

BIOETHICS

PHIL 235 (3 hrs), Manchester University, **January 2016** (M-F, 9:00-10:15am + 1:00-2:15pm; Academic Center 236)

Instructor: Dr. Steve Naragon, Office: Academic Center, #233 (Phone — *office*: 982-5041; *home*: 982-6033)

Web Syllabus: <http://users.manchester.edu/Facstaff/SSNaragon/Online/235-J16/Welcome.html>

You will need to consult the web syllabus for every class session.

Required Texts: Robert M. Veatch, Amy M. Haddad, Dan C. English, *Case Studies in Biomedical Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2015). + various readings available on the course website.

In these readings, you will encounter many **words that you do not know**. Some of these will be medical terms, some will be philosophical, and some will be part of a general vocabulary larger than your own. You must rise to the challenge in all three of these areas, and learn those words! I have developed an online **Glossary** of which I expect you to make active and constant use; it is aimed primarily at the philosophical vocabulary found in bioethics. For terms not found there, consult any good dictionary.

General Education Goals. This course satisfies the Core 4PH (philosophy) requirement, whose goals for the student are:

1. to discuss the approaches that philosophers take to fundamental human questions
2. to acquire the vocabulary and skills necessary to engage in philosophical inquiry, especially through developing your ability to understand and evaluate arguments.

These goals are given more detail in the “Course Objectives” that follow.

Course Objectives. Philosophy is a discipline in the **humanities**; as such it is interested in goals rather distinct from those of the natural and social sciences — although philosophy must also pay close attention to the findings of these other areas of human inquiry. For instance, a course in bioethics relies heavily on the biological and health sciences.

Philosophy is concerned less with the accumulation of facts, than with the education of the individual. My primary goal — and the goal of the humanities in general — is to help each individual increase their level of self-understanding. This is not a small matter, and it lies at the heart of any human existence that is worth living.

So here’s the deal: After three weeks of hard work, deep confusion, and more hard work, you should be able to ...

- (1) explain many of the basic ethical issues and concepts surrounding health care;
- (2) learn to distinguish conceptual, evaluative, and descriptive claims;
- (3) demonstrate a basic command of logical reasoning and conceptual analysis;
- (4) critically evaluate arguments and beliefs — in particular, you will be able to think more critically about your own assumptions and beliefs;
- (5) apply the major moral theories in assessing the morality of actions, agents, and situations.
- (6) discuss with more depth, and with greater appreciation of different perspectives, some of the most pressing questions confronting each of us as human beings, such as: Is there an objective difference between right and wrong, and true and false? If there is, can we come to know it? How might we best get on with each other? Are there better and worse ways for organizing our communal existence? How might I live my life most fully?

Course Requirements

Attendance. If you do not plan to attend class and participate constructively, then you should withdraw from this class. A course on philosophy is by its nature aimed at self-examination and discussion; consequently, doing well in this class requires being there. Missing class does not directly affect your grade, although students with poor attendance typically do quite poorly in the class. On the average, students missing more than two classes during the semester receive grades below the class average.

Small Groups. The class will be divided into small groups of six or seven, primarily for the purpose of discussing and presenting case studies (see below).

Exams. There will be three non-cumulative exams over the readings and lectures. [**Makeup:** Exams missed due to an excused absence are to be taken as soon as possible or else will be forfeited. It is your responsibility to see me about this.]

Discussion Forum. There are four discussion forums, each of which will require of you **one post** and **two comments**. The posts have a 500 word minimum, and comments a 100 word minimum. These Forums are turned in on D2L. Please see the rubric posted on the class website.

Pre-Class Case Studies. There are eight case studies — due before class, either morning or afternoon, turned in on D2L. These are due no later than 30 minutes before the start of class (thus, either 8:30 AM or 12:30 PM). Late entries are penalized. Please see the rubric posted on the class website.

Quizzes. There will be a quiz at the beginning of about one-half of the class sessions; these will concern the readings for that class session and material discussed the previous class session. The quizzes help keep us both informed of your grasp of the material. [**Makeup:** Missed quizzes can be made up in my office, but this has to occur before the next class meeting. It is entirely your responsibility to make this arrangement.]

