

LDST 377: Ethical Decision Making in Healthcare

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Overview: In this class, we will discuss ethical decision-making in healthcare from the perspective of patients, physicians, researchers, and policymakers. In Part 1, we will mainly address clinical ethics. For example, what can physicians permissibly do and what are patients entitled to request?

In Part 2, we turn to health policy. Do medical innovations like human enhancement and radical life extension threaten our moral equality? What about kidney taxes and organ markets? Is paternalism appropriate in public health or research contexts? Does everyone have a right to healthcare, and if so, how much? Are people entitled to elective treatments, enhancements, and life-extension technology?

Part 3 addresses procreative ethics. What do we owe future people? Are there any ethical principles that should inform the kinds of people we create? Is abortion permissible? Is commercial surrogacy permissible? Together, these readings and discussions will provide an introduction to the range of ethical questions that arise in modern medicine and medical research.

Objectives: This course is designed to give students a better understanding of medical ethics and the ethics of public health. The main learning outcomes center on discovery and creation:

- Students will **discover** philosophical perspectives that change the way they think about the ethics of healthcare.
 - Students will develop skills that enable them to develop and evaluate moral arguments. For example, students will learn to assess the soundness and validity of an ethical argument.
 - Students will critically evaluate real-world ethical dilemmas in healthcare in order to better understand concepts like consent, wellbeing, and justice.
- Students will also **create** original philosophical essays that address the ethics of healthcare.
 - Students will think in a clear and systematic way about the normative dimensions of their career or personal choices going forward.

- Students will learn to develop and write an original philosophical argument.
- Students will learn to revise papers in response to counter-arguments.
- Students will write the best papers they've ever written in their lives.

Readings:

PART 1: CLINICAL ETHICS

Week 1: Methods

M: MLK!

W: Medical Ethics and Philosophy

Savulescu- Why Bioethics Needs Philosophy

Week 2: Consent

M: Paternalism

Buchanan, "Medical Paternalism"

Hippocratic Oaths

W: Children's Medical Rights and Consent through time

Dare- Parental Rights and Medical Decisions

Davis, Precedent Autonomy and Subsequent Consent

AAP statement

Week 3: Addiction and Paternalism

M: Addiction and Choice

Foddy and Savulescu- A Liberal Account of Addiction

W: Smoking

Voigt- Smoking and Social Justice

Earp et al- Racial Justice and the War on Drugs

Week 4: Euthanasia and Death

M: Death By Choice

Velleman- A Right to Self Termination?

Fisher- Swiss Right to Die Clinics

W:- Survival

Parfit- Why Our Identity is Not What Matters

Aviv- What does it mean to die?

PART 2- HEALTH POLICY

Week 5- Impairment and Disability

M: Impairment

Howard and Aas- On Valuing Impairment
Savulescu- Disability: A Welfarist Approach

W: Modification

Bayne and Levy- Amputees by Choice
Minerva- Invisible Discrimination

Week 6- Public Health

M: Healthcare Systems

Persad et al- Principles of Allocation of Scarce Interventions
Cochrane: After the ACA

W: Social Determinants of Health

Hausman- What's Wrong With Health Inequalities?
Ray- Why Bioethics Should Care about Environmental Toxins

Week 7- Organs, Tissue, and Markets

M: Organ Markets

McGrath "Organ Procurement, Altruism, and Autonomy"
Satz "The Moral Limits of Markets: The Case of Human Kidneys"

W:- Organ Confiscation

Fabre- Organ Confiscation

Week 8- Pandemic Policy

M: Infectious Disease

Francis et al- How Infectious Disease Got Left Out
Flanigan- Compulsory Vaccination

W: Challenge Trials

Eyal- Human Challenge Studies to Accelerate Coronavirus Vaccine Licensure
Blumenthal Barby- Payment of COVID-19 challenge trials

