

Course: PHIL/PA 321 Medical Ethics  
 Course location: Phys-Atmos Sci Room 220  
 Meeting times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00PM-3:15PM  
 Instructor: Brandon Ashby  
 Email: [bashby@email.arizona.edu](mailto:bashby@email.arizona.edu)  
 Office location: Social Sciences 138  
 Office hours: Thursdays 3:15-5:15PM  
 Term: Fall 2019, University of Arizona

## 1. Textbooks and reading materials

There will be one textbook for the course:

Lewis Vaughan, *Biomedical Ethics: Principles, Issues, Cases*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, New York: Oxford University Press.

(You can also get the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition if it's cheaper. The page numbers will be different, but the materials we will be reading do not differ significantly between the two editions.)

All other reading materials will be posted as PDFs on the D2L course website.

## 2. About this Course

This course will survey a range of classical issues in medical ethics—such as informed consent, medical paternalism, and physician assisted suicide—from a perspective that emphasizes the socially embedded nature of medicine and medical research. For instance, to this day there are still widespread false beliefs in medical practitioners about biological differences between Black and white patients—e.g., that Black patients have thicker skin than white patients. These false beliefs lead physicians to underestimate the amount of pain that Black patients experience. As a result, physicians routinely fail to adequately treat Black patients' pain and the underlying conditions responsible for it. This is thought to be one of the factors that contributes to the significantly higher maternal death rates for Black mothers in the United States compared to white mothers; physicians interpret severe pain in Black mothers as “normal” and so fail to recognize emerging medical crises, such as hemorrhaging, before it is too late.<sup>1</sup>

## 3. Assignments

Assignments for this class include:

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<sup>1</sup> Kelly M. Hoffman, Sophie Trawalter, Jordan R. Axt, & M. Norman Oliver, (2016) ‘Racial bias in pain assessment and treatment recommendations, and false beliefs about biological differences between blacks and whites’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences: USA*, 113(16): 4296-4301.

Elliott K Main, Shen-Chih Chang, Ravi Dhurjati, Valerie Cape, Jochen Profit, & Jeffrey B Gould, (2020) ‘Reduction in racial disparities in severe maternal morbidity from hemorrhage in a large-scale quality improvement collaborative’ *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 223(1): 123.e1-123.e14.

- A syllabus quiz – 2.5% of your final grade
- Essays – 50% of your final grade
- Micro-exams – 40% of your final grade
- QIAs – 7.5% of your final grade

See the course schedule for exact dates of all assignments.

All assignments of a given category are weighted equally. E.g., all essays are worth the same amount.

### 3.1 Syllabus quiz:

At the end of the first week of class, students shall have a quiz that covers all aspects of the course syllabus and course policies. Students will have until 6PM on Monday of the second week of term to complete the syllabus quiz. Students may take the quiz as many times as they like and will receive the highest score from any given attempt. This is to ensure that students understand what will be expected of them in the course.

### 3.2 Essays:

You will have three essays over the course of the term. Each will be 2500 words in length. You will have the option of submitting a draft of each paper before you submit it for a final grade. The essays are worth 50% of your final grade and are evenly weighted. If you are satisfied with the grade that you receive on your first two essays, then you have the option of applying your combined score on your first two essays to your third essay. In other words, do well-enough on your first two essays and you don't have to do the third. I do this to encourage you to work hard on your first two essays and polish them.

Essays must be submitted online to the appropriate assignment dropbox on the D2L course website. Essays must be in .doc, .docx, .pdf, or .rtf format. Each essay will be sent through a plagiarism detection service called Turnitin.com. For more information about this, you may visit:

<https://turnitin.com/static/training/student.php>.

Essays can be submitted up to 72 hours after the due date without incurring a point penalty. After that 72-hour grace period, late essays will be marked down by 10% per day that they are late.

### 3.3 Micro-exams:

Students will have a micro-exam at the end of every week (including the first week of class). The micro-exams will be administered through the D2L course website. Micro-exams will open Friday evenings at 6PM and will close the following Monday at 6PM. The micro-exams can be found under the 'quizzes' tab of the D2L course website. The micro-exams are somewhat cumulative: a micro-exam may ask about any reading or lecture discussed in the last four weeks of the course. I shall drop your two lowest micro-quiz scores when compiling your final grade.

