

PHIL 242: Introduction to Medical Ethics
SYLLABUS
M-F 1:10-2:10pm
SAV 138

Primary Instructor:

Blake Hereth (sbhereth@uw.edu)
Office: Big Table, 3rd Floor of Savery Hall
Office Hours: M & F 11:10am-12:10pm and by appointment

Course Website:

<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1206417>

Course Description:

Most of us have spent some amount of time in the hospital or under someone's medical care, or know someone who has. That gives us good reason to care about doing medicine ethically. Most of us have been concerned, angry, sorrowful, relieved, or delighted at the care we or others have received. That gives us good reason to think we're already doing medical ethics. The point of this course is to learn a little about how to do it *well* by (1) gaining an understanding of some of the important issues in contemporary medical ethics, (2) becoming familiar with the variety of perspectives, arguments, and people involved in these debates, (3) learning to make valid and sound arguments of your own and applying them to the issues we discuss, and (4) revising your arguments in light of feedback.

Course Goals:

- To get familiar with and understand some central philosophical issues in medical ethics, such as: the ethics of procreation (anti-natalism, eugenics, and disability), using nonhuman animals in biomedical research, organ donation, compulsory vaccinations, and assisted suicide.
- To reconstruct the arguments we find on the issues above and evaluate them charitably and critically.
- To develop arguments of our own that are valid and sound.
- To revise our arguments in light of feedback.

Required Textbook (available at the University Bookstore):

Arguing About Bioethics. Edited by Stephen Holland. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Other Readings:

Any other readings will be provided by the instructor on Canvas.

Assignments:

- Participation: Students should take an active role in class. You should ask questions and listen carefully. You should also make an active effort to *appear* like a participating member,

avoiding things that make it look like you aren't (e.g., being on your phone, excessive glancing at your laptop, etc.).

- **In-Class Logic Exercises**: These are handouts designed to help you gain practice making good arguments. We'll work on them in groups during class. (They're easy. Don't freak out.)
- **Critical Reading Responses**: Each student will write five (5) critical reading responses. All you need to do is (1) briefly explain what the argument is you're evaluating and (2) raise an important criticism of the argument. Each reading response should be one page long. It's up to you which reading you pick, but I recommend that you get started early.
- **Term Paper: First Draft**: Each student will write a first draft (3-5 double-spaced pages) of their final term paper on an important issue in medical ethics. It should explain the issue and advance an original argument. This will be due Friday, July 13, at 5pm on Canvas. I'll give each student extensive comments on their draft, which they will then revise.
- **Term Paper: Second Draft**: Each student will revise their first draft in light of my comments. This means revising your main argument and adding a section where you raise and deal with objections to your argument. This draft should be 7-10 double-spaced pages. This will be due Monday, August 6, at 5pm on Canvas.
- **Odegaard Writing Center Visit**: Each student will take their Second Draft to the Odegaard Writing Center for final review. (Note: Specific dates will be assigned for you to do this, so wait for further information from me.)
- **Term Paper: Final Draft**: Each student will revise their Second Draft in light of comments from me and the Odegaard Writing Center, and then submit that revised draft to Canvas for final review. This will be due Friday, August 17, at 5pm on Canvas.

Grading:

Participation	10%
In-Class Logic Exercises	5%
Critical Reading Responses	20%
Term Paper: First Draft	10%
Term Paper: Second Draft	20%
Odegaard WC Visit	5%
Term Paper: Final Draft	30%

Assignment Policies:

- **Late Assignments**: There are *no* extensions or make-ups for Participation or the In-Class Logic Exercises. Critical Reading Responses are due by the last day of class via Canvas, with no possibility of extensions. The Odegaard Writing Center visit must occur *after* you've completed your Second Draft; I'll set aside some time for students to make visits, but otherwise it's up to you when you go. Drafts of the term paper will not be accepted except in cases of documented emergency or a prior, reasonable arrangement with me.
- **"W" Credit**: To pass this course, which carries "W" writing credit, you must submit all three drafts of your term paper.
- **Plagiarism**: Essays with plagiarism will result in failure of the course and will be sent directly to UW Academic Misconduct. It's your responsibility to know what does, and doesn't, count as plagiarism, but feel free to ask me about it if you're unsure. (I'm happy to help you.)

