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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-3:30

Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Biomedical Ethics (PHIL408M)
Syllabus, Fall 2011
TuTh 9:30am-10:45am; SKN 1112

This course explores four areas of lively current debate in bioethics: research ethics, markets in organs, the allocation of scarce health care resources, and genetic/pharmaceutical enhancement. Readings include book chapters, articles from professional journals, and ethical guidelines promulgated by international organizations. The course is not an introduction to bioethics. It is given under the assumption that students already possess the skills necessary to extract and assess arguments from sophisticated philosophical texts. Most class time will be devoted to discussion.

Texts:

All readings are available as PDF files on the ELMS (Blackboard) site for this course. It is your responsibility to download and print them. There is no textbook. Scheduled readings might change as the course progresses. Changes will be announced.

Requirements:

One presentation/paper, a final paper, a midterm and a final exam.

Presentation/Paper	Sign up by Sept. 8 for presentation date.	20% of grade
Final Paper	Based on presentation; due 16 December	40% of grade
Midterm	20 October; on Parts I & II	15% of grade
Final	16 Dec.; on Parts III & IV	15% of grade
In-Class Participation	Attendance is crucial	10% of grade

Academic integrity:

The University of Maryland Honor Pledge reads: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination." The Pledge statement should be handwritten and signed on the front of your exams and papers. Students who fail to write and sign the Pledge will be asked to confer with the instructor.

The Code of Academic Integrity identifies four types of academic dishonesty: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes dishonesty of these four types. Please consult the Code of Academic Integrity <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/iii100a.html> or speak with the instructor if you would like any further clarification (e.g., on what constitutes plagiarism). Incidents of academic dishonesty will be taken very seriously. Any cases of it will be forwarded to the office of judicial programs.

Policy on Electronic Devices

No use of electronic devices (e.g., computers, phones, iPods, tablets) will be permitted in class, unless a documented disability renders their use necessary or the device is used exclusively as an e-reader.

Presentation/Paper

You must sign up for a date to give an in-class presentation based on a critique you write of *an ethical claim or argument defended by the author* of a reading we are scheduled to discuss on the date of your presentation.

Your critique must focus on at least one *ethical* claim or argument, *defended* by the author, that plays a significant role in the reading. You need to clarify what the claim or argument amounts to before you set out your critique of it. But your task is *not* to summarize the reading.

The day before you give your presentation, you must email me a written version of it. The written version must be at least 5 pages in 12 point, double-spaced type. (Late texts will be accepted, but they will be penalized 1 full grade per day they are late. Only a university-approved excuse will free you from this penalty.)

The presentation should last 15-20 minutes. It will be followed with questions from the class. In giving your presentation, you should use some sort of visual aid, for example, a handout. Please do not simply read your critique to the class.

Final Paper

The paper must be 7-10 pages and based on your presentation. *In writing it, you should take into account the comments I send you regarding the written version of your presentation.* Late papers will be accepted, but they will be penalized 1 full grade per day they are late. Only a university-approved excuse will free you from this penalty. *You must provide me with a hard copy of your final paper, as well as email a copy of it to me.*

Midterm and Final

A few days before each exam, I will hand out a list of questions. The actual exam will consist of selected questions from that list. Exams will be open book. But you will not be permitted to use notes. You will be permitted to make up a missed exam only if you provide me with a university-approved excuse for your absence.

Policy on Medically Necessitated Absence from Class

I will accept as an excused absence a self-signed note from a student who has missed a single class session, attesting to the date of an injury/illness. The note must contain an acknowledgement by the student that the information is true and correct and that providing false information is prohibited under Code of Student Conduct. A student is obligated to make a reasonable attempt to inform me in advance of his/her injury/illness.

A student who experiences a prolonged absence, namely, either three or more class sessions consecutively, four or more sessions non-consecutively, or an injury/illness preventing attendance at a Major Scheduled Grading Event is required to provide written documentation of the illness from the Health Center or an outside health care provider, verifying the dates of treatment and the time period during which the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities.

The midterm and final exams as well as the presentation/paper and final paper are Major Scheduled Grading Events.

