



Bioethics – HPL 457-EV - Syllabus

Spring, 2023

Morton 324

Days/Times: Wednesdays - 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Instructor

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(For emergency use only)

Stevens Office Hours: One hour before every class and also by appointment

Texts

Required:

Paola, Frederick Adolf, Walker, Robert, Nixon, Lois LaCivita. (2010). Medical Ethics and Humanities. Sudberry MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers. ISBN: 978-0-7637-6063-2

Additionally, most weeks the professor will provide videos and articles to enhance a given topic and round out the contemporary discussion.

Overview

Course Description:

The last four years have been both challenging and stressful for many. Facing a pandemic, thinking through vaccinations, addressing people's needs, keeping calm, and all without full instruction or complete information has been a challenge to many. Even now, discovering and dealing with new variants, long term effects, and continued stress continue.

This course is about life. It's about preserving and advancing life for individuals and societies. It's about understanding the "what's possible in the world" in light of the "what's acceptable" among those choices. We will quickly see that the ethical variations are considerable.

Health Care or Biomedical Ethics originated in the Christian concern for healing using a medical science developed by the Greeks and advanced by the Jews and Muslims.

Given the reality that health care has become increasingly more secularized, its study is seen more contemporarily through the lens of “bioethics”. These matters can be both complicated and controversial. This course presumes that in a civilized society in order to achieve a state of “ethics”, that is, societies where people can disagree and still live peaceably among one another, understanding one’s own values and that of others is essential. The course will explore the topic by critically analyzing principles and issues both in theory and practice.

In light of COVID-19 and the worldwide response, this course is both timely and essential and provided case studies will allow us to analyze the last 48 months with a much closer lens.

Overall Course Objectives:

- a. To help students discover that health care and the matter of ethics is “everybody’s business” through an analysis of selected primary and secondary sources and an explanatory textbook.
- b. To create an atmosphere in which students may improve their thinking, speaking and writing through a careful consideration and discussion of primary and secondary works.
- c. To encourage students to evaluate critically the main elements of biomedical ethics through an analysis of pertinent works.
- d. To introduce students to the philosophers and practitioners who have developed the different bioethical theories that are studied today.
- e. To encourage students to apply classical and contemporary ethical theories to health care and ethical challenges of today.
- f. To guide students to “read the signs of the times” with respect to biomedical issues, specifically about COVID-19 and its many related issues.
- g. To assist students to identify plans for post COVID-19 days and how best to be prepared for any potential future pandemics.
- h. To coach students to create their personal set of ethical values, considering a rapidly changing and complicated world.

Means:

This course will utilize as the basis to the grade the following components:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Three Comprehensive Quizzes | 75% (each worth 25%) |
| Attendance/Discussion/Participation | 15% |
| One 5-page, written reflection on a contemporary issue | 10% |

The logical progression of the class will be that **we will cover one chapter in the text each week** with some weeks having additional materials provided. Students should come to each class having read and studied the chapter(s) and other assigned readings/viewings to be discussed. The best way to read the text is to review the chapter objectives at the beginning of each chapter and to answer the review questions at the end, taking notes as you go along.

When a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to find a “class buddy” to fill him/her in on the missing materials and any and all assignments. Catch up is not the responsibility of the professor. Each missed class will reduce the student’s total grade, so absent necessity, plan on being present and ready to participate at all classes.

There are three distinct types of student assessments. These assignments are as follows:

1. **Classroom/On-line Discussions:** These discussions provide opportunities for students to respond to a series of focus questions while offering significant opportunities for class interaction. Students are expected to participate in all discussion activities and will be called on each class. The students are expected to participate either in person (or, on a rare occasion, via Zoom, with cameras on) for every class. Students who are unprepared for class will not benefit from full credit for this portion of the grade. With respect to dialogue between and amongst students and faculty, all course participants are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect for divergent views when participating in these discussion activities. Furthermore, students are to communicate in complete sentences using correct grammar while using language that is socially acceptable. Students should prepare “talking points” for each chapter and other readings to facilitate discussion. We surely can learn from one another!

2. **Quizzes:** The three quizzes, spaced during the semester, will measure students’ comprehension of the materials at different points of the semester. The exact dates will be announced in advance, but students should plan for these about weeks 4, 8, and 12. Student absence on the date of a quiz will forfeit this portion of the grade, so you are advised to plan accordingly as make-up exams will not be given.

3. **Contemporary Bioethical Issue:** Students will be asked to find a contemporary biomedical ethical issue trending in the media. After finding it, they will write a five-page reaction noting the ethical issue at hand and then arguing the “pros” and

“cons” of both sides of the issue. This will be done once during the semester. Hopefully, we will have time in our schedule to share these insightful and relevant topics.

Confidentiality Notice: All papers, emails, discussion boards, and conversations between the student and the professor will be kept confidential by the professor. No opinions, or work content will be released to the student’s organization or anyone outside of the class.

Numeric scores will be translated to the corresponding letter grades as below:

| Letter Grade | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------|
| A | 94-100 |
| A- | 89-93 |
| B+ | 84-88 |
| B | 79-83 |
| B- | 74-78 |
| C+ | 69-73 |
| C | 64-68 |
| C- | 59-63 |
| D+ | 54-58 |
| F | Less than 54 |

Class Requisites:

- A regular notebook for class is strongly suggested.
- Attendance is mandatory for all class sessions; contact professor *via* email in cases where excused attendance may warranted.
- Class will start promptly at the posted class time.
- Each of us is responsible to all of us for useful class participation and maximum effort in all group and team assignments.

Consistent with the above statements, all homework exercises, tests and exams that are designated as individual assignments must contain the following signed statement before they can be accepted for grading.

Disability Support Services

“It is University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services at 201-216-3748 or contact the office via email at disabilityservices@stevens.edu.”

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct applies to all students. It is expected that all students will conduct themselves accordingly. Please see the Student Handbook for specific details.

<https://stevens-institute-of-technology.dcatalog.com/v/Student-Handbook/?page=10>

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination. I further pledge that I have not copied any material from a book, article, the Internet or any other source except where I have expressly cited the source.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____