

LDST 377: Ethical Decision Making in Healthcare

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M/W noon

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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.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
 - o Students will think in a clear and systematic way about the normative dimensions of their career or personal choices going forward.
 - o Students will learn to develop and write an original philosophical argument.
 - o Students will learn to revise papers in response to counter-arguments.
 - o Students will write the best papers they've ever written in their lives.

Class Technology

- **Perusal** (assigned readings)
 - Readings
- **Blackboard** (grade stuff)
 - Study guides
 - Grading rubrics
 - Tips for assignments
 - Sample work
 - Submit assignments (except essays)
 - Check your grades
- **Email**
 - Quick questions
 - Submitting draft essays

Grading:

Grade	Weight
Class Participation	10%
Perusal	10%
Reading Responses	10%
Disagreement Project	10%
Essay	40%
Final Exam	20%

All grades are entered as numbers.

The numerical values of essay grades are:

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

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

Perusall

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

Reading Responses:

You can do as many reading responses as you want. The top five scores will be included in your grade.

- Use Blackboard to submit each response. Submit your responses online before class starts.
 - I will not accept responses after the corresponding class.
 - If for some reason you cannot access Blackboard you can email me a response before class.

Disagreement Project

To complete the disagreement project, you must talk to someone for 15 minutes about a topic from the class. You must disagree with the person you're talking to. Record the conversation and write 700-1000 words about why you disagree. Then show your interlocutor the summary of the conversation, and ask them to email me to verify that you accurately described your conversation. You can complete this project any time before the last day of class.

Essay

One of our goals in this course will be to further develop your writing abilities. **You can rewrite your essay as many times as you want** for a higher grade, but I will only re-grade your essay once every two weeks. More information about the essay is available on Blackboard.

Final Exam:

The Registrar sets the final exam time and date. The exam will test you on the whole semester. The exam is 10 questions and it will cover the readings, classroom discussions, and handouts. I will post a study guide before the exam and there will be a review session.

Academic Integrity:

Students may not use course materials from previous versions of this course. Students must complete every assignment on their own

Students must comply with the UR honor code.

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

Materials:

All readings are on Blackboard or Perusall.

Please print the readings and bring them to class.
Laptops and iPads are not permitted in class without authorization.

Readings:

PART 1: CLINICAL ETHICS

Week 1: How should we reason about moral problems in medicine?

January 10- Medical Ethics and Philosophy

Savulescu- Why Bioethics Needs Philosophy

January 12- Paternalism

Buchanan, "Medical Paternalism"

Hippocratic Oaths

Week 2: Competence and Paternalism

January 17- MLK!

January 19- 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

January 24- Addiction and Choice

Foddy and Savulescu- A Liberal Account of Addiction

January 26- Smoking

Voigt- Smoking and Social Justice

Earp et al- Racial Justice and the War on Drugs

Week 4: Euthanasia and Death

January 31- Death By Choice

Velleman- A Right to Self Termination?

Fisher- Swiss Right to Die Clinics

February 2 - 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

February 7- Impairment

Howard and Aas- On Valuing Impairment

Savulescu- Disability: A Welfarist Approach

February 9- Modification

Bayne and Levy- Amputees by Choice

Minerva- Invisible Discrimination

Week 6- Public Health

February 14- Healthcare Systems

Persad et al- Principles of Allocation of Scarce Interventions

Cochrane: After the ACA

February 16- 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

February 21- Organ Markets

McGrath "Organ Procurement, Altruism, and Autonomy"

Satz "The Moral Limits of Markets: The Case of Human Kidneys"

February 23- Organ Confiscation

Fabre- Organ Confiscation

Week 8- Pandemic Policy

February 28- Infectious Disease

Francis et al- How Infectious Disease Got Left Out

Flanigan- Compulsory Vaccination

March 2- 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

March 14- The non-identity problem

Parfit- The Non-Identity Problem

March 16- A Solution to the Problem

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

Week 11: Creation Ethics

March 21- Designer Babies

Savulescu- Procreative Beneficence

Sandel- The Case Against Perfection

March 23- Transhumanism and Equality

Bostrom, The Reversal Test

Bostrom, "The Fable of the Dragon Tyrant"

Week 12: Pregnancy and Maternal Rights

March 28- Assisted Reproduction

McLachlan and Swales- Babies, Child Bearers, and Commodification

Anderson- Commercial Surrogate Motherhood

March 30- Maternal Rights

Thomson- "A Defense of Abortion"

Week 13: Pregnancy and Moral Status

April 4- A fetus has moral status

Marquis- Why Abortion is Immoral

Liao- The Basis of Human Moral Status

April 6- A fetus only has moral status in some cases

Harman- Creation Ethics

Week 14: Pregnancy and Moral Status

April 11: A fetus does not have moral status

Tooley- Abortion and Infanticide

April 13: We don't know whether a fetus has moral status

Moller- Abortion and Moral Risk

Week 15: Birth and Childhood

April 18: Birth

Warren- The Moral Significance of Birth

April 20: Childhood

Gheaus- The Best Available Parent

This syllabus may be revised throughout the semester. Please check Blackboard for updates.