Grading:

Your final grade will depend on the percentage you earn of the total points possible in the class: A+: 97-100; A: 94-96; A-: 90-93; B+: 87-89; B: 84-86; B-: 80-83; C+: 77-79; C: 74-76; C-: 70-73; D+: 67-69; D: 64-66; D-: 60-63. *There will be no opportunities for extra credit.* Failure to complete an assignment will result in your receiving no points (a zero) for that assignment.

Religious Observances:

You will not be penalized for any absence that results from religious observance. However, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor in advance of any intended absences for religious observance.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities should inform the instructor of their needs as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Schedule:

(Readings might be altered as the course progresses. If there are any changes, they will be announced.)

Sept. 1	Introduction
Part I	Research Ethics
Sept. 6	Jones, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment"; Annas and Grodin, "The Nuremberg Code" [No presentation]
Sept. 8	Jonas, "Philosophical Reflections on Experimenting with Human Subjects"
Sept. 13	Declaration of Helsinki; Porter and Koski "Regulations for the Protection of Humans in Research in the United States" 156-159; Hawkins, "Brief Background to Clinical Research Ethics"
Sept. 15	Miller: "Consent to Clinical Research"
Sept. 20	Harmon: "Where Did You Go with My DNA?"; Mellow and Wolf: "The Havasupai Indian Tribe Case"; "OHRP - Guidance on Research Involving Coded Private Information or Biological Specimens" (optional) ; Truog et al.: "Is Informed Consent Always Necessary for Randomized, Controlled Trials?"
Sept. 22	Wendler and Miller, "Deception in Clinical Research" [No presentation]
Sept. 27	Lurie and Wolfe, "Unethical Trials of Interventions to Reduce Perinatal Transmission of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus in Developing Countries"; Hawkins, "Case Studies: The Havrix Trial and the Surfaxin Trial"
Sept. 29	Pogge, "Testing our Drugs on the Poor Abroad"
Oct. 4	Wertheimer: "Exploitation in Clinical Research"
Part II	Markets in Organs
Oct. 6	WHO "Guiding Principles on Human Cell, Tissue, and Organ Transplantation"; Shimazono: "The State of the International Organ Trade"
Oct. 11	Radcliffe-Richards: "The Case for Allowing Kidney Sales"; Satel: excerpt from <i>When Altruism Isn't Enough</i>
Oct. 13	Satz: excerpt from <i>Why Some Things Should Not Be For Sale</i>

Oct. 18	Review
Oct. 20	Midterm
Part III	Allocation of Scarce, Life-Saving Resources
Oct. 25	Alexander: "They Decide Who Lives, Who Dies" [No presentation]
Oct. 27	Broome: "Fairness" [No presentation]
Nov. 1	Daniels: "Four Unsolved Rationing Problems: A Challenge" [No presentation]
Nov. 3	NICE: "Measuring Effectiveness and Cost Effectiveness: the QALY" Weinstein et al.: "QALYs: The Basics" [No presentation]
Nov. 8	Harris: "QALYfying the Value of Life"
Nov. 10	Singer et al.: "Double Jeopardy and the Use of QALYs in Health Care Allocation"; Singer: "Why We Must Ration Health Care"
Nov. 15	Persad et al.: "Principles for Allocation of Scarce Medical Interventions"
Nov. 17	Kerstein and Bognar: "Complete Lives in the Balance"; Persad et al. "Standing by Our Principles"; Kerstein and Bognar: "Response to Open Peer Commentaries" [No presentation]
Part IV	Enhancement
Nov. 22	Savulescu and Kahane: "The Moral Obligation to Create Children with the Best Chance of the Best Life"
Thanksgiving	Break
Nov. 29	Pinker "The Designer Baby Myth"; Sandel, "The Case Against Perfection"
Dec. 1	Kamm, "Is There a Problem with Enhancement?"
Dec. 6	Buchanan: "Enhancement and the Ethics of Development"
Dec. 8	Wasserman and Liao: "Issues in the Pharmacological Induction of Emotions"
Dec. 13	Review
Friday, Dec 16 8:00am-10:00am	Final Exam