

**Bioethics
Philosophy 4333
Online Writing Enhanced
Sam Houston State University
Spring 2018**

Instructor:

Charles Royal Carlson, PhD
Office: CHSS 340
Office Hours: 12pm-2pm on Tuesdays
Virtual Office Hours: 1-2 Thursdays
Email: charlescarlson@shsu.edu

Course Description:

PHIL 4333. Bioethics. This course is a survey of bioethics. In this class students will use various ethical theories and moral principles to analyze and critically evaluate moral dilemmas in medicine. This course covers a broad range of issues including: 1) the patient-physician relationship, 2) bias in medicine, 3) health care delivery systems and 4) the ethics of research. To enhance critical thinking skills and decision making skills, students will be required to develop and defend views on given bioethical issues. Credit: 3. **Prerequisite:** Sophomore standing.

Required Textbook:

Title: Bioethics: An Anthology (3rd Edition)
ISBN-13: 978-1118941508
ISBN-10: 1118941500
Edited by Helga Duhse, Eudo Schuklenk and Peter Singer
Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell
Year: 2015

Course and Skill Objectives:

Intellectual Creation: This course explores ideas that foster intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition, in particular as it relates to the practice of medicine. Students will be engaging in a variety of writing assignments. Some of these may include assignments in which they will be asked to discuss and/or apply moral theories to moral dilemmas relating to bioethical issues. These assignments fulfill this component objective, as students will think through the relevance of moral values to the medical policies and issues resulting in variety of written projects.

Critical thinking: Students will be introduced to basic logic in the context of constructing and evaluating philosophical arguments. Their own philosophical arguments will be evaluated in short writing assignments in the course. Students will be asked to identify contemporary moral dilemmas in news outlets and apply moral theories from the course to resolve the dilemma. Some writing assignments for the course will require the students to analyze philosophical arguments presented in the course text, prior to discussion of

these arguments to foster a student's ability to think critically about what they have read prior to explicit instruction.

Communication skills: This is a writing enhanced course which means at least 50% of a student's grade must come from writing assignments over course material. There are a variety of writing assignments in PHIL 2306W, and assignments are evaluated on clarity and the quality of their reasoning. Clear writing will be writing that effectively communicates what the student intends to convey to her audience. Class discussions are designed to foster a community of inquiry through careful and critical statement of positions and through interaction with fellow students in a way that is caring and helps to clarify the positions of others.

Personal responsibility: Students will be required to write papers and contribute to discussions in which they develop arguments in favor of their moral perspectives. Being able to do this successfully will require students to think through the ethical implications of their moral beliefs and actions.

Social responsibility: Students will be asked to evaluate the morality of practices that have political and social dimensions (such as, for example, euthanasia and healthcare rationing). Students will be introduced to various perspectives on different moral issues and will be asked to discuss the differences in these perspectives in the context of class discussion on the discussion boards.

Office Hours and Appointments:

It is important that students feel comfortable to meet with me outside of class time about any issue pertaining to the course. The easiest way to arrange a meeting is to let me know that you are coming by is sending an email. You may, of course, just stop by my office hours. I will be logged on and available for Virtual Office Hours at the same time as my scheduled face-to-face office hours. This is often the best way to resolve a complicated issue because we can talk through it in real time. Should students choose to contact me by e-mail or through the Virtual Office Hours, they are asked to remember to use appropriate etiquette. If my posted office hours conflict with your availability we can always arrange to meet at a time that works for you. I occasionally have will hold virtual office hours later in the evening, particularly if there is a request to do so. Having a phone conversation is often the easiest to schedule a conversation for hours outside of the posted office hours. If you would like to schedule a phone call please send me a number where you can be reached and times when you will be available to take my call. I check my email only once a day and do not check the course page outside of business hours, on the weekends, or during holidays.

Grading Policy:

It is also important that you feel comfortable asking questions about the grades I assign to your work. You should feel free to discuss with me any issues you have about graded materials, but are encouraged to first take a close look at the details of the assignment, the comments I have provided, and reread what you wrote. If you would like to discuss your

grade you are encouraged to arrange a meeting with me to do so, either virtually, in person, or telephonically.

