

PHIL 3160: Bioethics

Fall 2013

section 001: TR 3:30-4:45pm, HALE 240
section 002: TR 2:00-3:15pm, CLUB 13

Syllabus

Instructor

Chad Vance
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Office Hours: MW, noon-1:30pm
Buchanan's Coffee (on the hill)

What Is This Class About?

This is an ethics course, designed to give you a basic understanding of morality, and moral issues, specifically within a bio-medical context. At the same time, more generally, this course should give you some of the tools that you will need in order to think critically, be rational, better argue for what you believe, and investigate the question of how to live morally. The course has two units:

First Unit: Moral Theories and the Ethical Treatment of Patients. Here, we will first investigate the nature of morality in general, and ask: Are there such things as good, bad, right, and wrong? If so, do we decide them for ourselves, or are they already decided for us? Is moral obligation simply about producing the best consequences, or can an action be wrong even if it has a good outcome? Am I obligated simply to not hurt others, or do I have a duty to help others as well? Next, we will investigate the nature of patient's rights, and ask: Do patients have rights at all? Should everyone have access to medical treatment, or should only some people? Is it permissible to restrict a patient's freedom if it is for their own good? Under what conditions does patient consent occur?

Second Unit: Bioethical Issues. In this unit, we will examine several specific ethical issues in bioethics. For instance, we will ask whether or not it is morally permissible to end the life of a suffering patient, clone a human being, kill a fetus, kill an infant, genetically screen a fetus, sell organs, use stem cells for research, or animals, or conduct randomized clinical trials on human beings, to name a few.

Required Text

Bioethics, 2nd edition, edited by Lewis Vaughn (2013), Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 9780199796236

Required readings not found in our textbook will be posted under "Assigned Readings" as .pdf files on the course website, here:

<http://rintintin.colorado.edu/~vancecd/phil3160/phil3160.html>

Course Requirements

1. *Exams (40%)*. You will take a mid-term exam (15%) and a final exam (25%).
2. *Papers (30%)*. You will write two papers. The first (10%) will be a short diagnostic paper, 600-900 words (i.e., 2 - 3 pages), and the second (20%) will be a longer paper, 1200-1800 words in length (i.e., 4 - 6 pages). *Topics and more info: TBA.*
3. *Class Debate (10%)*. You will participate in an in-class debate. *More info: TBA.*
4. *Quizzes (10%)*. You will take a total of 11 short reading quizzes. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped; i.e., your 10 best scores will constitute your quiz grade (1% each).
5. *Participation (10%)*. A portion of your grade will depend on your ability to come to class (on time and prepared), participate in class discussion, and refrain from being disruptive, falling asleep, sending text messages, or surfing the internet.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). More information on the Honor Code can be found at: honorcode.colorado.edu/about-honor-code/definitions

NOTE: *Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member (i.e., you will automatically receive an F for the course) as well as non-academic sanctions (e.g., academic probation, suspension, or expulsion).*

Disability Services

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. Please let me know well in advance about any such conflicts, so we can resolve them. For more information, see colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. See policies at colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policies on Discrimination and Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at colorado.edu/odh.

Course Schedule

Below is a schedule of the topics that we will cover, along with which reading(s) you should complete for each class meeting. There are page numbers next to the readings found in our textbook. Readings not found in the text are marked: (pdf). Please note the **paper due dates, debate days, and exam dates** in bold.

Unit One Moral Theories & the Ethical Treatment of Patients		
Week 1		
Tue 8/27	Intro/Syllabus/Arguments	No readings
Thurs 8/29	Ethical Relativism & Nihilism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Ethical Relativism" (13-17) • Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" (pdf) • Huemer, "Ethical Intuitionism" section 5.5 (pdf)
Week 2		
Tue 9/3	Utilitarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Utilitarianism" (35-37) • Mill, "Utilitarianism" (52-54) • Rachels, "Debate Over Utilitarianism" (pdf) • Nozick, "The Experience Machine" (pdf)
Thurs 9/5	Deontology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Kantian Ethics" (37-39) • Kant, "The Moral Law" (54-60) • Ross, "What Makes Right Acts Right?" (pdf)
Week 3		
Tue 9/10	Deontology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greene, "Moral Dilemmas & 'The Trolley Problem'" (pdf)
Thurs 9/12	CAMPUS CLOSED	No new readings
Week 4		
Tue 9/17	Justice – Rawls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Rawls' Contract Theory" (41-42) • Rawls, "Justice As Fairness" (pdf)
Thurs 9/19	Justice - Nozick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nozick, "Distributive Justice" (pdf) • Hale, "The Veil of Opulence" (online)
Week 5		
Tue 9/24	Distributing Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris, "QALYfying the Value of Life" (738-746) • Daniels, "Is There a Right to Health Care and, If So, What Does it Encompass?" (696-702)
Thurs 9/26	Paternalism and Patient Autonomy DUE: PAPER #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Shades of Autonomy and Paternalism" & "Refusing Treatment" (71-74) • Dworkin, "Paternalism" (84-93)
Week 6		
Tue 10/1	Paternalism, Truth-Telling, & Informed Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Paternalism and Deception" (131-134) • Vaughn, "Informed Consent" (180-185) • Lipkin, "On Telling Patients the Truth" (145-147) • Thomasma, "Clinical Case Categories" (excerpt:143-144) • Goldman, "The Moral Argument" (excerpt: 96-98) • Cullen & Klein, "Respect for Patients, Physicians, and the Truth" (148-155)
Thurs 10/3	UNIT ONE EXAM	No new readings

