

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

PHIL 3030: Bioethics

Fall 2023

Professor: Paul A. Tubig
Class Times: Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:30pm - 3:45pm
Class Location: Newton Building, Room 2216

Office Hours: Friday, 10:00am - 12:00pm; or by appointment
Office Location: Newton Building, Room 3304C
Contact Info: ptubig@georgiasouthern.edu

CLASS DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to some of the contemporary ethical problems in medicine. In a general sense, bioethics is the rational attempt to understand, analyze, and address complicated ethical questions that arise in contemporary medicine. We will consider and analyze complicated issues in medical practice, such as medical paternalism and patient autonomy, informed consent, procreative liberty in the context of reproductive and genetic technologies, health and disability, physician-assisted death, and the social determinants of health. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students to major issues and thought in medical ethics, improve their abilities to think critically about these issues, develop their own ideas about them, and express these ideas clearly and persuasively in writing.

COURSE GOALS:

- To provide students with an understanding of some of the live, major ethical issues in medicine and philosophical arguments developed in response to them.
- To provide students with the conceptual tools to engage in the philosophical discourse of medical ethics. To effectively grapple with some of the contemporary ethical issues in medicine, students should have a high degree of fluency with the ethical theories and concepts that are relevant to them.
- To improve students' critical thinking and writing skills. Students should be able to effectively identify, evaluate and formulate arguments. Also, this course should help students be able to express their ideas in writing that is clear, organized and rationally persuasive. To improve students' independent thinking. This course does not aim to "convert" minds to adopt certain positions. Instead, it is to help students develop their own ideas that are responsive to reason and relevant moral considerations.

TEXT:

All required and recommended readings are available on the course's Folio site.

EVALUATION/GRADING

In-class participation & discussion posts:	15%
Critical reading assignments:	35%
Mini-lecture assignment	10%
Exams (2 total):	20%
Paper proposal assignment:	5%
Term paper:	15%

Total:	100%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In-class Participation & Discussion Posts:

Students are expected to attend every class session and stay for the entire duration of class. At the end of each class session, I will raise a discussion question related to the issue that we're covering and ask students to post their response on the designated discussion board. Discussion posts will be graded based not on the position that the students take, but on the level of seriousness, thoughtfulness, and philosophical depth reflected in the responses. Students are required to be in class to complete the discussion board assignment. The lowest six scores will be dropped. Late work will not be accepted.

Critical Reading Assignments:

Since this is an upper-division course, this class involves a lot of reading and discussion. Prior to class discussions on the readings, there are critical reading assignments that will be due. The purpose of critical reading assignments is to help students engage and comprehend the assigned readings by answering questions about the text and begin thinking critically about the questions raised in these readings. It therefore demands you to pay close attention to the texts so that you respond to these questions correctly or thoughtfully. Each critical reading & reflection assignment will consist of multiple-choice and/or short-answer questions, and a short-essay critical reflection question. They will be submitted on Folio. There will be a total of 13 critical reading & reflection assignments, and the lowest three scores will be dropped. Late work will not be accepted, except in cases of advanced instructor permission or extraordinary circumstances.

Mini-lecture Assignment:

One of the most effective ways of comprehending a philosophical work is by teaching it. Each student is expected to give a 15-minute lecture on one of the required or recommended readings. There is room for creativity in how students give their lecture (such as using presentation slides, a handout, doing a discussion activity, etc.). Prior to the lecture, students are to meet with me to go over their plans and discuss their chosen reading. Students will be graded based on the level of care and effort they put in preparing for their lecture (e.g. careful reading of the assigned article, discussion with me, care in their presentation) and not necessarily performance (I understand public speaking can be hard!) or even accuracy (it is okay if some readings aren't fully comprehended - it comes with

grappling with complicated philosophical works). In the first two weeks, students will choose which reading they would like to present, depending on availability.

Exams:

There will be TWO in-class exams. The first exam will cover the class material from Week 1 to Week 6. The second exam will cover the class material from Week 8 to Week 16. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions (1-3 sentences), and long-answer questions (4-6 sentences), gauging students' understanding of the critical ethical concepts and arguments covered in class. Exam study guides will be provided the week prior to the exam date. Also, the long-answer questions will be provided ahead of time. Exams cannot be completed later than the designated exam date, except in cases of advanced instructor permission or truly exceptional circumstances, such as family or medical emergencies.

