

## **Biomedical Ethics**

L30 Phil 233F, 3 credits  
Summer Session 4, 2016  
Location: Simon Hall 20

Professor Shrumm  
Email: [Shrumm@wustl.edu](mailto:Shrumm@wustl.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3-4, and by appointment  
Meetings will take place in the Danforth University Center

### **Course Overview**

The class will explore a variety of controversial topics within biomedical ethics. Students will learn to reconstruct and criticize key arguments on each topic, in addition to specifying their own views. A key goal of the course is to give students critical thinking skills that can be applied to topics beyond the scope of the classroom. The first unit of the course asks “who is dead”? Readings cover philosophic problems with conceptualizing death and how this pertains to end of life issues. Students will be introduced to central values in biomedical ethics. Unit two introduces the problem of scarcity. This is especially a problem for organ transplantation: classes will explore the ethical issues pertaining to obtaining and distributing organs. The third unit focuses on conflicts arising within the patient-physician relationship; topics include biases, knowledge, and paternalism. Students in the class will learn theoretical arguments for different patient-physician models, as well as specific medical controversies. The last unit of the course focuses on experimentation: What ethical considerations need be met in order for medical practice to move forward?

### **Course Material**

Readings will all be available online at [kcsschmidt.com/classes/biomed](http://kcsschmidt.com/classes/biomed)

### **Grading Information**

Grades will be based upon the completion of multiple short assignments and papers, in addition to in-class activities.

35% - Assignments  
30% - Homework  
10% - Attendance and in-class participation  
10% - Paper 1  
15% - Paper 2

Final grades will include plusses and minuses: 97-100 for A+, 93-96 for A, 90-92 for A-, 87-89 for B+, etc. Students must receive at least a 70 to pass.

## Course Expectations

Students are expected to arrive on time, having read the assigned reading(s), and actively participate in classroom discussions with respect.

\*ALL assignments will be graded anonymously. Please submit them with your student ID number, and do not list your name\*

## Homework & Assignments

Homework will be listed online, and will consist of a series of questions accompanying the reading for the next day. Homework should be completed entirely in your own words, with no quotes. Bring a printed copy of the homework to class on the day it is due. There will also be five assignments, each 2-3 pages long, consisting of multiple short paragraph responses. Assignments will include more in depth exploration of the topics from the week.

## Papers

The two course papers will consist of 3-5 page argumentative papers on a key controversy from the first and second half of the course. Students will be asked to defend a position on one of the topics discussed during class. The papers will involve clearly explaining an argument, as well as discussing an objection and response.

## Course Advice

Many of the articles we read are difficult, and you may need to read them multiple times. It is helpful to give yourself enough time to read things multiple times and take notes. Similarly, give yourself enough time to think about the homework and assignments in depth - it may take time to precisely formulate your answers. If you have questions - ask!

## Course Policies

Students may miss 1 class day without penalty. Additional absences will be deducted from their final grade.

Late work will be accepted for a 10% penalty within the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, late work will not be accepted. Coursework is due at the beginning of the class period.

In case of extenuating circumstances, please contact the professor well in advance of the deadline.

In order to maintain a focused classroom environment: arrive on time and keep cell phones off and put away during class. Laptop use is strongly discouraged as recent scientific studies suggest it is harmful to the learning experience.

### Tentative Schedule

- This schedule is subject to change! Please visit the course website for the most updated information.

Date	Topic	Readings ( <u>Read prior to class</u> )
7/18	Intro/Unit 1 Defining death	*Pryor - How to read a philosophy article *Presidential commission report [pages 3-12]
7/19	Unit 1 Defining death	*Veatch - The whole-brain-oriented concept of death *Johnson - A tragic death and a fight for life (Optional reading) Harvard definition of brain death
7/20	Unit 1 Defining death	*Singer - Is the sanctity of life ethic terminally ill?
7/21	Unit 1 Ethical approaches	*Stirrat - How to approach ethical issues: a brief guide
7/22	Unit 1 Defining life and death	*Jones - The problematic symmetry between brain birth and brain death <u>Assignment 1 due</u>
7/25	Unit 2 Scarcity	*Alexander - They decide who lives and who dies *Singer: Why we must ration health care
7/26	Unit 2 Organ Sales	*Cherry - It is morally acceptable to buy and sell organs for human transplantation
7/27	Unit 2 Organ Sales	*Delmonico and Capron - Our body parts shouldn't be for sale *Carney - If you're willing to buy a kidney, you're willing to exploit the poor <u>Assignment 2 due</u>
7/28	Unit 2 Conscription	*Spital and Erin - Conscription of cadaveric organs for transplantation: let's at least talk about it
7/29	Unit 2 Liver transplants and alcoholism	*Moss and Siegler - Should alcoholics compete equally for liver transplantation?