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

PART III- Procreative Ethics

Week 10: Conception

M: The non-identity problem

Parfit- The Non-Identity Problem

W: A Solution to the Problem

Shiffrin- Wrongful Life, Procreative Responsibility, and the Significance of Harm

Week 11: Creation Ethics

M: Designer Babies

Savulescu- Procreative Beneficence
Sandel- The Case Against Perfection

W: Transhumanism and Equality

Bostrom, The Reversal Test

Bostrom, "The Fable of the Dragon Tyrant"

Week 12: Pregnancy and Maternal Rights

M: Assisted Reproduction

McLachlan and Swales- Babies, Child Bearers, and Commodification

Anderson- Commercial Surrogate Motherhood

W: Maternal Rights

Thomson- "A Defense of Abortion"

Week 13: Pregnancy and Moral Status

M: A fetus has moral status

Marquis- Why Abortion is Immoral

Liao- The Basis of Human Moral Status

W: A fetus only has moral status in some cases

Harman- Creation Ethics

Week 14: Pregnancy and Moral Status

M: A fetus does not have moral status

Tooley- Abortion and Infanticide

W: We don't know whether a fetus has moral status

Moller- Abortion and Moral Risk

Week 15: Birth and Childhood

M: Birth

Warren- The Moral Significance of Birth

W: Childhood

Gheaus- The Best Available Parent

Grading:

Grade	Weight
Class Participation	10%
Perusall	10%
Top 10 Responses	30%
Essay <ul style="list-style-type: none">I will apply a $\frac{1}{3}$ grade late penalty to your final essay grade if you do not meet with me and submit a thesis outline by week 5I will apply a $\frac{1}{3}$ grade late penalty to your final essay grade if you do not submit a draft by week 10	30%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final submissions are due by the end of week 15 	
Final Exam	20%

All grades are entered as numbers.

The numerical values of essay grades are:

A+ 98.5	A+/A 97	A 95	A/A- 93	A- 91.5	A-/B+ 90
B+ 88.5	B+/B 87	B 85	B/B- 83	B- 81.5	B-/C+ 80
C+ 78.5	C+/C 77	C 75	C/C- 73	C- 71.5	C-/D+ 70
D+ 68.5	D+/D 67	D 65	D/D- 63	D- 61.5	D-/F 60

The numerical values for final letter grades are:

A+ 100-97	A 96.99-94	A- 93.99-90
B+ 89.99-87	B 86.99-84	B- 83.99-80
C+ 79.99-77	C 77.99-74	C- 73.99-70
D+ 69.99-67	D 66.99-63	D- 63.99-60

Participation (10%)

Your participation grade is based on how well you contributed to class discussions and activities and how often you attended class. I posted participation guidelines online to give you a rough sense of the standards for each grade.

Perusall (10%)

Your perusal grade is based on whether you completed the assigned reading and engaged in conversation on Perusall before class.

Reading Responses (30%)

Every week will have a reading response due on Friday. You can choose which one to do but you cannot repeat them.

Your grade will consist in the top ten highest scores for your response submissions.

Essay (30%)

One of our goals in this course will be to develop your writing abilities further. Specifically, I want you to write the best paper you've ever written. For that reason, **you can revise your essay at least twice for a higher grade**, as long as you meet with me to discuss revisions.

Exam (20%)

The Registrar sets the final exam time and date. Information about the final is posted online.

Academic Integrity:

Students may not use course materials from previous versions of this course, and students may not distribute the course materials (e.g. exams) without authorization.

Students must complete every assignment on their own unless otherwise specified.

Students may not use artificial intelligence to assist with writing assignments.

Students must comply with the UR honor code.

Students may not submit work from previous courses for this course.

Grades:

Either we will use Google Classroom or you will make a copy of the GoogleDoc grade rubric and I will update your grades there. TBD!

Materials:

All readings are on Perusall. You can print the readings and bring them to class.

Laptops and iPads are not permitted in class without authorization.

This syllabus may be revised throughout the semester.