Due dates:

- Exam #1 Wednesday, Sep. 27
- Exam #2 Monday, Dec. 4

Term Paper & Paper Proposal:

Students will write ONE term paper for this course. The paper must be 1750 - 2500 words on any topic from the course. I will provide several prompts, but students could also propose their own prompts. To prepare for the term paper, students are required to submit a paper proposal that roughly outlines the issue that they would like to address, the readings they would like to engage with, and the argument they would like to develop and advance. Students must also meet with me to discuss their paper proposal and have it approved. Late work will not be accepted, except in cases of advanced instructor permission or extraordinary circumstances.

In December, there will also be an opportunity to submit your paper to the *Penn Bioethics Journal*, a reputable peer-reviewed undergraduate bioethics journal. Please reach out to me if you're interested.

Extra Credit Option: PHILFlix Film Series

Students who attend any of the PhilFlix screenings and write a film review about it will receive extra credit. A high-quality film review can supplement your total grade by 2- 3%. This semester's tentative PHILFlix lineup will be the following (dates: TBD):

- Sound of Medal
- Far From the Tree
- How to Die in Oregon
- White Coat Rebels
- Clinica de Migrantes

CLASS POLICIES:

Classroom Climate:

Since our class will be discussion-based, students are encouraged to consider opposing views and alternative perspectives. Philosophy, when done well, requires us to consider beliefs and arguments other than our own and to defend our own beliefs and arguments with reasons. Consequently, please be respectful and open-minded when someone else expresses a view with which you disagree. Absolutely no personal attacks, disrespectful or uncharitable comments will be tolerated.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with documented disabilities who need reasonable accommodation are encouraged to contact the instructor. The STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCE CENTER is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. Their office is temporarily located on the second floor of Cone Hall and can be reached in the following ways:

- Phone: 912-478-1566
- Fax: 912-478-1419
- Video Phone: 912-225-9877
- Email: sarcboro@georgiasouthern.edu

For more information, the Student Accessibility Resource Center web address is the following: <https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/sarc/>.

Learning Assistance:

Students who require assistance with a reading and/or writing are more than welcome to attend my office hours or set up an appointment at the earliest convenience. I strongly recommend students to visit me regularly during office hours for any questions, clarifications, or assistance with the material in order to encourage the learning process. Further aid is also provided by Georgia Southern's ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER. They provide very valuable services, such as in-person or virtual tutoring. The center is in Henderson Library, Suite 1303 and can be reached in the following ways:

- Phone: 912-478-5371
- Email: asc@georgiasouthern.edu

For more information about the Academic Success Center, please visit the following address: <https://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/success/>.

Another valuable resource is the UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER, which provides assistance to students who are working on writing projects for any course at any stage of the writing process. For more information, visit <http://georgiasouthern.edu/writingcenter>.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Maintain personal integrity by avoiding plagiarism (representing another's work as your own), cheating (altering the conditions of an examination to create unfair personal advantage), and other forms of academic dishonesty. Any academic dishonesty on any

assignment or exam may result in an F on the assignment and a second infraction will result in an F for the course. Plagiarizing and cheating are serious academic offenses and will be treated as such.

Statement on Artificial Intelligence

I expect you to generate your own work in this class. Any work submitted infers the assertion that you have generated and written the text, unless stated otherwise by proper quotation and attribution methods. Submitting content that was generated by someone else, or that was created or assisted by a computer application or tool, including artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, is cheating and constituted a violation of the Student Conduct Code. You may use simple word processing tools to update grammar in your work, but you may not use AI tools to draft your assignments, even if you edit, revise, or paraphrase it.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault and Title IX:

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources, both on- and off-campus, at:

<https://president.georgiasouthern.edu/eo-titleix/>.

As a faculty member, I am required by our institution to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. Please know that you can seek confidential resources by visiting the Georgia Southern Title IX webpage and contacting the Title IX coordinator: Amber Johns Culpepper:

- Office: Rosenwald Building, Room 1066
- Phone: 912-478-5136
- Email: eeo-titleix@georgiasouthern.edu

COVID-19

The situation with COVID-19 is still very fluid. If you tested positive for COVID-19 or was in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and need to quarantine, please do not hesitate to reach out to me so that we can make accommodations.

**** Departmental Philosophy:**

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies recognizes and supports identities including those related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, (dis)ability, religion, age, socioeconomic status, and place of birth. We value varied perspectives, experiences, and well-reasoned ideas communicated with civility and respect. As members of the College of Arts and Humanities, we share a responsibility for fostering a dynamic learning environment that celebrates uniqueness, pursues equality and justice, and welcomes and supports all students.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

(This calendar is subject to revision. Major changes will be discussed with the students.)