Unit Two		Bioethical Issues
Week 7		
Tue 10/8	DEBATE #1: EUTHANASIA	No new readings
Thurs 10/10	Euthanasia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide" (594-602) • Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia" (649-652)
Week 8		
Tue 10/15	Euthanasia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia" (614-625) • Arras, "The Likelihood of Abuse" (excerpt: 638-639)
Thurs 10/17	DEBATE #2: ABORTION	No new readings
Week 9		
Tue 10/22	Abortion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral" (317-328) • Tooley, "In Defense of Abortion and Infanticide" (366-368)¹
Thurs 10/24	Abortion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (307-316) • Warren, "On the Moral & Legal Status of Abortion" (333-338)²
Week 10		
Tue 10/29	Abortion & Infanticide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warren, "On the Moral & Legal Status of Abortion" (338-343)² • Tooley, "In Defense of Abortion and Infanticide" (354-370)¹
Thurs 10/31	DEBATE #3: ANIMALS	No new readings
Week 11		
Tue 11/5	Animal Experimentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singer, "All Animals Are Equal" (pdf) • Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals" (pdf)
Thurs 11/7	Animal Experimentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People" (pdf)
Week 12		
Tue 11/12	Human Experimentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, Intro & "The Science of Clinical Trials" (221-224) • The Nuremburg Code (241-242) • Hellman & Hellman, "Of Mice But Not Men" (254-259) • Angell, "Ethics of Clinical Research in the 3rd World" (279-282) • Brody, "Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials..." (283-286)
Thurs 11/14	DEBATE #4: CLONING	No new readings
Week 13		
Tue 11/19	Human Cloning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kass, "The Wisdom of Repugnance" (486-487;491-494)³ • Brock, "Cloning Human Beings" (499-509)
Thurs 11/21	Genetic Enhancement DUE: PAPER #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaughn, "Gene Therapy" (526-529; skip page 527) • Glover "Questions About ... Genetic Engineering" (pdf) • Glannon "Genetic Enhancement" (577-581)
Fall Break		
11/25-11/29	Fall Break	No new readings
Week 14		
Tue 12/3	Genome Sequencing & Genetic Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: Cracking Your Genetic Code • Wilkinson, "Genetic Information ... Not 'Exceptional'" (pdf)
Thurs 12/5	In-Vitro Fertilization & Stem-Cell Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singer, "IVF: The Simple Case" (410-414) • Vaughn, "Stem Cells" (529-532) • Pontifical Academy, "Declaration on ... Stem Cells" (592-593) • Steinbock, "...Respect For Embryos..." (589-592)
Week 15		
Tue 12/10	Organ Transplants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radcliffe-Richards, "...Allowing Kidney Sales" (pdf) • Moss & Siegler, "Alcoholics ... Liver Transplantation?" (pdf)
Thurs 12/12	Review: Final Exam	No new readings
Sat 12/14	FINAL EXAM (2:00 class)	Section 002: 1:30pm – 4:00pm
Wed 12/18	FINAL EXAM (3:30 class)	Section 001: 1:30pm – 4:00pm

¹ For 10/22, begin with the last paragraph on page 366, and stop at the end of the first full paragraph on page 368 (i.e., stop when you get to the paragraph that starts, "There is one final point...").

For 10/29, read the entire article, but skip the section, "Is It Morally Wrong to Destroy Potential Persons?"

² For 10/24, read from the beginning to part II. For 10/29, read from part II to the end.

³ Read only the sections titled "The State of the Art" (486-7) and "The Perversities of Cloning" (491-4)