### 3.4 QIAs (Questions, Ideas, Arguments):

You will be required to complete a QIA for five readings in the course. This requires you to post on the course website discussion forums:

- Five questions they had about the reading
  - Three big ideas or takeaways from the reading
  - Two criticisms of one or more of the arguments made in the reading
- QIAs must be posted at least 12 hours before the course meeting discussing the relevant reading begins. I drop your lowest QIA score in the course.

### 3.5 Required forms:

Students are required to fill out and submit two forms:

- the pledge of academic integrity; and
- the receipt, acknowledgement, and acceptance of the course syllabus.

Both forms can be found on the course website. The forms must be submitted to the appropriately labeled assignment dropboxes on the D2L course website under the 'Assignments' tab. Students will not be able to view any other assignments for the courses until they have submitted both forms.

## 4. Course Schedule

### Introduction

1. Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>
  - 1.1. The Course Syllabus
  - 1.2. **Syllabus quiz closes Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

### The Voluntary Amputation of Healthy Limbs

2. Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>
  - 2.1. Bayne and Levy: 'Amputees by Choice' PDF on D2L
  - 2.2. **Micro-exam 1**
3. Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - 3.1. Patrone: 'Disfigured Anatomies and Imperfect Analogies'

### Intro to Ethical Theory

4. Thursday, September 5<sup>th</sup>
  - 4.1. Pages 3-13 (from the beginning of the chapter up to the sub-section titled 'Ethical Relativism') of Ch. 1 of *Bioethics* by Lewis Vaughan (ed.)
  - 4.2. **Micro-exam 2**
5. Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>
  - 5.1. James Rachels, "What is Morality?" in *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* 8th ed., pp. 1-14 (available on D2L)
6. Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>
  - 6.1. John Stuart Mill's 'Utilitarianism' in Vaughan, *Bioethics*, pgs. 55-58
  - 6.2. Immanuel Kant's 'The Moral Law' in Vaughan, *Bioethics*, pgs. 58-63
  - 6.3. **Micro-exam 3**

### Active and Passive Euthanasia

7. Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>
  - 7.1. Daniel Callahan's 'When Self-Determination Runs Amok' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 682-687
  - 7.2. James Rachels' 'Active and Passive Euthanasia' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 702-706
8. Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>
  - 8.1. Dan Brock's 'Voluntary Active Euthanasia' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 670-682
  - 8.2. [Micro-exam 4](#)

### Abortion

9. Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>
  - 9.1. Judith Jarvis Thompson 'A Defense of Abortion' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 357-367
10. Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>
  - 10.1. Don Marquis' 'Why Abortion is Immoral' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 367-379
  - 10.2. [Micro-exam 5](#)
  - 10.3. **Optional drafts of your first essay are due**

### Physician Participation in Capital Punishment

11. Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>
  - 11.1. Lawrence Nelson and Brandon Ashby's 'Rethinking the Ethics of Physician Participation in Capital Punishment in Lethal Injection Execution' PDF on D2L
  - 11.2. **First essay is due by 10PM**

### The Ethics of Medical Research

12. Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - 12.1. Samuel Hellman and Deborah Hellman's 'Of Mice but Not Men: Problems of the Randomized Clinical Trial', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 304-310
  - 12.2. Don Marquis's 'How to Resolve an Ethical Dilemma Concerning Randomized Clinical Trials', PDF on course website
  - 12.3. [Micro-exam 6](#)
13. Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>
  - 13.1. Watch *Wit*, available at this link:<sup>2</sup>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyyGu5OUD-o&list=PLuWjm74n77sPRfsAce5yolxo5vcbz-DC->
14. Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It's also available through Amazon Prime and HBO online. You can rent it from iTunes, the google media store, Amazon, and other electronic media distributors for \$4.

- 14.1. Marcia Angell's 'The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 328-332
- 14.2. Baruch Brady's 'Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials in Developing Countries', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 332-338.
- 14.3. [Micro-exam 7](#)

### Paternalism and Autonomy

- 15. Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>
  - 15.1. Gerald Dworkin's 'Paternalism', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 111-121
- 16. Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>
  - 16.1. James Colgrove and Ronald Bayer, "Manifold Restraints: Liberty, Public Health, and the Legacy of *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*" in *American Journal of Public Health* 94, no. 4 (2005), pp. 571-576 (available on D2L)
  - 16.2. [Micro-exam 8](#)