Tentative Schedule of Topics & Readings

Week 1 (June 18-22): Course Introduction, Logic, & Procreation

Readings:

- (1) Syllabus
- (2) J. Savulescu, "Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children"

Note:

- (1) In-Class Logic Exercises will occur during this week.

Week 2 (June 25-29): Procreation (cont.)

Readings:

- (1) E. Parens and A. Asch, "The Disability Rights Critique of Prenatal Genetic Testing: Reflections and Recommendations"
- (2) D. Benatar, "The Asymmetry Argument" (**via Canvas**)

Week 3 (July 2-6): Informed Consent

Readings:

- (1) O. O'Neill, "Some Limits of Informed Consent"
- (2) J. Savulescu and R.W. Momeyer, "Should Informed Consent Be Based on Rational Beliefs?"

Notes:

- (1) This week will include a viewing of the *20/20 Special* on Dax Cowart.
- (2) There will be **no class** on July 4th (Independence Day).

Week 4 (July 9-13): Organ Donation

Readings:

- (1) C. Cohen, "The Case for Presumed Consent to Transplant Human Organs After Death"
- (2) T.M. Wilkinson, "What's Not Wrong with Conditional Organ Donation?"

Assignments:

- (1) **Term Paper: First Draft** due Friday, July 13, at 5pm via Canvas

Week 5 (July 16-20): Nonhuman Animals

Readings:

- (1) A.L. Caplan, "Is Xenografting Morally Wrong?"
- (2) J.L. Nelson, "Moral Sensibilities and Moral Standing: Caplan on Xenograft 'Donors'"

Note:

- (1) In-Class Logic Exercises will occur during this week.

Week 6 (July 23-27): Public Health

Readings:

- (1) D. Isaacs, H.A. Kilham, and H. Marshall, "Should Routine Childhood Immunizations Be Compulsory?"
- (2) S. Chapman, "Banning Smoking Outdoors is Seldom Ethically Justifiable"
- (3) N. Daniels, "Health-Care Needs and Distributive Justice"

Week 7 (July 30 – August 3): Assisted Suicide

Readings:

- (1) R. Dworkin, T. Nagel, R. Nozick, J. Rawls, T. Scanlon, and J.J. Thomson, "Assisted Suicide: The Philosopher's Brief"
- (2) J.M. Dieterle, "Physician-Assisted Suicide: A New Look at the Arguments"

Week 8 (August 6-10): OPEN TOPIC

Readings:

TBD (by you!)

Assignments:

- (1) **Term Paper: Second Draft** due Monday, August 6, at 5pm via Canvas.
- (2a) Although there will be class on Thursday, August 9, **please try to visit the Odegaard Writing Center that day** (either before or after class). Ideally, half of you will visit this day and the other half will visit Monday, August 13.
- (3) There will be **no class** on Friday, August 10. (I'll be at a conference.)

Week 9 (August 13-17): OPEN TOPIC (cont.) & Finals Week

Readings:

No new readings. Focus on your papers.

Assignments:

- (1) There will be **no class** on Monday, August 13. Please use this day, including our regular class time, to visit the Odegaard Writing Center.
- (2) **Term Paper: Final Draft** due Friday, August 17, at 5pm via Canvas
- (3) Any remaining **Critical Reading Responses** due Friday, August 17, at 5pm via Canvas

Policies, Rules, and Resources:

- Distractions: Cell phones and pagers should be turned off and put away before you come to class. Laptops may be used for taking notes only. If you are found using your laptop for some other purpose, I will ask you to shut it down and put it away. You may bring food and drinks to class, but please to be respectful to your fellow students - strong odors and crinkly packaging are distracting!
- Atmosphere: It is quite common for students to feel a bit uncomfortable speaking up during class, especially when dealing with complicated or new material. Since a large portion of the class will be discussion based, it is important that we foster an open and engaging class atmosphere, in which everyone can feel free to ask questions and express their ideas without fear about "being wrong". A productive discourse can only be generated and maintained by being courteous and respectful to our peers. This is absolutely necessary,

since we may be exposed to ideas or points of view different from our own and may even find ourselves presenting/defending ideas that are not actually ours. Thus, it is important that students be mindful that we are engaging with and evaluating philosophical positions and ideas, **not each other.**

- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as the use of creations, ideas or words of publicly available work without formally acknowledging the author or source through appropriate use of quotation marks, references, and the like. Plagiarizing is presenting someone else's work as one's own original work or thought. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. The University of Washington takes plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism may lead to disciplinary action by the University against the student who submitted the work. Any student who is uncertain whether his or her use of the work of others constitutes plagiarism should consult the course instructor for guidance before formally submitting the course work involved. (Sources: UW Graduate School Style Manual; UW Bothell Catalog; UW Student Conduct Code)
- **Incompletes:** An incomplete is given only when the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work until within two weeks of the end of the quarter and has furnished proof satisfactory to the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control. (Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading")
- **Grade Appeal Procedure:** A student who believes he or she has been improperly graded must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's explanation, the student may submit a written appeal to the chair of the Department of Philosophy with a copy of the appeal also sent to the instructor. The chair consults with the instructor to ensure that the evaluation of the student's performance has not been arbitrary or capricious. Should the chair believe the instructor's conduct to be arbitrary or capricious and the instructor declines to revise the grade, the chair, with the approval of the voting members of his or her faculty, shall appoint an appropriate member, or members, of the faculty of the Department of Philosophy to evaluate the performance of the student and assign a grade. The Dean and Provost should be informed of this action. Once a student submits a written appeal, this document and all subsequent actions on this appeal are recorded in written form for deposit in a School file. (Source: UW General Catalog Online, "Student Guide/Grading")
- **Concerns About the Course or the Instructor:** If you have any concerns about a Philosophy course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall), or the Graduate School at G-1 Communications Building (543-5900).
- **Equal Opportunity:** The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran in accordance with University of Washington policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.
- **Disability Accommodation:** The University of Washington is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. For information or to request disability accommodation contact:
 - Disabled Students Services (Seattle campus) at (206) 543-8924/V, (206) 543-8925/TTY, (206) 616-8379/Fax, or e-mail at uwdss@u.washington.edu
 - Bothell Student Affairs at (425) 352-5000/V; (425) 352-5303/TTY, (425) 352- 5335/Fax, or e-mail at uwbothel@u.washington.edu;
 - Tacoma Student Services at (253) 552-4000/V, (253) 552-4413/TTY, (253) 552-4414/Fax.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is defined as the use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal, or as the creation by a member of the University community of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. If you believe that you are being harassed, seek help—the earlier the better. You may speak with your instructor, your teaching assistant, the undergraduate advisor (363 Savery Hall), graduate program assistant (366 Savery Hall), or the chair of the Philosophy Department (364 Savery Hall). In addition, you should be aware that the University has designated special people to help you. They are:
 - University Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Sexual Harassment (for complaints involving faculty members and teaching assistants) Susan Neff, 301 Student Union (HUB), 543-6028; and the

University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office, 616-2028. (Sources: UW Graduate School, CIDR, Office of the President)

- Office of Scholarly Integrity - The Office of Scholarly Integrity is housed in the Office of the Vice-Provost. The Office of Scholarly Integrity assumes responsibility for investigating and resolving allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct by faculty, students, and staff of the University of Washington. The Office of Scholarly Integrity coordinates, in consultation and cooperation with the Schools and Colleges, inquiries and investigations into allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity is responsible for compliance with reporting requirements established by various Federal and other funding agencies in matters of scientific or scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity maintains all records resulting from inquiries and investigations of such allegations. University rules (Handbook, Vol. II, Section 25-51, Executive Order #61) define scientific and scholarly misconduct to include the following forms of inappropriate activities: intentional misrepresentation of credentials; falsification of data; plagiarism; abuse of confidentiality; deliberate violation of regulations applicable to research.

Students can report cases of scientific or scholarly misconduct either to the Office of Scholarly Integrity, to their faculty adviser, or the department chair. The student should report such problems to whomever he or she feels most comfortable. (Sources: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/OSI/osi.htm>; minutes of Grad School Executive Staff and Division Heads meeting, 7/23/98)

- **Campus Safety and Violence Prevention:** Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone.
 1. Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
 2. Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
 3. Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
 4. Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at www.washington.edu/alert

For more information visit the SafeCampus website at: www.washington.edu/safecampus