Grading:

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

First Position Paper: 15%

Second Position Paper: 15%

Discussion Board Posts and Responses: 30% (6 assignments worth 5% each)

Grading Scale:

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F Below 60%

Writing Enhanced:

This is a “W” course, which means that a minimum of 50 percent of your course grade must derive from writing activities designed to help you master course objectives. This class meets this requirement as the Discussion Board and the two Position Papers account for 60 percent of the grade and there is also writing required for the short answer and essay portions of the exams. Some writing activities will require you to draft and revise your work, with or without instructor feedback. You should approach writing in this course as a tool to use as part of your learning as well as a tool your instructor will use to assess your level of learning. This course satisfies the requirements for being listed as “writing enhanced” by providing all students with the opportunity to receive feedback on drafts of the Position Papers, and because the Discussion boards allow students an ongoing place to practice clarifying and making good written arguments as well as to receive low-stakes feedback from their peers - to which they may respond. The writing skills that are developed on the Discussion Board, along with the opportunity to incorporate feedback from the instructor and from fellow students, are then deployed in the creation of the two Position Papers for the course.

Academic Integrity:

I am passionate about the prevention of cheating on all assignments, and it is a point of emphasis for online educators in particular. I have many procedures and techniques in place to ensure that it is more profitable to spend the time learning the material than it is to spend time trying to beat the system. For the Position Papers we will be using the Turnitin software. I have several other methods that identify disingenuous effort. If you play by the rules you will not even notice that these things are there. Be assured that the best way to get a good grade is to do the work: complete the readings, watch the lectures, spend time in discussion with your fellow classmates, and work on the study guide until the material falls out of your memory on prompting. I am confident that if you do these things you will find this course intellectually stimulating and that you will be satisfied with the rewards of your effort. If you cheat however, I highly doubt you will enjoy the

course and you can expect an F in the course if you submit a plagiarized assignment. It is also worth noting that Blackboard tracks everything you do in the course, including the amount of time you spend watching lectures and how often you log in. I sincerely want you to succeed in this course and am not without sympathy or understanding. If you feel that you have run out of time or for some other reason feel compelled to submit plagiarized work - DONT. Contact me and we will work something out.

Explanation of Assignments

Exams:

There are two exams, a midterm and a final. Their content will be derived from both the lectures and the assigned readings. Most of the questions will be in multiple-choice format. There will also be some short answer and essay at the end. The potential topics of the essay questions will be distributed along with a general study guide a few days before the exam. Study groups are encouraged and online collaboration events will be organized. The exams will be administered within the date-range specified in the “Course Schedule”. (20% of final grade for each)

Position Papers:

Students will write two Position Papers three to five pages in length (750-1250 words). More information will be provided on the course website. These essays exemplify the objectives of the course by requiring both understanding of ethical theory and application to a specific contemporary bioethical issue. A good Position Paper demonstrates that you have considered many objections and alternatives to the position that you are putting forth, and that you have tried to address potential criticisms. The crafting of the paper as well as the gathering of the research will be an ongoing project and should be seen as a culmination of your work in the course and a chance to do serious academic research on a topic of great interest to you. You should include at least one source from our assigned readings and two external sources. Examples of your own creation are encouraged. You write about any of the topics we have previously discussed, but you must write on a different topic for each position paper. For example, you could write on Resource Allocation (session 1) for your first position paper, and for your second position paper you could write on Genetic Modification (session 2). You could also write both papers that are within a broader topic as long as the specific issue being discussed is different. For instance you could write both papers on Bias in Medicine (session 6) if one was on mandatory HIV testing and another was on Ruth Macklin’s concept of difference in the patient-physician relationship in different cultures.

I will gladly look at drafts at any time along the process up until 3 days before the assignment is due. The due dates for these assignments are listed on the course schedule. Papers will be uploaded to turnitin.com. (15% of final grade for each)

Discussion Board Posts and Responses:

You must make two posts on the discussion board for each of the 6 sessions of the course where a Discussion Board Assignment is assigned. There are two kinds of posts. The first are called *Research* posts, and the second are called *Participation* posts. One of each is required for each session and both have unique requirements. Research Posts are worth 4

points, and participation posts are worth 1 point. 5% of your final grade comes from each of the six Discussion Board 6 assignments over the course of the semester totaling 30% of your final grade. A description of the two kinds of posts is below, more information will be posted on our course page.