Grading. The set of three exams is worth 17% (51% each); the set of discussion forums is worth 20%; the set of case studies is worth 20%, and the set of quizzes is worth 9%. I use the following letter grade conversion scale: A (94-100), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D-(60-62), F (0-59).

Cell Phones. Don't bring these to class; or if you *do*, keep them turned off and put away. If you are unable to part company with your cell phone, or are unable to keep it turned off and stowed, then please find another class to attend. Thank you. For a fuller explanation, see the "Course Requirements" of the web syllabus.



Students with Disabilities. See the "Course Requirements" of the web syllabus.

Cheating and Plagiarism. See the "Course Requirements" of the web syllabus.

SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSION AND READINGS

Ethics and Values

Mon, Jan 4 A

(1) What is Bioethics? (CSBE, pp. 1-7)

Mon, Jan 4 P

(2) Overview of Moral Theories (CSBE, pp. 8-16)

Tue, Jan 5 A

(3) A Model for Problem-Solving (CSBE, ch. 1)

Tue, Jan 5 P

(4) Values and Moral Judgment (CSBE, chs. 2-3)

Principles in Medical Ethics

Wed, Jan 6 A

(5) Benefiting the Patient and Others (CSBE, ch. 4)

Wed, Jan 6 P

(6) Distributive Justice (CSBE, ch. 5)

Thu, Jan 7 A

(7) Autonomy (CSBE, ch. 6)

Thu, Jan 7 P

(8) Veracity and Fidelity (CSBE, chs. 7-8)

Fri, Jan 8 A

Exam #1

Fri, Jan 8 P

(9) **Bioethics at the Movies:** *Wit* (2001; dir. Mike Nichols [1h 39m]).

Matters of Life and Death

Mon, Jan 11 A

(10) Killing and Letting Die (CSBE, ch. 9)

Mon, Jan 11 P

(11) Assisted Suicide (Callahan, "Self-Determination" [pdf])

Tue, Jan 12 A

(12) Death and the Incompetent (CSBE, ch. 18)

Tue, Jan 12 P

(13) Abortion: Whose Body? (Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" [pdf])

Wed, Jan 13 A

(14) Abortion: Rights and Duties (CSBE, ch. 10)

Wed, Jan 13 P

(15) Impaired Infants (Engelhardt, "Ethical Issues" [pdf])

Thu, Jan 14 A

(16) Genetic Screening (CSBE, ch. 11)

Thu, Jan 14 P

(17) Surrogate Mothers (Steinbock, "Defining Parenthood" [pdf])

Fri, Jan 15 A

2nd Exam

Fri, Jan 15 P

(18) **Bioethics at the Movies:** *John Q* (2002; dir.: Nick Cassavetes [1h 56m])

Mental Health and Confidentiality

Mon, Jan 18 A

(19) Mental Health and Behavior Control (CSBE, ch. 12)

Mon, Jan 18 P

(20) Confidentiality (CSBE, ch. 13)

Allocating Scarce Resources

Tue, Jan 19 A

(21) Organ Transplants (CSBE, ch. 14)

Tue, Jan 19 P

(22) **Bioethics at the Movies:** *Extreme Measures* (1996; Dir.: Michael Apted [1h 58m]).

Wed, Jan 20 A

(23) Health Insurance (CSBE, ch. 15)

Wed, Jan 20 P

(24) Healthcare Rationing (Singer, "Why We Must Ration Health Care" [pdf])

Research and Treatment

Thu, Jan 21 A

(25) Experimentation on Human Subjects (CSBE, ch. 16)

Thu, Jan 21 P

(26) Research and the Public Good (Jonas, "Philosophical Reflections on Experimenting with Human Subjects" [pdf])

Fri, Jan 24 A

(27) Consent and Refusing Treatment (CSBE, ch. 17)

Fri, Jan 24 P

Exam #3