

Ethics: Bioethics

Spring 2015

Instructor: Laura Guidry-Grimes ♦ **Email:** lkg8@georgetown.edu

Office Hours: TR, 6:30-7:30 pm and by appointment ♦ New North, 2nd floor lounge

****NOTE: SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY FOR UPDATES.**

OVERVIEW

Is it morally acceptable to subject children to clinical research when they will not directly benefit? How should someone make medical decisions for someone who has never been competent? Does physician-assisted suicide violate professional boundaries for the virtuous physician? These questions and many more crop up in the vast field known as bioethics. With the parade of technological advancement, we are faced with a mounting number of difficult decisions and complex moral problems. In this course, we will examine key moral responsibilities of actors within the healthcare system and research fields. Through a combination of ethical theory and case studies, students will learn how to pick out morally salient facts, identify moral stakeholders, weigh conflicting interests, and recognize the moral residue that often accompanies resolutions.

COURSE GOALS

- ♦ Develop critical thinking and writing skills, which for philosophy involves the following:
 - ♦ recognizing the parts of arguments
 - ♦ understanding how these parts work together to form a coherent argument
 - ♦ critiquing the steps, reasoning, consistency, or validity of the argument as a whole
 - ♦ inferring further implications of the argument, given your critique or other critiques that can be made
- ♦ Identify key historical events and movements that contributed to the development of bioethics as an academic field and practice
- ♦ Use rich moral language to unpack the nuances and complexities of moral problems in medicine and biotechnology
- ♦ Increase appreciation and awareness of the types of moral conflicts that can arise in the clinic and in research
- ♦ Apply philosophical concepts to real-world cases in medicine and biotechnology
- ♦ Compare, contrast, and analyze different positions of philosophers and other scholars and activists when it comes to central questions in bioethics

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LOGISTICS

PHIL 105-03 will be meeting **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5.00 pm – 6.15 pm in Walsh 497.**

Blackboard will be used for submitting assignments and accessing readings, but all other class materials and information will be on the course website.

<http://bioethics-spring2015.weebly.com>

This class does count towards Georgetown's Bioethics minor.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Weight	Deadline
Participation	20%	
Short Paper #1	20%	February 8th @ 11.59 pm
Short Paper #2	20%	March 22nd @ 11.59 pm
Debate Contribution	15%	April 13th @ 11.59 pm
Case Analysis	25%	May 1st @ 11.59 pm

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Participation. You are expected to participate regularly and thoughtfully. You should demonstrate that you have read the required material, and you should also engage with your classmates. *If there are not enough people participating on a given day, I will give out a pop quiz.* In case you have been too quiet, you can improve your grade by contributing to the class blog on our website.

<http://bioethics-spring2015.weebly.com/class-blog>

Blog posts cannot be fully substituted for in-class participation, however.

Debate contribution. We will have an in-class debate on a topic related to the course material. You will work with a group of students to present a case for your side of the issue. The night before, you (each student) must submit 750 words on what you want to contribute to the debate. Some possible questions you can respond to as your contribution: What are the competing interests or obligations in this issue? How should the moral interests be weighed or understood? Based on your position, what is the most challenging aspect of resolving these ethical problems? What is a problem with one of the opposing views? Do not attempt to answer all of these questions in your paper. Focus on one particular ethical/philosophical aspect of the case that you will present with your team. Depth and thoughtfulness are more important than breadth. You should incorporate ideas, terms, or insights from course material.

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Your contribution should clearly integrate at least one class reading and at least one debate reading. Check the course websites for more detailed instructions. Submit to Blackboard.

Short papers. You are required to write two short (1,000 words) papers based on prompts that I provide on the course website. The prompt can be on any readings that we have done up to that point. The point of these papers is to help you build your philosophical writing skills. Submit to Blackboard.

Case analysis. Using the ethics case work-up handout (separate document on course website), you need to methodically break down a clinical ethics case. Your analysis should conclude with a concrete recommendation for what the medical professionals should do to resolve the case. Put yourself in the shoes of a clinical ethicist called for guidance. The analysis should thoughtfully integrate at least two class readings and three outside readings. The case analysis should be 2,000 words and submitted to Blackboard. Check the course websites for more detailed instructions.

