History and Philosophy of Science 0613
Spring Semester, 2021
MORALITY AND MEDICINE
(Last updated: Jan 28, 2021)

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Course Description Living well is difficult: it involves making difficult decisions for ourselves, for people we care deeply about, and for people in our care, and it requires navigating complicated relationships. Clinical medicine and public health are contexts where the stakes for these tasks are especially high, where we often disagree about what to do, and where reaching any decision at all is philosophically and emotionally laborious. This course is designed to help you do this work, by offering philosophical frameworks to analyze ethical issues that arise in the context of contemporary medical practice and research. Topics to be covered include concepts of disease, health, and well being; reproductive issues; genetics; termination of treatment; euthanasia; global justice and healthcare. We will establish and follow community norms for discussing these topics, many of which may be sensitive or deeply personal. This course is part of a core sequence leading to certification in the Conceptual Foundations of Medicine Certificate Program, and is a companion course to HPS 0612 (Mind and Medicine) but may be taken independently. No course prerequisites are needed. The course is of particular interest to pre-medical and pre-health care students, and to members of the health care profession, ethicists, policy makers, and the general public as health care consumers.

Pedagogy

Weekly live class discussion sessions Every week there will be interactive weekly live (synchronous) class discussion sessions on Tuesdays. These will be held via the Zoom online conference system.

Zoom link: https://pitt.zoom.us/j/92122303963 Meeting ID: 921 2230 3963
Passcode: bioethics

Our success as an online class will depend on the same commitment we share in the physical classroom. We will adopt the same rules and norms, so that you will be expected to come to class after doing the required readings and viewing the video or podcast materials—all these materials are uploaded on Canvas and arranged by weekly meetings in the Modules tab; to participate by asking and answering questions; to respond interactively with other colleagues. For everyone's benefit, ideally please try to participate in a quiet place, turn on your video feed whenever possible, and mute your microphone unless you are speaking. Parts of the class meetings may be recorded and subsequently uploaded to Canvas. To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Office hours There will be office hours held on Zoom every Tuesday from 2 – 3 PM and every Wednesday from 4 – 5 PM, and by appointment. Zoom links available via Canvas. Please sign up for an appointment using the Calendar.

Note that the Zoom link for office hours is different from the one for class. Please feel free to come, especially when you are preparing for assignments or if you missed a class.

Evaluation

Participation and Contribution to class discussion (15%)
As a member of this course, you are expected to attend class and actively engage in discussion, via video, audio, or chat.

Online discussion writing (25%)
Roughly ever other week, you will be asked to provide a response (200 words) to a discussion question/prompt on the Canvas discussion pages for your section. You will also be expected to leave a response of about 50 words on someone else's comment. We will go through the answers in class and discuss some common misconceptions and ways to develop ideas.

Two papers (25% first paper + 30% final paper = 55% total).

You will be asked to write two papers. Each paper will be roughly 1500 words. The first paper will be due in the middle of semester (say around Week 8), and second at the end of the semester. Papers will involve defending a decision in an ethical case. I will supply cases to write about.

Writing philosophy papers is hard! We will spend time in class going through how this should be done and I'm always here to help. But please start working early: It always takes more time that you think.

Miscellaneous quizzes and assignments (5%)

Once in a while I will ask you complete miscellaneous assignments, these might be quizzes or short exercises such as argument visualization.

Late Policy

If you experience any health problems and cannot finish the assignments on time, the class plans and assignments are designed in a way that you would be able to make it up later. If there are any further problems, please contact me so that we can work out a solution. Usually late work is worth 10% fewer points for every day it is late from the time it was due, unless you have a compelling reason for turning it in late (for instance, you were sick, had to work late, or had to take care of someone else). In order to give you full credit for your late work, I need to know your compelling reason within two weeks after the deadline.

List of Readings and Course Schedule

This is available at Syllabus Part II: https://canvas.pitt.edu/courses/80964/assignments/syllabus

Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate basic argumentation skills (including identifying the conclusion in a philosophical or popular text, extracting reasons and evidence offered in support of the conclusion, and critically evaluating the reasons and evidence, and their relation to the conclusion); identify and analyze different philosophical approaches to selected issues in medical ethics; have gained insight into how to read and critically interpret philosophical arguments; argue for or against a position in debates about a particular bioethical case study; charitably but critically evaluate multiple viewpoints on a bioethical case study; and have developed skills that will enable them to think clearly about ethical questions as future or current health care providers, policy makers, and consumers.

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators. To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the Academic Integrity Guide for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial.

Disability Resources and Services Project If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Diversity and Inclusion The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, see: https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rightstitle-ix-compliance/policies-procedures-and-practices. I will grade your assignments anonymously. The reason to grade anonymously is to eliminate the possible effects of implicit biases. For an introduction to implicit bias, take Project Implicit's "Implicit Association Test" (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit) or read the Stanford

Encyclopedia of Philosophy's article on Implicit Bias (https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/implicit-bias/).

Content Warning and Class Climate Statement (from Pitt GSWS and a California State University course: Race, Racism and Critical Thinking) Our course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. Course topics might be political and personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings— anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of ad hominem arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the university, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

Health Resources and Policy Your health is a priority. Please take care of yourself by staying hydrated, eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax. There are many other wonderful people at Pitt and in our broader Pittsburgh community who can also help with specific aspects of your mental and physical health. Some of them are: Student Health: https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/ Counseling: https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/ An important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Take the time to learn about all that's available and take advantage of it. Ask for support sooner rather than later – this always helps. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or difficult feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for assistance connecting to the support that can help. In the midst of this pandemic, it is extremely important that you abide by public health regulations and University of Pittsburgh health standards and guidelines. While in class, at a minimum this means that you must wear a face covering and comply with physical distancing requirements; other requirements may be added by the University during the semester. These rules have been developed to protect the health and safety of all community members.

Contingency Plans Flex@Pitt has three operating postures: Guarded, Elevated, and High Risk. Our class size is too large to meet in person during Elevated and High Risk postures, and when this is the case, we will meet on Zoom. During Guarded Risk, you may attend class in G40 William Pitt Union or via Zoom. I will appear on screen via Zoom in G40 William Pitt Union. None of the assignments, or class meeting plans for this course will change as we change operating postures. Please contact me if you have any questions about our contingency plans. If you experience any health problems and cannot finish the assignments on time, the class plans

and assignments are designed in a way that you would be able to make it up later. If there are any further problems, please contact me so that we can work out a solution.