

MORAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN HEALTH CARE

PH1165 SECTION 4

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

FALL 2016

Professor:	Dr. Irina Mikhalevich	Date/Time:	M/Thr. 11:45 – 1:25
Email:	i.mikhalevich@northeastern.edu	Class Location:	94 Cargill Hall
Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 12 - 2 & by apt.	Office:	383 Holmes Hall

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a case-study-driven approach to understanding the ethical dimension of medical practice and health policy. You can expect to gain the resources needed for assessing the kinds of conceptually and emotionally challenging issues that healthcare professionals routinely face. We will consider such questions as the following:

- ❖ What special duties do physicians owe their patients? What are the limits of patient autonomy? What does informed consent entail and why does it matter?
- ❖ What are disabilities and are they always bad for the person who has them?
- ❖ Is enhancement different from treatment? If so, is it always/sometimes morally permissible? Might it even be required?
- ❖ Is access to healthcare a basic human right?

As with any philosophy course, you will be expected to think critically and systematically about complex issues. You are expected to come to class having completed all the readings and prepared to assess the merits and demerits of the arguments in classroom discussion. You will hone the skills needed to engage productively with philosophically challenging topics through a combination of careful reading and constructive in-class discussion and debate.

REQUIRED TEXT

- ❖ Lewis Vaughn. 2013. *Bioethics, Second Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Readings are from the textbook unless otherwise specified)
- ❖ *Additional readings will be posted to Blackboard.*

ASSIGNMENTS

- ❖ 2 Midterm Exams: **25** points each/50 points total (in class, multiple choice & short answers)
Midterm 1: September 29th; Midterm 2: November 7th
- ❖ Final Exam: **35** points (take-home essay; ap. 2000 words; 24 hrs to complete); December 9th
- ❖ Attendance and Participation: **15** points
- ❖ Total points possible for class: 100 points

EMAIL ETIQUETTE AND POLICY

- ❖ Indicate “PHIL1165-S4” in the subject line.
- ❖ Start your email with a greeting.
- ❖ Write full sentences and spell properly.
- ❖ Sign your full name in your correspondence. Student ID numbers are not required.
- ❖ Allow up to 24 hours for a reply, and 48 hours on weekends and holidays.

ABSENCE POLICY & CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

You are permitted TWO unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence lowers the participation grade by **one** point up to a total of 15. Please note that attendance is defined as coming to class on time (no more than 10 minutes late and never habitually so), being alert and attentive, and refraining from disruptive activities (e.g., chatting with others, looking at unrelated material online, napping, anything on your cellphone, and so on).

Absence due to religious beliefs: Consistent with the Northeastern University provisions, any student who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement will be provided with an opportunity to make up the examination, study, or work requirement wherever possible. Students should make appropriate arrangements with me in advance of the absence, preferably at least two weeks before the religious observance.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

We have a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism on *any part* of *any* assignment will result in automatic failure of the course. Your rights and responsibilities as a member of Northeastern University’s academic community can be found here:

<http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academic-integrity-policy/> Please visit the page. Knowing what constitutes plagiarism is **your** responsibility and ignorance is no excuse.

NU Writing Center: For assistance with your writing, please access services at the NU Writing Center: <http://www.northeastern.edu/writingcenter/>

SPECIAL NEEDS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

If you need extra assistance, please see me as soon as possible. To see whether you qualify for academic accommodations or to receive the necessary forms, please visit the Northeastern University Disability Center’s website at: <http://www.northeastern.edu/drc/>

Support Services: If you or someone you know would like to discuss confidential information about health or mental health care, please contact Northeastern University Health and Counseling Services (<http://www.northeastern.edu/uhcs/counseling-services/>) or We Care (<http://www.northeastern.edu/wecare/>).

Title IX: Northeastern’s Title IX Policy includes information about disclosure and reporting as it pertains to sexual harassment and sexual violence: [http://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Title IX Policy.pdf](http://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Title_IX_Policy.pdf)

SCHEDULE OF READINGS (subject to change with advance notice)

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Part I: Bioethical Principles and Ethical Theories		
Sept. 8	Introduction to class	<i>No readings</i>
Sept. 12, 15	Introduction to moral reasoning and ethical theories	❖ Vaughn (3 – 50)
Sept. 19		❖ James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism” <i>on Blackboard</i>
Sept. 22		❖ John Stuart Mill, Chapter 1 of <i>Utilitarianism on Blackboard</i>
Sept 26		❖ Onora O’Neill, “A simplified account of Kant’s ethics” <i>on Blackboard</i>
Part II: Standards of Medical Practice		
Sept 29	<i>MIDTERM EXAM 1 – in class</i>	
Oct. 3	Autonomy & Paternalism	❖ <i>Bowia v. Superior Court</i> (109 – 113) ❖ Vaughn (71 – 83)
Oct. 6		❖ “Why doctors should intervene” (99 – 103) ❖ “Autonomy, futility, and the limits of medicine.” (104 – 108)
Oct. 10	<i>NO CLASS – School Holiday</i>	
Oct. 13	Informed Consent	❖ Vaughn (180 – 185)
Oct. 17		❖ “The concept of informed consent.” (190 – 194)
Oct. 20		❖ Rebecca Kukla, “Conscientious autonomy: displacing decisions in health care” <i>on Blackboard</i>
Part III: Personal Choices, Public Implications?		
Oct. 24	Euthanasia	❖ Vaughn, 595 – 604 ❖ Dan W. Brock, “Voluntary Active Euthanasia” (625 – 629)
Oct. 27		❖ Daniel Callahan, “When Self-Determination Runs Amok” ❖ John Lachs, “When Abstract Moralizing Runs Amok” <i>Movie: Suicide Tourist</i>

Oct. 31, Nov 3	High-tech Conversion “Therapy”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Brian D. Earp, Anders Sandberg, & Julian Savulescu, “Brave New Love: The threat of high-tech ‘conversion’ therapy and the bio-oppression of sexual minorities” on Blackboard ❖ Sean Aas & Candice Delmas, “The ethics of sexual reorientation: what should clinicians and researchers do?” on Blackboard <p>*read both papers for both dates</p>
Nov 7	MIDTERM EXAM 2 – in class	
Nov 11	NO CLASS: School Holiday	
Nov. 14	Enhancement and Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ “Genetic enhancement” (577 – 581) ❖ “Genetic dilemmas and the child’s right to an open future” (553 – 563)
Nov 17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ John Harris, “Is Gene Therapy a Form of Eugenics?” (571 – 577) ❖ Walter Glannon, “Genetic Enhancement” (577 – 581) ❖ Dan Brock, “The non-identity problem and genetic harms – the case of wrongful handicaps” on Blackboard
Nov 21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allan Buchanan, “Human nature and enhancement” on Blackboard
Nov 24	No Class – THANKSGIVING BREAK ***Homework: Watch the movie, “Sicko”***	
Part IV: Justice and the Distribution of Health Care Resources		
Nov 28	Is there a right to health care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Movie: Sicko ❖ Vaughn (681 – 694) ❖ Norman Daniels, “Is there are right to health care and, if so, what does it encompass?” on Blackboard
Dec 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., “Rights to health care, social justice, and fairness in health care allocations: frustrations in the face of finitude” (708 – 716)
Dec 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allan E. Buchanan, “The right to a decent minimum of health care” on Blackboard
DECEMBER 9 – Take-Home Final Exam		