Spring 2-1-2004

PHIL 421E.01: Medical Ethics

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Philosophy 421E: Medical Ethics

Spring Semester, 2004
TTh 12:40-2:00
GBB 225
Office Hours: Wed. 1:00-2:00
Thurs. 2:15-3:15

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Course Description and Objectives: This three-credit course examines the moral dimensions of medicine in select issues, including the doctor-patient relationship, medical decisionmaking, the definition of death, end-of-life decisionmaking, euthanasia and assisted suicide, abortion, procreative choice, assisted reproduction, genetic technologies, medical research, and medical resource allocation. Numerous cases will be used to highlight moral issues. The purpose of the course is to:
1. Provide students with a basic understanding of moral dimensions of health care and medical decisionmaking generally;
2. Provide students with an understanding of the moral dimensions of issues in medical ethics;
3. Advance students' skills in critical thinking and writing in ethics through the consideration of medical ethics issues and cases

Prerequisites: A lower-level ethics course, or permission of instructor

Requirements
1. Mid-term examination, March 18 (30 percent of grade)
2. Ethical analysis paper, due April 27 (30 percent of grade)
3. Participation in class discussions (10 percent of grade)
4. Final examination, May 10 (30 percent of grade)

- Examinations will likely be a combination of a choice among short answer questions and a longer essay and/or case analysis. The final examination will not be comprehensive but may be longer than the mid-term. Exams must be taken at scheduled times unless prior permission of the instructor is obtained, otherwise the exam receives a failing grade.
- The required paper should analyze central arguments of a particular medical ethical issue and put forward your normative position on the issue. It should utilize at least two outside sources. Students are encouraged to discuss topics and ideas with the instructor in advance. Graduate students taking the course for graduate credit should see the instructor for additional requirements. Unless an extension is granted, late papers are immediately penalized one grade, and thereafter at a graduated rate, amounting to an additional letter grade per five days.
- Class participation involves attendance, participating actively with group discussions, and being well prepared for discussions.
- Students taking the course with the P/NP option are required to achieve at least the equivalent of a C- to pass.

Required Reading
Aldous Huxley, Brave New World (pb). Used copies may be available.
Other articles and cases as assigned (electronic reserve at Mansfield Library: “Medethics”)
Topics and Reading Assignments

Introduction: Moral Reasoning in the Medical Context
Jan. 27, 29 S,A,&L, pp. 1-41

Foundations of the Health Professional-Patient Relationship
Feb. 3, 5 S,A,&L, pp. 43-47, 55-82

Defining Death, End-of-Life Decisionmaking
Feb. 10, 12 Defining Death
S,A,&L, pp. 245-48, 259-82
Feb. 17,19 Decisional Capacity & Advance Directives
S,A,&L, pp. 250-52, 290-321;
Feb. 24 Choosing for Others
S,A,&L, pp. 252-55, 323-368
Feb. 26 No Class
March 2, 4 Euthanasia & Physician-Assisted Suicide
S,A,&L, pp. 255-58, 377-81, 394-400, 416-25
D. Brock, “Voluntary Active Euthanasia”
(electronic reserve)

Abortion and Procreative Choice
March 9, 11 The Morality of Abortion
S,A,&L, pp. 441-45, 461-500
March 16 Catch Up and Review
March 18 Mid-term Examination

Brave New World: A Vision of Our Future?
March 23, 25 Huxley, Brave New World
C. Elliott, “Is Ugliness a Disease?”
(electronic reserve)
March 30-April 1  

**Spring Break**

Reproductive Technologies and Genetics

April 6, 8  
*Mapping the Human Genome*
S,A,&L, pp. 450-54, 553-57, 571-94, 513-23

April 13, 15  
*Assisted Reproductive Technologies*
S,A,&L, 454-55, 595-630

April 20, 22  
*Human Cloning and Stem Cell Research*
S,A,&L, pp. 456-60, 631-56, 665-83

April 27  
**Paper Due**

Experimentation on Human Subjects

April 27, 29  
S,A,&L, pp. 693-99, 705-6, 727-45, 747-55

Allocation, Social Justice, and Health Policy

May 4, 6  
S,A,&L, pp. 145-49, 155-86

**Final Exam**

May 10  
1:10-3:10 p.m.