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SUR 204E.50: Ethical Dimensions in the Health Professions - Online

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**University of Montana – College of Technology
Missoula**

**SUR 204E Ethical Dimensions in the Health Professions
Fall 2006**

COURSE SYLLABUS

Semester credits: 3

Live class time: T 4-6 via Virtual Classroom

Instructor: Muriel Friedman, M.D.

email: melf@bigsky.net

Course description: Healthcare inevitably deals with ethical problems because ethics, like healthcare, is about *relationships*. This course will enable students to recognize ethical problems in all aspects of life and work and will provide tools to deal with these problems knowledgeably and effectively. The course will cover bioethical principles; basic philosophical moral theory; ethical issues, especially as they relate to organizations; case studies; and practical problems in healthcare delivery.

Students in online classes must be motivated to do all readings in advance and participate in all class sessions. I urge you to familiarize yourself with Blackboard, as there is a learning curve. I also suggest that you locate a back-up computer in case you have trouble logging on or have other problems, such as transportation. I will post Announcements if the system or I have computer problems. I recognize that we all have computer problems at times, so please do your best to communicate with me. Lectures should be read before class and again after class so you understand them. There may also be news or short magazine articles for you to read. Class sessions will be discussion in a Chat room seminar format. We will go over any questions you have, and I will present cases to discuss. I will also pose questions and guide the discussion so that the material becomes more real. The second session through the second Philosophical Theory session are theoretical, and you may feel your head swimming

If you have not taken an online class before, please familiarize yourself with Blackboard. It takes everyone a while to become comfortable with the format, so don't worry too much. Look at the tutorial on the Blackboard site. You will need to download Java so you can log into the chat room (takes a few minutes); some campus computers may not work. If you do not have Word, I may not be able to download your assignments and will ask you to send it to me in the body of an email; you should use Rich Text Format (RTF) if given the choice. I will try to grade assignments and exams within a day or two; grades will be posted in Gradebook. I expect computer glitches occasionally; look at Announcements for explanations or directions, and if you lose me during class, I will be trying to get back online so please be patient. Please go to Discussion Board and enter a little info about yourself (year, major, hometown, what you like to be called, anything else you think interesting or pertinent). If you need to drop the class, please do so

officially and also send me an email so 1) I don't worry about you and 2) I can deal with the registrar later if need be.

Lectures: Lectures will be posted in Course Documents. You need to read them *in advance* so you can participate in class discussion. I encourage you to print them out so you can refer to them later.

Readings: The main text (Jameton) is out of print. Therefore, we will use selections from the book and additional readings from other books and two papers I wrote for classes. These readings will be available in Course Documents. You may wish to print out the readings, especially the Pence reading for week 5.

Student performance assessment methods and grading: Your grade reflects your work in this class, as well as class participation. I do not look lightly on missed assignments and will lower your grade if assignments are late, unless prior arrangements have been made. I expect students to complete the readings before class.

Your physical presence in class is important for you and for the rest of the class, including me. I plan to Archive sessions in Virtual Classroom, in case you must miss class or want to review what was discussed. I encourage students to ask questions, in order to understand sometimes complex material, and because other students probably have the same questions you do. Please try to schedule doctors' appointments, etc. at other times. I understand that illness, emergencies, and work scheduling problems come up. Please email me if you know you will be absent and why. If you miss more than two sessions, I reserve the right to lower your grade.

I have designed assignments to be useful thinking and writing exercises that use your time effectively. You will have two take-home midterms, two assignments, a final paper, and a final exam taken online. They will generally be due at the start of class on a Monday, submitted via Digital Dropbox. I expect good and well-organized writing in standard English; you should proof-read your work, because Spell-check may not pick up everything. I try (but do not always succeed) to grade promptly; look for grades in Gradebook. Unfortunately, it is difficult for the instructor to make a lot of comments on papers in Blackboard. I may email you general comments.

I will try to answer your emails promptly, but it may take a few days at times.

Feedback for instructor: I urge you to approach me with concerns and suggestions. All comments will be taken seriously.

Please notify me if you have special needs.

Grading criteria:

Assignments and midterms: 40%

Final paper: 25%

Final exam: 25%

Class participation: 10%

Readings:

Andrew Jameton, *Nursing Practice: The Ethical Issues*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1984.

(Jay Katz, *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient*, New York, Free Press, 1984).

Erich Loewy, *Textbook of Medical Ethics*, New York, Plenum Medical Book Co., 1989.

Howard Brody, *The Healer's Power*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992.

Laurence B. McCullough, James W. Jones, and Baruch A. Brody, *Surgical Ethics*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998.

Gregory E. Pence, *Classical Works in Medical Ethics*, Boston, McGraw-Hill, 1997.

Virginia L. Warren, "Feminist Directions in Medical Ethics," in Helen Bequaert Holmes and Laura M. Purdy, *Feminist Perspectives in Medical Ethics*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1992.

Daniel F. Chambliss, *Beyond Caring*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Dennis F. Thompson, "Paternalism in Medicine, Law, and Public Policy," in Daniel Callahan and Sissela Bok, *Ethics Teaching in Higher Education*, New York, Plenum Press, 1980.

PRELIMINARY CLASS SCHEDULE:

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|--------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Introduction to ethics | Read: Jameton 152-63 |
| T 8/29 | Systematic moral analysis | Moral analysis worksheets |
| Week 2 | Principles I | Jameton 50- 52, 107-16, 166-82 |
| T 9/5 | | |
| Week 3 | Principles II | Jameton 130-5, 261-74 |
| T 9/12 | | |
| Week 4 | Philosophical theory I | Pence 1-18, Jameton 93-7, 135-41 |
| T 9/19 | | |
| Week 5 | “ II | Warren 32-43, Loewy 25-35 |
| T 9/26 | | |

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|--------------------|---|--|
| Week 6 T 10/3 | Bureaucracy, power, business ethics, moral distress | Jameton 36-54, Chambliss 90-119 |
| Week 7 T 10/10 | Informed consent | Katz 207-12 (if available) |
| Week 8 T 10/17 | Deception/paternalism/conflict of interest | McCull.347-65, Thompson 245-72 |
| Week 9 T 10/24 | Confidentiality | my paper on confidentiality |
| Week 10 T 10/31 | Public health, mistakes, | my paper on learning curves |
| Week 11 T 11/7 | No class. It is your duty as a citizen to vote | |
| Week 12 T 11/15 | Team situation: whistle-blowing/ bad outcomes/responsibility/blame | Jameton 141-5, 278-91 |
| Week 13 T 11/22 | No class | |
| Week 14 T 11/29 | End-of-life, Ethics committees | “My Choices” advance directive Brody 137-56, 238-52 |
| Week 15 12/6 | Mediation Codes of ethics | Jameton 201-18 |