Research Post: For these you are asked to take a position on one of the issues in the readings. Explain the issue in your own words, explain the position taken by the author in the reading, and provide your position and defend it with good philosophical reasons. This last part is important, as it is where you make your philosophical contribution. Strive to make a clear statement of your contribution to the debate and support it with at least two well-explained reasons for your position/take/contribution. Each post should be at least 250 words and include citation information such as the name of article, name of the author, and relevant page numbers for quotes.

Participation Post: For these you are asked to engage in critical inquiry with your classmates by responding to someone else's Research Post. You may choose to agree or disagree with another's interpretation of the issue, or you may go another route altogether. The crucial element is that you add something to the philosophical discussion. This may take many forms including adding something that is missing from either their reasoning or a theoretical approach they are not considering.

The work done on the discussion board is meant to serve as the foundation for your Position Papers. They are a place to try out an argument and to see if others have criticisms or ways to look at the situation that you have not yet thought of. All articles and their discussion threads will be left open throughout the semester for you to read and continue to engage in discussion. **Extra Credit** can be earned by providing extra Participation posts other than the one post required. Extra credit points will be applied to the grades on the midterm and final exams. Up to 10 extra credits points are possible to be applied to each exam.

Tentative Schedule

All of the readings are from the textbook unless it is indicated otherwise. In those cases supplementary readings will be posted through Blackboard. Please keep in mind this is not a final reading schedule; changes may be incorporated during the semester and will be announced on the course page. The length of the sessions varies from one week to two depending on assignments due and holidays. Sessions end on Sunday night and new sessions become available after midnight. It is incumbent on you to keep abreast of any changes to the syllabus that might occur as we go along.

Session One: January 18th – 28th

Lecture Topics:

Resource Allocation

Readings:

Introduction – pg 1-9

Paul T. Menzel – “Rescuing Lives: Can’t We Count?” pg 387-390

Alvin H. Moss and Mark Siegler – Should Alcoholics Compete Equally for liver Transplantation? pg 390-397

Nick Beckstead and Toby Ord – “Bubbles under the Wallpaper: Healthcare Rationing and Discrimination” pg 406-413

John Harris – “The Survival Lottery” pg 437-443

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Two: *January 29th – February 4th*

Lecture Topics:

Genetic Modification

Readings:

Johnathon Glover – “Questions about Some Uses of Genetic Engineering” pg 177-189

David Resnik – “The Moral Significance of the Therapy – Enhancement Distinction in Human Genetics” pg 189-199

Nick Bostrom – “In Defense of Posthuman Dignity” pg 208-215

Michael Tooley – “The Moral Status of the Cloning of Humans”

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Three: *February 5th – 11th*

Lecture Topics:

Life and Death Issues part 1

Readings:

Harvard Medical School ad hoc committee on Brain Death - “A Definition of the Irreversible Coma” pg 307-312

Jonathon Glover – “The Sanctity of Life” pg 225-235

James Rachels – “Active and Passive Euthanasia” pg 248-252

R.M. Hare – “The Abnormal Child: Moral Dilemmas of Doctors and Parents” pg 285-290

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Four: *February 12th – 25th*

Lecture Topics:

Life and Death issues Part 2

Readings:

Peter Singer – “Is the Sanctity of Life Ethic Terminally Ill?” pg 321-331

Ronald Dworkin – “Life Past Reason” pg 333-341

Chris Hill – “The Note” pg 353-357

Daniel Callahan – “When Self Determination Runs Amok” pg 357-362

John Lachs – “When Abstract Moralizing Runs Amok” pg 362-366

Graded Tasks:

First Position Paper due at 10pm on Sunday Feb 25th

Session Five: *February 26th – March 12th*

Lecture Topics:

Issues in Reproduction

Readings:

Derek Parfit – “Rights, Interests, and Possible People” pg 86-91

Laura Purdy – “Genetics and Reproductive Risk: Can Having Children Be Immoral” pg 105-112

