Ethical Conflicts in Health Care Research, Policy, and Practice
PHILOS 3341H
Autumn Semester 2018
Ohio State University

Instructor: Dr. Dana Howard

Course Description
The advances made in medicine over the past century are an impressive collective human achievement. However, not all people have benefited equally from the explosive growth of biomedical technology and some have suffered greatly both in the development and the procurement of medical care. This course offers an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing some key moral dilemmas that have arisen in health care research, policy, and practice. Questions that we will cover in the course involve the ethics of human and animal research, particularly the means we may take toward laudable ends; the ethics of genetic enhancement and what the ends of medicine should be; and the ethics of health care provision and what sort of society we should aspire to be.

Course Objectives
1. To familiarize students with a number of significant and perennial issues within the fields of medical ethics, research ethics, and public health policy
2. To equip students with the skills for developing ethical judgments and defending them in speech and writing
3. To further cultivate students’ own intellectual and moral positions by engaging in reflection and debate on urgent and contested political and social issues

Texts
There are no required texts for purchase. All required readings will be made available on Carmen.

Requirements
The course grade will be determined on the basis of three written assignments, a final exam, class participation/preparation and reflections based on attendance of campus events that are related to the class.

Three Ethics Committee Reports: each worth 20% of the final grade
During the class you will meet as a hospital or research ethics committee to discuss an ethically difficult case and/or treatment decision. Each of you will then prepare a paper in which you will explain and justify your position on what should be done in the case and engage with the views of your colleagues. You will be expected to incorporate the readings for the unit in your discussion. The reports should be around 2000 words. Reports are tentatively due on the following dates:
- 1st report is due 9/26
- 2nd report is due 10/24
- 3rd report is due with Final 12/7
Final Exam: 20% of the final grade
The final exam will take place in class on Friday 12/7, 8:00am-9:45am. It will be a closed book exam. A study guide will be distributed in advance and all questions on the exam will be drawn from it. Some questions on the study guide may develop out of the reading questions that you prepare.

Class Participation and Preparation: 15% of the final grade

Class attendance and active participation are expected. People learn philosophy best by doing it: that is, by discussing and criticizing arguments and ideas with other people. Accordingly, I will give you ample opportunity to participate in class, through in-class group discussions and exercises. Ideally our class will resemble a seminar more than a lecture. However, this strategy will only work if you arrive to class willing and able to discuss the readings in an informed, critical way! So please do prepare conscientiously for class.

Participating actively in class means contributing your own comments and questions to the discussion, both in small groups and with the class as a whole. Don’t be afraid to say something that might be wrong or that you’re unsure about; what you say will almost certainly advance the discussion anyway. Also, because we will be discussing some contentious topics, it is absolutely essential that you be respectful of your classmates.

Class preparation consists of two requirements:

1. You must write one question about the reading before every class and post it on Carmen before class starts. These questions will help shape the focus of our classroom discussion, so they may seek clarification about important passages that confuse you, propose interpretations of controversial ideas, or consider further applications or extensions of the reading. Classes will typically begin by having small groups share and discuss their questions, so make sure to bring a copy of your question with you. You are allowed to skip 1 day of reading questions without detriment to your grade.

2. You are expected to bring a (physical or .pdf) copy of the material with you to class. Trying to read a pdf on your phone is no substitute for a copy that you can actually work with. The copy of the reading should provide some evidence that such deep engagement has taken place (i.e. highlighting, underlining, reading notes, marginal notes, etc.).

Reflections on Campus Events: 5% of the final grade
You are expected to attend two campus events of your choosing (lecture, movie, student group meeting, art show. Etc.) that relate (broadly) to the topics discussed in class. The event may touch upon any feature of health care, health policy, or biomedical research; or it can touch upon other related issues of public policy, distributive justice, ethics, disability rights, race, gender, income inequality, etc. You are expected to post a short reflection on the event on a Carmen discussion board within a week of attendance. The reflection should include a one paragraph summary of the event and another paragraph highlighting the important ethical issues that were raised and how they relate to our class. Throughout the semester, I will suggest some campus events that may be of interest. If more than one student attends the same event, feel free to embed your reflection as a response to a previous poster (this could allow you to spend less time summarizing the event and more time reflecting on the interesting ethical issues).
**Class Policies**

**Attendance**
Like a job, this course gives you 3 sick-days to use at your discretion. I will take attendance each class after the first two. I will assume that all absences are for good reasons such as illness, so you do not need to provide excuses or notes for such absences (unless it causes you to miss an assignment or Ethics Committee Meeting). *I urge you to save your sick-days for when you really need them.* Four absences (i.e., one more than your allotted sick days) will reduce your final grade by 6 points. Five absences (2 more than your allotted sick days) will reduce your final grade by 10 points. More than five absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Exceptions will be made only for illness or other extraordinary circumstances that are severe enough to make these limits unreasonable.