8/1	Unit 2 Liver transplants and alcoholism	*Cohen et al. - Alcoholics and liver transplantation
8/2	Writing day	<u>Draft of paper 1 due</u> (bring a hard copy to class)
8/3	Unit 3 Doctor/Patient relationship	*Emanuel and Emanuel - Four models of the physician-patient relationship
8/4	Unit 3 Physician-assisted suicide	*Lacks - Physician-assisted suicide is ethical <u>Assignment 3 due</u>
8/5	Unit 3 Physician-assisted suicide	*Wolf - Gender, Feminism, and Death [beginning - top of 285, 287 - end of 291] *Lane - Europe's Sinister Expansion of Euthanasia
		<u>Paper 1 due by midnight Saturday</u>
8/8	Unit 3 Paternalism	*Bayne and Levy - Amputees by choice: Body integrity identity disorder and the ethics of amputation
8/9	Unit 3 Conscientious objection	*Fiala and Arthur - "Dishonourable disobedience": Why refusal to treat in reproductive healthcare is not conscientious objection. <u>Assignment 4 due</u>
8/10	Unit 3 Patient knowledge	*Gigerenzer et al. - Helping doctors and patients make sense of health statistics
8/11	Unit 3 Patient knowledge	*Kukla - How do patients know? <u>Draft of paper 2 due</u>
8/12	Unit 4 Experimentation	* Emanuel et al. - What makes clinical research ethical? * (optional) - Belmont report
8/15	Unit 4 Vulnerable Populations	* Ashton et al. - Racial and Ethnic disparities in the use of health services *Wikipedia article - "Unethical human experimentation"

		in the united states” <u>Assignment 5 due</u>
8/16	Unit 4 Face Transplants	*Wiggins et al. - On the ethics of facial transplantation research
8/17	Unit 4 Face Transplants	*Butler et al. - Face transplantation: when and for whom?
8/18	Unit 4 Genetic Manipulation	* Nature - Don't edit the human germ line * Nazir-Ali - Three-parent babies: an ethical boundary is being crossed *(Optional) Sample - Scientist's genetically modify human embryos in controversial world first
8/19	Unit 4 / Closing Genetic Manipulation	*Caplan - Is it ethical to create babies from three DNA sources? Absolutely.
		<u>Paper 2 due by midnight Saturday</u>

### University Policies

It is the student's responsibility to understand and abide by the University's policies on academic integrity. All work must be your own, and ideas taken from other sources must be properly referenced. If you have questions, please come speak to the instructor, or see more here: [http://ucollege.wustl.edu/faculty/academic\\_integrity](http://ucollege.wustl.edu/faculty/academic_integrity)

### Student Accommodations and Support

**Cornerstone:** Cornerstone provides access to academic peer mentoring, assists students with essential study and test-taking skills, and offers disability resources to students in need. Visit <http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/> for more information.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center staff members are writers helping writers, they provide free, one-on-one tutoring to all WUSTL students for any writing or public speaking project. Visit <http://writingcenter.wustl.edu/> for more information.

**Library / Computer Lab resources:** Visit <http://computing.artsci.wustl.edu/labs>, and <http://library.wustl.edu/> for information regarding campus resources.

**Accommodation based upon sexual assault:** If you would like to request accommodation, please direct your request to Kim Webb ([kim\\_webb@wustl.edu](mailto:kim_webb@wustl.edu)), Director of the Office of Sexual Assault and Community Health Services. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however,

requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty.

**Bias Reporting:** The university has an anonymous bias reporting system: [brss.wustl.edu](https://brss.wustl.edu).

**Mental Health:** Mental Health Services' professional staff members are available to work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can impact the academic experience. Students may be eligible for free services. Visit [shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth](https://shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth) for more information.

If you have further concerns about resources and accommodations, please contact the professor.