American Society of Reproductive Medicine – “Sex Selection and Genetic Preimplantation Diagnosis” pg 136-141

Julian Savulescu and Edgar Dahl “ Sex Selection and Preimplantation Diagnosis: A Response to the Ethics Committee of the American Society of Reproductive Medicine” pg 141-144

Graded Tasks:

Midterm Exam – Available Wednesday, March 7th at noon and closes Thursday, March 8h at 10pm

Session Six: *March 12th -25th*

Lecture Topics:

Bias in Medicine

Readings:

Udo Schuklenk and Anita Kleinsmidt – “Rethinking Mandatory HIV Testing during Pregnancy in Areas with High HIV Prevalence Rates: Ethical and Policy Issues” pg. 565-572

Ruth Macklin – “The Doctor-Patient Relationship in Different Cultures” pg. 642-654

Ainsley Newson and Robert Williamson – “Should we Undertake Genetic Research on Intelligence” pg 199-208

Alison Davis – “Right to Life of Handicapped” pg 290-292

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Seven: *March 26- April 1st*

Lecture Topics:

Ethical Issues in the Practice of Healthcare Part 1

Readings:

Mark Siegler – “Confidentiality in Medicine: A Decrepit Concept” pg 599-603

Immanuel Kant – “On a Supposed Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives” pg 613-615

Joseph Collins – “Should Doctors Tell the Truth” pg 615-621

Tom Beauchamp – “Informed Consent: Its History, Meaning and Present Challenges” pg 635-642

Julian Savulescu – “Rational Desires and the Limitation of Life-Sustaining Treatment” pg 665-683

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Eight: *April 2nd – 8th*

Lecture Topics:

Ethical Issues in the Practice of Healthcare Part 2

Readings:

Gary Rolfe – “Foundations for a Human Science of Nursing: Gadamer, Laing, and the Hermeneutics of Caring” (available through library.shsu.edu or on blackboard)

Sarah Dock – “The Relation of the Nurse to the Doctor and the Doctor to the Nurse” pg 699-700

Lisa Newton – “In Defense of the Traditional Nurse” pg 700-708

Sarah Breier – “Patient Autonomy and Medical Paternity: Can Nurses Help Doctors to Listen to Patients?” pg 708-718

Graded Tasks:

Discussion Board Posts

Session Nine: *April 9th – 22nd*

Lecture Topics:

The Ethics of research

Readings:

Henry Beecher – “Ethics of Clinical Research” pg 451-499

John Harris – “Scientific Research is a Moral Duty” pg 471-483

Sandra Shapsay and Kenneth Pimple – “Participation in Biomedical Research is an Imperfect Moral Duty: A Response to John Harris” pg 483-489

Leah Belsky and Henry Richardson – “Medical Researchers’ Ancillary Clinical Care Responsibilities” pg 497-503

Graded Tasks:

Second Position Paper due at 10pm on Sunday April 22nd

Session Ten: *April 23rd – May 4th*

Lecture Topics:

Neuroethics

Readings:

Jonathan Moreno – “Neuroethics: An Agenda for Neuroscience and Society” pg 733-741

Sally Adee – “How Electrical Brain Stimulation Can Change the Way we Think” pg 741-744

Adam Kolber – “Freedom of Memory Today” pg 744-749

Henry Greely et al – “Towards Responsible Use of Cognitive Enhancing Drugs by the Healthy” pg 753-760

Julian Savulescu and Anders Sandberg – “Engineering Love” pg 760-762

Graded Tasks:

Final Exam – Available Wednesday, May 8th at noon and closes Thursday, May 9th at 10pm

Institutional policies and requirements regarding Q-drops, dates of religious observance, academic dishonesty, disabilities accommodations, etc., may be found at the following link: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/> Please familiarize yourself with the policies.

STANDARD POLICIES: I have extracted from the full statement a key element as a reminder of the policy in its entirety, but the student must download the posting on SHSU Online to have the full policy statement. Here are the four points of particular note:

- (1) NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. There will be no retroactive accommodations.
- (2) ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.
- (3) CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.
- (4) COURSE EVALUATIONS: In accordance with University policy, students will have an opportunity near the end of the semester on a set day and time to complete a course evaluation.