Week 1: Introduction to the course // Moral reasoning in the medical context

Mon. Aug. 14: Introduction and course overview
Wed. Aug. 16: Overview of major moral theories

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #1 (due: Friday, 08/18 by 11:59pm)

Week 2: Medical paternalism vs. patient autonomy

Mon. Aug. 21: Medical paternalism vs patient autonomy
Wed. Aug. 23: The case for moral paternalism

Required readings:

- Goldman: The Refutation of Medical Paternalism
- Ackerman: Why Doctors Should Intervene
- Case Study: Beneficence Today, or Autonomy (Maybe) Tomorrow?
- Elger: Commentary
- Chevrolet: Commentary

Recommended readings:

- Dworkin: Paternalism
- Emanuel & Emanuel: Four Models of the Physician-Patient Relationship

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #2 (due: Friday, 08/25 by 11:59pm)

Week 3: Informed consent

Mon. Aug. 28: The meaning of informed consent
Wed. Aug. 30: Individual vs. interdependent consent

Required readings:

- Childress: The Place of Autonomy in Bioethics
- Cowart & Burt: Confronting Death: Who Chooses, Who Controls? A Dialogue Between Dax Cowart and Robert Burt
- Akabayashi & Slingsby: Informed Consent Revisited: Japan and the U.S.
- This American Life: "What You Don't Know" (podcast)

Recommended readings:

- Buchanan & Brock: Deciding for Others - Competency

- Ho: Relational autonomy or undue pressure? Family's role in medical decision-making

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #3 (due: Friday, 09/01 by 11:59pm)

Week 4: The Ethics of Reproductive Choices - Choosing embryos

Mon. Sep. 04: LABOR DAY - NO CLASSES

Wed. Sep. 06: Procreative beneficence

Required readings:

- Savulescu: Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children
- De Melo-Martin: On Our Obligation to Select the Best Children: A Reply to Savulescu

Recommended readings:

- Parker: The Best Possible Child?
- Bennett: When Intuition is Not Enough. Why the Principle of Procreative Beneficence Must Work Much Harder to Justify its Eugenic Vision

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #4 (due: Friday, 09/08 by 11:59pm)

Week 5: The Ethics of Reproductive Choices - Choosing embryos

Mon. Sep. 11: Choosing for disability

Wed. Sep. 13: Disability culture

Required readings:

- Davis: Genetic Dilemmas and the Child's Right to an Open Future
- Tubig: Is a Deaf Future an "Open" Future? Reconsidering the Open Future Argument Against Deaf Embryo Selection
- Sparrow: Defending Deaf Culture: The Case of Cochlear Implants

Recommended readings:

- Garland-Thomson: The Case for Conserving Disability
- Fahmy: On the Supposed Moral Harm of Selecting for Deafness

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #5 (due: Friday, 09/15 by 11:59pm)

Week 6: The Ethics of Reproductive Choices - Examining disability

Mon. Sep. 18: Different models of disability
Wed. Sep. 20: Film: *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement*

Required readings:

- Johnson: Unspeakable Conversations
- Silvers: A Fatal Attraction to Normalizing: Treating Disabilities as Deviations from "Species-Typical" Functioning
- Radiolab: G: Unfit (podcast)

Recommended readings:

- Stramondo: Why Bioethics Needs a Disability Moral Psychology
- Reynolds: Three Things Clinicians Should Know About Disability
- Goering: "You Say You're Happy but...": Contested Quality of Life Judgements in Bioethics and Disability Studies

Week 7: Exam #1

Mon. Sep. 25: Review
Wed. Sep. 27: In-class exam #1

This week's assignments due:

- Critical reading assignment #6 (due: Friday, 09/29 at 11:59pm)

Week 8: The Ethics of End-of-Life Choices: Physician-Assisted Suicide

Mon. Oct. 02: Film: *How to Die in Oregon*
Wed. Oct. 04: PAS: For and against; active vs. passive euthanasia

Required readings:

- Rachels: Active and Passive Euthanasia
- Brock: Voluntary Active Euthanasia
- Callahan: When Self-Determination Runs Amok

Recommended readings:

- Emanuel: Why I Hope to Die at 75

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #7 (due: Friday, 10/06 at 11:59pm)

Week 9: The Ethics of End-of-Life Choices: PAS vs. CS; PAS & Disability

Mon. Oct. 09: PAS vs. continuous sedation
Wed. Oct. 11: Justice and PAS for people with disabilities

Required readings:

- Raus et al: Is Continuous Sedation at the End of Life an Ethically Preferable Alternative to Physician-Assisted Suicide?
- Smith & Boal: Pulling the Sheet Back Down: A Response to Battin on the Practice of Terminal Sedation
- Bickenbach: Disability and Life-Ending Decisions

Recommended readings:

- McMullin-Powell: Physician-Assisted Suicide Discriminates Against Persons with Disabilities
- Silvers: Protecting the Innocents from Physician-Assisted Suicide

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #8 (due: Friday, 10/13 at 11:59pm)

Week 10: Health Inequality - Cultural Pluralism

Mon. Oct. 16: Practicing medicine in culturally diverse contexts
Wed. Oct. 18: The story of Lia Lee

Required readings:

- Fadiman: *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #9 (due: Friday, 10/20 at 11:59pm)

Week 11: Health Inequality - Cultural Pluralism/Structural Injustice

Mon. Oct. 23: Cultural competency
Wed. Oct. 25: Social determinants of health

Required readings:

- Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*
- Hyun: Clinical Cultural Competence and the Threat of Ethical Relativism
- Daniels, Kennedy, and Kawachi: Justice is Good for Your Health (ch. 1 of *Is Inequality Bad for Our Health?*)

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #10 (due: Friday, 10/27 at 11:59pm)

Week 12: Health Inequality - Structural Injustice

Mon. Oct. 30: Health, race, and class
Wed. Nov. 01: Structural competency

Required readings:

- Villarosa: ch. 4 of *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of the Nation*
- Villarosa: ch. 7 of *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of the Nation*
- Mezl and Hansen: Structural Competency: Theorizing a New Medical Engagement with Stigma and Inequality

Recommended readings:

- Wilson: Bioethics, Race, and Contempt
- Blacksher: Healthcare Disparities: The Salience of Social Class
- Valera and Barreda: Bioethics and COVID-19: Considering the Social Determinants of Health
- Frontline: The Healthcare Divide (documentary)

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #11 (due: Friday, 11/03 at 11:59pm)

Week 13: The Moral Role of Doctors // Complicity to suspect norms

Mon. Nov. 06: Doctors and the death penalty

Wed. Nov. 08: Doctors and cosmetic surgery

Required readings:

- Gawande: When Law and Ethics Collide - Why Physicians Participate in Executions
- Sikora and Fleischman: Physician Participation in Capital Punishment: A Question of Professional Integrity
- Little: Cosmetic Surgery, Suspect Norms, and the Ethics of Complicity

Recommended readings:

- Wolf: Dying in Detention: Where are the Bioethicists?
- Jauhar: Why it is O.K. for Doctors to Participate in Executions

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #12 (due: Friday: Friday, 11/10 at 11:59pm)

Week 14: Pharmaceutical Freedom

Mon. Nov. 13: The right of self-medication

Wed. Nov. 15: Critiques of the right to self-medication

Required readings:

- Flanigan: Three arguments against prescription requirements
- Schwartz: Autonomy, Futility, and the Limits of Medicine

- This American Life: Prescription for Freedom (podcast)

Recommended readings:

- Taylor: The value of autonomy and the right to self-medication
- Henry: Physicians object to court-ordered use of ivermectin for COVID-19
- Litigation Center of the American Medical Association and State Medical Societies: Amicus brief for *Gahl v. Aurora Health*

This week's assignments due:

- Critical Reading Assignment #13 (due: Friday, 11/17 at 11:59pm)

Week 15: Thanksgiving Break

Mon. Nov. 20 & 22: THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASSES

Week 16: Conscientious Objection

Mon. Nov. 27: Conscientious refusal
 Wed. Nov. 29: Conscientious provision

Required readings:

- Klugman: Legalized Medical Discrimination Violates Medical Ethics
- Rhodes: Conscience, Conscientious Objection, and Medicine
- Cantor and Baum: The Limits of Conscientious Objection - May Pharmacists Refuse to Fill Prescriptions for Emergency Contraception?
- Ryan et al: Why the Post-Roe Era Requires Protecting Conscientious Provision as We Protect Conscientious Refusal in Health Care

Recommended readings:

- Eberl: Protecting Reasonable Conscientious Refusals in Health Care
- Stahl and Emanuel: Physicians, Not Conscripts - Conscientious Objection to Health Care
- Rubin: Doctors and Patients Deserve a 'Conscience' Exception to Abortion Bans

This week's assignments due:

- Paper proposal assignment (due: Friday, 12/01 at 11:59pm)

Week 17: Wrapping Up

Mon. Dec. 04: Exam #2

Week 18: Finals Week

Mon. Dec. 11: Term paper due at 11:59pm