Course Syllabus
Philosophy 3340 (Online)
Biomedical Ethics
Summer 2011

Course Description: Biomedical ethics is composed of two separate fields: bioethics and medical ethics. Bioethics is the study of the ethics of life (and death), and includes familiar topics such as abortion, cloning, stem cell research, allocation of scarce medical resources, and euthanasia. We shall spend approximately the first two-third of the course on these issues. For the last third of the course, we shall discuss topics in medical ethics, which is concerned with "micro" issues such as the moral underpinnings of doctor-patient relationships as well as "macro" issues such as the structures of medical institutions or the duties that societies have to provide health care for those in need. No previous coursework in philosophy is required for this course and fundamental concepts in moral philosophy (e.g., consequentialism and deontology) will be explained as they become relevant. This is a course on *theoretical* (as opposed to clinical) bioethics.

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Course Website: http://elearn.wmich.edu

Text: All readings are available online at http://www.wmich.edu/library/reserves/. The first time that you visit that site, you must create an account and add this course to that account. The password is ethics.

Technical Support: For any technical support pertaining to the course (including course readings), contact EUP by phone at (269) 387-2847 or by email at atis-support@wmich.edu. Neither the professor nor graduate assistant is able to provide technical support.

Email: All correspondence regarding this course will either be sent to WMU email accounts (from GoWMU) or else posted to the e-learning environment. Students are required to regularly check their WMU accounts, and all correspondence from them should be sent from those accounts (per university policy). Emails to the instructor or GA should be sent to them directly and not posted as mail through e-learning; this will ensure a faster response since e-learning mail has to be checked separately from university email.

Overview: This course will be conducted online and has various components; those components will be described in the rest of the syllabus. Each week, students will complete the below-listed reading assignments and then read lectures that have posted about them. Lectures will be posted on Monday and Wednesday at 900a of each week and will remain visible for the rest of the course. (Students should do the readings first as the lectures will analyze and evaluate them.) Following the assimilation of the readings and lectures, students will take an online quiz. There will also be four writing assignments.

Grading:		
	Weekly Quizzes	20%
	Writing Assignment #1	20%
	Writing Assignment #2	20%
	Writing Assignment #3	20%
	Writing Assignment #4	20%

All writing assignments receive letter grades which are converted to a 4.0 scale: A = 4.0, BA = 3.5, B = 3.0, CB = 2.5, C = 2.0, DC = 1.5, D = 1.0, E = 0.0. Final quiz averages are also converted to a 4.0 scale: ≥93% = 4.0, 90-92% = 3.7, 88-89% = 3.3, 83-87% = 3.0, 80-82% = 2.7, 78-79% = 2.3, 73-77% = 2.0, 70-72% = 2.3, 68-69% = 1.3, 63-67% = 1.0, 60-62% = 0.7, 58-59% = 0.3, ≤58% = 0.0. Numerical final grades are then converted to letter grades: ≥3.75 = A, 3.25-3.74 = BA, 2.75-3.24 = B, 2.25-2.74 = CB, 1.75-2.24 = C, 1.25-1.74 = DC, 0.75-1.24 = D, ≤0.74 = E.

Weekly Quizzes: Every Monday and Wednesday at 900a, a quiz will be released from the course website. For each student, 10 multiple choice questions will be randomly selected from a bank of questions that have been submitted. These quizzes should be taken without any study materials present, and 15 minutes will be available to complete them. The quizzes released on Monday at 900a must be completed by Tuesday at 500p and the quizzes released on Wednesday at 900a must be completed by Thursday at 500p; after these times, they will no longer be available. Students should take the quiz after they have read the assigned readings corresponding lectures.

Each student's lowest two quiz grades, including those for missed quizzes, will be dropped. For this reason, no further allowances will be made for personal reasons or computer issues that should arise. (I.e., there are no extensions on quizzes, nor will they be reopened under any circumstances.)

Writing Assignments: The lecture schedule below indicates when the writing assignments are due. They will be made available exactly one week prior to their due date and time, unless they are due on Friday at 500p, in which case they will be available the previous Thursday at 500p. Assignments submitted up to 48 hours late will be penalized one letter grade (e.g., A to BA). Assignments submitted at any later time will be penalized two letter grades (e.g., A to B). Extensions will not be offered, nor should they be requested.

Each writing assignment will be approximately 2,500 words, and the prompts will likely have several components. You are allowed to use your course notes as well as your course readings in the development of your answers. No other sources—including collaboration with others—should be incorporated into this assignment; the incorporation of any uncited sources will be considered plagiarism. Citations should be made to course readings as appropriate, with citations given to the author and original page of publication.

Note that you also have quizzes (on new material) the same weeks that you will be principally writing these assignments. This is one reason that they have been made available the week they are due; this way, you have a weekend to work on them, should you want to.

TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

W[1]	L	Topic	Readings
1a	1	Introduction to Biomedical Ethics	
1b	2	Abortion	Mary Anne Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion"
2a	3	Abortion (cont.)	Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"
2b	4	Abortion (cont.)	Don Marquis, "Why Abortion Is Immoral"
3a	5	Stem Cells and Cloning **Writing Assignment #1 by Monday at 900a**	Leon Kass, "The Wisdom of Repugnance"
3b	6	Cloning (cont.)	Gregory Pence, "Who's Afraid of Human Cloning?" Fritz Allhoff, "Telomeres and the Ethics of Human Cloning"
4a	7	Commercial Surrogacy	Ruth Macklin, "What Is Wrong with Commodification?" Sara Ann Ketchum, "Selling Babies and Selling Bodies"
4b	8	(Im)morality of Reproduction **Writing Assignment #2 by Friday at 500p**	Laura Purdy, "Genetics and Reproductive Risk: Can Having Children Be Immoral?"
5a	9	Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources	Nicholas Rescher, "The Allocation of Exotic Medical Lifesaving Therapy"

[1] Each summer session is divided into seven weeks; each week consists of two learning modules (including a lecture and quiz). The weeks are designated in the "W" column and the learning modules designated in the "L" column. The week is then broken into two halves (a/b) each of which has an associative learning module. The a-module is posted on Monday at 900a and the quiz for that module closes Tuesday at 500p. The b-module is posted on Wednesday at 900a and the quiz for that module closes Thursday at 500p.

5b	10	Physician-Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia	James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"
6a	11	Euthanasia (cont.)	Dan Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia" Daniel Callahan, "Physician-Assisted Dying: Self-Determination Run Amok"
6b	12	Medical Ethics and the Doctor-Patient Relationship **Writing Assignment #3 by Friday at 500p**	The Hippocratic Oath Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, American Medical Association, "Fundamental Elements of the Patient-Physician Relationship" James Childress and Mark Siegler, "Metaphors and Models of the Doctor-Patient Relationship: Their Implications for Autonomy"
7a	13	Truth and the Physician	Bernard Meyer, "Truth and the Physician" Sissela Bok, "Lies to the Sick and Dying"
7b	14	Competence and Surrogate Decision Making	Allen Buchanan and Dan Brock, "Standards of Competence" Dan Brock, "Surrogate Decision Making for Incompetent Adults: An Ethical Framework"
8	**N/A**	**Writing Assignment #4 by Monday at 500p**	

Statement on Academic Honesty: You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog that pertain to Academic Honesty (pp. 274-276). These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.