CLASS MATERIALS

REQUIRED:

All of the required readings will be available on Blackboard (<http://campus.georgetown.edu>).

RECOMMENDED:

Anthony Weston's *A Rulebook for Arguments*

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and tardiness. You are expected to attend class every day, and you should avoid tardiness. I will take roll daily. If you miss roll due to lateness, it is your responsibility to make sure that I have corrected the attendance sheet. If you need to miss class, you must e-mail me, preferably before the class meets. Keep in mind that sleeping in, fun local events, and work do not excuse you. You are only permitted two unexcused absences before points are deducted from your grade. You will lose one-third of a letter grade on your final grade for each unexcused absence after the first two (so 'B+' becomes a 'B' after one extra, 'B+' becomes a 'B-' after two extra, etc.). You must provide proper documentation for absences that you want excused. You only need to give me enough information for me to discern whether the excuse is legitimate and whether the documentation is adequate.

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Late assignments. You must turn assignments in on time unless you are given permission to do otherwise. I will deduct a full letter grade for each day an assignment is late without a documented, legitimate excuse (e.g., an 'A' paper becomes a 'B' for one day late; an 'A' paper becomes a 'C' for two days late). The number of points deducted for a late paper will correspond to how many hours it is late (so 24 hours late = full letter grade off, 12 hours late = half letter grade off, etc.). It is your responsibility to make sure that your assignment has been uploaded successfully. It is conceivable that you will have multiple deadlines and stressors in the same week as you have a deadline for this course, but this is not grounds for asking for an extension. In the case of piling deadlines, I recommend that you work out an earlier deadline for your assignment for this course. Except in extraordinary circumstances, I will not grant extensions when the assignment is due in less than 24 hours. Keep in mind that the deadline applies even if you have computer trouble.

Paper length. You have 100-word leeway either way for papers. This means that (e.g.) your short papers must be between 900 and 1,100 words, or I'll deduct points. How many points are deducted will depend on how much you go over or under the word limit. Same goes for the other assignments.

Anonymous grading. In order to ensure fairness in grading, all assignments will be graded anonymously. Students are required to make sure that their submitted assignments comply with instructions (on course website) to ensure blind grading. Students who do not follow instructions for anonymous grading are subject to a two-third letter grade deduction on their assignment (e.g., an 'A' becomes a 'B+'). For these students, I will still clear their papers of all identifying information long before they are graded. I will not know whose paper is whose until all papers for that assignment are graded and are returned to the students.

Proper resources. All research materials should be appropriate for college-level assignments. This means that blogs (generally), Wikipedia, and other similar sites should not be used as the basis for any assignment. You need to cite all sources you consult or use. Contact me if you are unclear whether a particular source counts as proper. The Bioethics Research Library (Healy 102) has excellent staff and materials.

Citations. All of your work must be cited correctly. You can use any official method, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. Points will be deducted for omissions, serious errors, and repeated mistakes. Your case analysis should include a bibliography.

Cell phone use. Your cell phones should be turned off when class begins.

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Laptops. You are permitted to use your computer in class, but only for class purposes. If you become a laptop zombie in class, I will email you with a polite warning. Repeated abuses of your laptop privilege will result in my prohibiting you to bring it to class anymore.

Drafts and outlines. I will not look at drafts over e-mail or in office hours. However, you can bring in or send *short outlines*. I do not accept attachments, so you will need to copy and paste your text into the body of an email.

Appealing grades. It is within your rights as a student to ensure that your grades fairly reflect the quality of your work. If you believe you deserve a higher grade on an assignment, you need to send me a list of concrete reasons for appealing your grade. I will then take 24 hours to review your work, and I will either keep your grade as is or raise it. After you have completed this step, you can appeal to my teaching mentor if desired. My mentor can give you a higher *or a lower* grade, depending on his judgment of your work.

GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM

Plagiarism. Any piece of work submitted to this class that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments, all borrowed words, ideas, and paraphrases from other individuals (published, printed, or expressed in any medium) must be properly attributed. Proper attribution requires that all sources you consult or use have been fully identified in a footnote, endnote, or bibliography. It is considered plagiarism and a violation of academic honesty to pay any person or any service for assignments, in whole or in part. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to give proper attribution, contact the instructor before any assignment is submitted.

Academic honesty. As signatories to the Georgetown University Honor Pledge, and indeed simply as good scholars and citizens, you are required to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of this course. You are expected to be familiar with the letter and spirit of the Standards of Conduct outlines in the Georgetown Honor System and on the Honor Council website. As faculty, I too am obligated to uphold the Honor System and will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty.

Standards of Conduct. <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53519.html>

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ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER AND ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability or believe you might and would like to receive accommodations in my course, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) to register as a student with a disability or for an evaluation referral. You should do this at the beginning of the term. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodation in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies. The Center is located on the third floor of the Leavey Center, Suite 335. You may access their website at <http://ldss.georgetown.edu>.

WRITING CENTER

Please consider taking advantage of the resources of the Writing Center. The Writing Center provides one-on-one peer tutoring focused on improving your writing skills. I encourage you to take your paper drafts to the Writing Center. Visit <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu> for more information. You can also schedule an appointment with a Writing Center tutor online on the center's website.

DAILY BREAKDOWN OF READINGS & DEADLINES

All readings should be completed by the day they are listed.

➤ *MODULE: FOUNDATIONS OF BIOETHICS*

WEEK ONE

Thursday, January 8th

Introduction to course (no reading)

WEEK TWO

Tuesday, January 13th

"Bioethics" by Daniel Callahan

Group work: Bioethics cases and brainstorming

Thursday, January 15th

"Fifty Years Later: The Significance of the Nuremberg Code" by Evelyne Shuster

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“Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study” by Allan M. Brandt

“The Willowbrook Hepatitis Study” by David J. Rothman & Sheila M. Rothman

WEEK THREE

Tuesday, January 20th

The Belmont Report

The Declaration of Helsinki

<http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/>

Thursday, January 22nd

“What Is Morality?” and “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” by James Rachels & Stuart Rachels

➤ *MODULE: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS*

WEEK FOUR

Tuesday, January 27th

The Hippocratic Oath

http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/greek/greek_oath.html

“Please Don’t Tell” by Len Fleck and Marcia Angell

“SARS Plague: Duty of Care or Medical Heroism?” by Desmon Tai

Thursday, January 29th

“Professionalism, Profession and the Virtues of the Good Physician” by Edmund Pellegrino

“Why Doctors Should Intervene” by Terrence F. Ackerman

WEEK FIVE

Tuesday, February 3rd

“Doctor Does Not Know Best: Why in the New Century Physicians Must Stop Trying to Benefit Patients”

by Robert Veatch

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Thursday, February 5th

From Detached Concern to Empathy: Humanizing Medical Practice by Jodi Halpern (excerpts)

◆ *Short paper #1 due by Sunday, February 8th, @ 11.59 pm. Submit to Blackboard.*

➤ *MODULE: VULNERABILITY & DISABILITY*

WEEK SIX

Tuesday, February 10th

“Elucidating the Concept of Vulnerability: Layers Not Labels” by Florencia Luna

Thursday, February 12th

“Exploitation and the Enterprise of Medical Research” by Alisa Carse and Margaret Little (excerpt)

WEEK SEVEN

Tuesday, February 17th

“Disability, Bioethics, and Human Rights” by Adrienne Asch (excerpts)

Thursday, February 19th

“The Individualist Model of Autonomy and the Challenge of Disability” by Anita Ho

➤ *MODULE: CLINICAL RESEARCH*

WEEK EIGHT

Tuesday, February 24th

“What Makes Clinical Research Ethical?” by Ezekiel J. Emanuel, David Wendler, and Christine Grady

“Equipose and the Ethics of Clinical Research” by Benjamin Freedman

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Thursday, February 26th

“Informed Consent” by Tom Beauchamp & James Childress

WEEK NINE

Tuesday, March 3rd

“Research in Developing Countries: Taking ‘Benefit’ Seriously” by Leonard Glanz, George Annas,
Michael Grodin, and Wendy Mariner