### Paternalism and Dietary Policies

- 17. Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - 17.1. Healthy Eating Policy: Sarah Conly, *Against Autonomy*, pgs. 162-169 PDF on D2L
  - 17.2. Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein's 'Libertarian Paternalism' PDF on D2L
- 18. Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>
  - 18.1. Alva Noe, 'The Value in Sweet Drinks': <http://www.npr.org/blogs/13.7/2012/09/24/161277720/the-value-in-sweet-drinks>
  - 18.2. Lauren Hunter and Kristin van Busum, "Soda 'Ban' May Actually Increase Freedom of Choice": [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lauren-hunter/new-york-soda-ban\\_b\\_1904920.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lauren-hunter/new-york-soda-ban_b_1904920.html) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
  - 18.3. Lowen Liu, "All Hail the Nanny State: How Michael Bloomberg, with his soda and cigarette bans, created a new social justice movement" Slate Magazine. 23 October 2012: <https://slate.com/business/2012/10/soda-ban-and-bloomberg-how-the-new-york-mayor-is-creating-a-great-new-social-justice-movement.html>
  - 18.4. [Micro-exam 9](#)
  - 18.5. **Optional drafts of your second essay are due**

### Medicine Gone Horribly Wrong

- 19. Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>
  - 19.1. Alexander Leopold, 'Medical Science Under a Dictatorship' PDF on D2L

### Addiction

- 20. Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>
  - 20.1. Michele Farisco, Kathinka Evers, and Jean-Pierre Changeux's 'Drug Addiction: From Neuroscience to Ethics' PDF on D2L
  - 20.2. [Micro-exam 10](#)
  - 20.3. **Second essay is due by 10PM**

### Informed Consent

21. Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>
  - 21.1. Robert Levine's 'Informed Consent: Some Challenges to the Universal Validity of the Western Model', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 261-267
22. Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>
  - 22.1. Jay Katz, 'Informed Consent—Must it Remain a Fairy Tale?', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 245-255
  - 22.2. [Micro-exam 11](#)

### Truth Telling and Confidentiality in Medicine

23. Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>
  - 23.1. Mack Lipkin's 'On Telling Patients the Truth' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 191-193
  - 23.2. Susan Cullen and Margaret Klein's 'Respect for Patients, Physicians, and the Truth', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 196-204
24. Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>
  - 24.1. Mark Siegler's 'Confidentiality in Medicine—A Decrepit Concept', in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 209-212
  - 24.2. James Rachels' 'Why Privacy is Important', PDF on D2L
  - 24.3. [Micro-exam 12](#)

### Universal Healthcare

25. Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>
  - 25.1. Gopal Sreenivasan's 'Health Care and Equality of Opportunity' PDF on D2L
26. Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>
  - 26.1. Norman Daniels' 'Is There a Right to Health Care and, If So, What Does it Encompass?' in Vaughn, *Bioethics*, pgs. 763-770.
  - 26.2. Robert Nozick, Selections from *Anarchy, State, Utopia*, pgs. 233-235, PDF on D2L
  - 26.3. [Micro-exam 13](#)

### The Allocation of Medical Resources

27. Tuesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>
  - 27.1. Daniel Wilder and Sarah Marchand's 'Society's Allocation of Resources for Health' PDF on D2L
  - 27.2. Alvin Moss and Mark Siegler, 'Should Alcoholics Compete Equally for Liver Transplantation?' PDF on D2L
  - 27.3. Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Lawrence K. Altman, 'An Ethical Dilemma with Few Precedents' available at this link:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/21/us/an-ethical-dilemma-with-few-precedents.html>
  - 27.4. [Micro-exam 14](#)

Thanksgiving Recess

[The Allocation of Medical Resources Continued](#)

28. Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

- 28.1. John Harris, 'Deciding Between Patients' PDF on D2L
- 28.2. Govind Persad, Alan Wertheimer, and Ezekiel Emanuel's 'Principles for Allocation of Scarce Medical Interventions' PDF on D2L
- 28.3. **Optional drafts of your third essay are due**

[Disability and Human Enhancement](#)

29. Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

- 29.1. Barker and Wilson's 'Well-Being, Disability, and Choosing Children' PDF on D2L
- 29.2. [Micro-exam 15](#)

30. Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>

- 30.1. Nick Bostrom's 'Cognitive Enhancement: Methods, Ethics, Regulatory Challenges' PDF on D2L
- 30.2. [Micro-exam 16](#)
- 30.3. **Third essay is due by 10PM**