 60%=D, 59% and below = F

## **Course Readings and Schedule\*:**

*\*Some readings may be added or removed during the course of the term.*

### **Allocation, Social Justice, and Health Policy**

#### **Week 1**

Tuesday, August 29

*First day of class*

Introduction

Thursday, August 31

“An Ethical Framework for Access to Health Care” (155-162)

“Equal Opportunity and Health Care” Norman Daniels (164-166)

#### **Week 2**

Tuesday, September 5

“Class, Health, and Justice” Sarah Marchand, Daniel Wikler, and Bruce Landesman (167-176)

Thursday, September 7

“Freedom and Moral Diversity: The Moral Failures of Health Care in the welfare state”

H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (177-186)

### **Methods and Strategies for Rationing Health Care**

#### **Week 3**

Tuesday, September 12

“The Individual Vs Society; Resolving the Conflict” David M Eddy (194-201)

Thursday, September 14

“Toward a Broader View of values in Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Health” Paul Menzel *et al.* (201-210)

#### **Week 4**

Tuesday, September 19

“Last-Chance Therapies and Managed Care: Pluralism, Fair Procedures, and Legitimacy” Norman Daniels *et al.* (210-222)

### **Equality and the ends of Medicine**

Thursday, September 21

“Should Alcoholics compete equally for liver transplantation?” Alvin H Moss *et al.* (223-228),

“Alcoholics and Liver Transplantation” Carl Cohen *et al.* (228-232)

### **The Definition of Death**

#### **Week 5**

Tuesday, September 26

“Defining Death” President’s Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical and Behavioral Research (259-268)

Thursday, September 28

“The Impending Collapse of the Whole-Brain Definition of Death” Robert M Veatch (268-276)

“How Much of the Brain Must be Dead?” Baruch A Brody (277-282)

### **Decisional Capacity and the Right to Refuse Treatment**

#### **Week 6**

Tuesday, October 3

“Deciding for Others: Competency” Allen Buchanan and Dan W. Brock (290-301)

Thursday, October 5

“A Chronicle: Dax’s Case as it Happened” Keith Burton (301-304)

“Commentary” Robert B. White (305-306)

“Commentary” H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (307-308)

## **Physician-Assisted Suicide**

### ***Week 7***

Tuesday, October 10

“The Philosopher’s Brief” Ronald Dworkin *et al.* (386-394)

“Physician –Assisted Suicide: A Tragic View” John D. Arras (394-400)

Thursday, October 12

“Is There a Duty to Die?” John Hardwig (416-425)

“For Now Have I My Death”: The “Duty to Die” versus the Duty to Help the Ill Stay Alive” Felicia Ackerman (426-434)

### ***Week 8***

Tuesday, October 17

Review for Mid-term Exam

Thursday, October 19

***Mid-Term Exam***

## **The Morality of Abortion**

### ***Week 9***

Tuesday, October 24

“The Unspeakable Crime of Abortion” Pope John Paul II (461-463)

“Why Abortion is Immoral” Don Marquis (463-471)

Thursday, October 26

“Why Most Abortions Are Not Wrong” Bonnie Steinbock (471-482)

### ***Week 10***

Tuesday, October 31

“A Defense of Abortion” Judith Jarvis Thompson (483-492)

Thursday, November 2

“The Morality of Abortion” Margaret Olivia Little (492-500)

## **Carrier Screening, Prenatal Testing, and Reproductive Decisions**

### ***Week 11***

Tuesday, November 7

“The Introduction of Cystic Fibrosis Carrier Screening into Clinical Practice: Policy Considerations” Benjamin S. Wilfond and Norman Frost (501-512)

Thursday, November 9

“Ethical Issues Related to Prenatal Genetic Testing” The Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association (*selections*, 513-523)

“Prenatal Diagnosis and Selective Abortion: A Challenge to Policy and Practice” Adrienne Asch (*selections*, 523-533)

## **Born in Scandal: The Origins of U.S. Research Ethics**

### ***Week 12***

Tuesday, November 14

“The Nuremburg Code” 705-706

“The Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital Case” Jay Katz (706-717)

Thursday, November 16

“Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study” Allan M Brandt (727-738)

## **Ethical Issues in International Research**

### ***Week 13***

Tuesday, November 21

“Unethical Trials of Interventions to Reduce Perinatal transmission of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus in Developing Countries” Peter Laurie *et al.* (761-766)

“AZT Trials and Tribulation” Robert A. Crouch *et al.* (766-771)

Thursday, November 23

*No class*

### ***Week 14***

Tuesday, November 28

“The Ambiguity and the Exigency: Clarifying ‘Standard of Care’ Arguments in International Research” Alex John London (771-780)

Thursday, November 30

“Research in Developing Countries: Taking ‘Benefit’ Seriously” Leonard H. Glatz (781-786)

### ***Week 15***

Tuesday, December 5

*Last Day of Class*

Review

### ***Week 16***

Wednesday, December 13, 8-10am

***Final Paper Due***

## POLICIES

1. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Any paper not received at the beginning of class will be considered late. Late papers will be penalized. Extensions will not be granted except under extreme circumstances. Under such circumstances, please hand me the excuse in writing. Please review the dates on which exams and papers are scheduled to see if you face any conflicts. Exams will be rescheduled only when there is a university approved absence. You are responsible for arranging other commitments you may have such that you are able to take the exams when scheduled.
2. Grade complaints-  
I will be more than happy to discuss your grade with you on a couple of conditions. First, you must wait at least 24 hours after you get the assignment back. Take this time to carefully read all the comments I have given you. Second, you must come with a written statement about why you think that there is a discrepancy between the quality of the work and the grade it received.
3. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall or call 845-1637.
4. **AGGIE HONOR CODE**  
“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System.

For additional information please visit: [www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/](http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/)

### Pledge

On all course work, assignments, or examinations at Texas A&M University, the following Honor Pledge shall be pre-printed and signed by the student:

“On my honor, as an Aggie, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.”