“Exploitation and the Enterprise of Medical Research” by Alisa Carse and Margaret Little (excerpt)

Thursday, March 5th

"Children and 'Minimal Risk' Research: The Kennedy-Krieger Lead Paint Study" by Alex John London

"Should Children Decide Whether They Are Enrolled in Nonbeneficial Research?" by David Wendler &
Seema Shah

“Knowing Who You Want to Be When You Grow Up: Implications for Pediatric Assent” by Richard
Sharp & Rosemary Quigley

WEEK TEN

Spring Break

➤ *MODULE: REPRODUCTION*

WEEK ELEVEN

Tuesday, March 17th

“Why Abortion Is Immoral” by Don Marquis

Thursday, March 19th

“A Defense of Abortion” by Judith Jarvis Thomson

♦ *Short paper #2 due by Sunday, March 22nd, @ 11.59 pm. Submit to Blackboard.*

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WEEK TWELVE

Tuesday, March 24th

“The Exploitation Argument against Commercial Surrogacy” by Stephen Wilkinson

“Is There Anything Wrong with Surrogate Motherhood? An Ethical Analysis” by Ruth Macklin

Thursday, November 26th

“Confessions of a Sperm Donor” by Martin Bashir

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/Health/story?id=1982328>

“Egg Donor Business Booms on Campuses” by Jim Hopkins

http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/industries/health/2006-03-15-egg-donors-usat_x.htm

➤ *MODULE: END-OF-LIFE*

WEEK THIRTEEN

Tuesday, March 31st

“The Medical Futility Debate: Patient Choice, Physician Obligation, and End-of-Life Care” by Robert Burt

Controversies in the Determination of Death by the President’s Council on Bioethics (pgs. 1-6, 49-67)

“Active and Passive Euthanasia” by James Rachels

Thursday, April 2nd

No Class: Easter Break

WEEK FOURTEEN

Tuesday, April 7th

Bouvia v. Superior Court

“Confronting Death Who Chooses, Who Controls?” by Dax Cowart & Robert Burt

Thursday, April 9th

Superintendent of Belchertown v. Saikewicz

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“Testing the Limits of Precedent Autonomy: Five Scenarios” by Norman Cantor

“Quality of Life and Non-Treatment Decisions for Incompetent Patients: A Critique of the Orthodox Approach” by Rebecca Dresser & John Roberts

WEEK FIFTEEN

♦ *Debate contribution due by Monday, April 13th, @ 11.59 pm. Submit to Blackboard.*

Tuesday, April 14th

In-class debate

Debate materials:

“Opinion 2.211: Physician-Assisted Suicide” by the AMA

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics/opinion2211.page>

“Physician Assisted Death” by Timothy E. Quill and Jane Greenlaw

<http://www.thehastingscenter.org/Publications/BriefingBook/Detail.aspx?id=2202>

“Sunday Dialogue: Choosing How We Die”

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/opinion/sunday/sunday-dialogue-choosing-how-we-die.html?pagewanted=1&version&_r=1&action=click®ion=searchResults

“Why Do So Many Disability Groups Oppose Physician Assisted Suicide?” by James D. McGaughey

<http://www.ct.gov/opapd/cwp/view.asp?Q=519546&A=3683>

Thursday, April 16th

“Extreme Prematurity and Parental Rights After Baby Doe” by John Robertson

“Resuscitation of the Preterm Infant Against Parental Wishes” by John Paris, Michael Schreiber, and Alun Elias-Jones

➤ *MODULE: RESOURCE ALLOCATION*

WEEK SIXTEEN

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Tuesday, April 21st

“The Case for Allowing Kidney Sales” by the International Forum for Transplant Ethics

“Body Values: The Case against Compensating for Transplant Organs” by Donald Joralemon & Phil Cox

Thursday, April 23rd

“Equal Opportunity and Health Care” by Norman Daniels

“Justice and the High Cost of Health” by Ronald Dworkin

➤ FINALS WEEK

♦ *Submit case analysis through Blackboard by May 1st @ 11:59 pm. No class meeting during this week.*