**Academic Misconduct**
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp

**Late Work**
Papers will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day they are late (i.e., a B+ becomes a B). Extensions will be granted only in the case of documented illnesses or personal emergencies. I do not accept papers more than 3 days late. Late reading questions will not be accepted.

**Laptops/phones/etc.**
You may use computers, but turn the Wi-Fi off for the duration of class time. Use laptops for note taking and for accessing any course materials that may be online. Do not use them for anything else. That means, for example, no Facebook, no email, no homework for other courses, no online shopping, no reading the NY Times, etc. Doing these things is distracting to you and to those around you. The same goes, of course, for phones and other devices. In small group discussions, keep any online research [if you deem it necessary] to a minimum.

**Disabilities**
The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.
Grading Criteria
I will provide detailed grading rubrics before each writing assignment. Discussion questions will be graded on a ✓ □ ✓ ✓ ✓ + basis and I will provide further information about what makes a good question in the coming sessions.

Here is how I will grade your participation in class discussion:

For an A-range grade: knows reading well, has thought through its implications. Has often prepared thoughtful reading questions that can help shape the class discussion in useful ways. Offers interpretations and analysis more than just summary. Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students’ points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.

For a B-range grade: attends class prepared, having done the reading, made notes, and brought them. Has often prepared thoughtful reading questions that can help shape the class discussion in useful ways. Contributes to class discussion with some regularity and takes an active role in small group discussions.

For a C-range grade: makes mistakes about the basics of the reading and does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze it. May offer straightforward information without elaboration or does so very infrequently. May sometimes not bring reading. More than one day in which the reading question was not submitted online before class.

For a D-range grade: Present in class and not disruptive, but always silent and inattentive.

For a failing grade: Regularly fails to attend or visibly disruptive (checking phone, email, etc).

Tentative Reading Schedule
[I may make changes to the syllabus periodically. If I do, I will make an announcement on Carmen at least one class before any change takes place. The schedule in the modules on Carmen will be the most up-to-date so if there is a discrepancy between the syllabus and Carmen, Carmen wins.]

Unit 1: Human and Animal Research:
What Means Should We Take Toward Laudable Ends?

Week 1: Introduction
T 8/21 Reading distributed in class

Week 2: Crises and Regulations


Jigsaw: You will be assigned one of the following documents:
- The International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects The Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO)

Week 3: Placebos, RCTs, Equipoise


Week 4: Exploitation


Week 5: 1st Ethics Committee Meeting and The Ethics of Animal Research

T 9/18  1st Ethics Committee Meeting. Preparatory Readings TBD.


Unit 2: Genetic Selection: Therapy, Enhancement, or Eugenics

What Sort of People Should We Be?

Week 6: Bioconservativism and Transhumanism


Week 7: Procreative “Beneficence” and Procreative Autonomy


Week 8: Some More Cautious Positions


R 10/11 No Class: Autumn Break

Week 9: Causing Disability

T 10/16 Elizabeth Barnes, “Valuing Disability, Causing Disability” Ethics 125, Oct. 2014, 88-113


R 10/18 2nd Ethics Committee Meeting. [Dr. Howard will be at a Bioethics Conference]

Unit 3: Justice and Allocation in Health Care: What Sort of Society Should We Be?

Week 10: Health Care Equity


Week 11: Is There a Right to Health?


R 11/1 Gerard Vong Presentation. Reading TBD

Week 12: Fairness and Rationing


Week 13: Justice and Health Disparities


Week 14: Rationing From the Bedside?


Week 15: Prioritizing and Rationing


R 11/29 3rd Ethics committee meeting – Readings TBD

Week 16: Semester Wrap Up

T 12/4 No Reading Required