

Philosophy 30015: Medicine and Morality

Fall 2009

M & W 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

Bowman 220

Professor: Dr. Deborah Barnbaum

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Office Hours: M 4:30-5:30, M & W 12:15-2:15, and by appointment

Course Content: This course will focus on three ethical issues of current interest in medicine. The first issue we will examine is the use of genetic technologies. What is eugenics, and how does eugenics affect our thinking about the use of genetic technologies? When is it permissible, and when is it impermissible, to use genetic technologies? Are there some forms of permissible genetic enhancement? How is genetic enhancement different from genetic therapy? The second issue in medicine we will examine is organ donation. The shortage of transplantable organs in the United States continues to be at epidemic proportions. What is a just allocation of organs? Who should go at the top of the organ donation list, and who should go at the bottom? Is it ever right to pay someone for his/her organs? The last issue we will look at is assisted suicide. What are the different types of assisted suicide? Are there any acts of assisted suicide that are morally permissible? Is there a difference between killing someone, and letting the person die?

Texts:

1. Allen Buchanan, Dan W. Brock, Norman Daniels, Daniel Wikler, *From Chance to Choice: Genetics and Justice*, Cambridge University Press, 2000 (henceforth FCC)
2. Tom L. Beauchamp, ed., *Intending Death: The Ethics of Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia*, Prentice Hall 1996 (henceforth ID)
3. Arthur L. Caplan and Daniel H. Coelho, *The Ethics of Organ Transplants: The Current Debate*, Prometheus Books, 1998 (henceforth TEOT)

There may also be hand-outs made available during the course of the semester.

Course Requirements:

Your grade will be based on your performance in the following:

Assignment:	Value Towards Final Grade:
Midterm #1	25%
Midterm #2	25%
Final	25%
Class Participation	25%

There is no “extra-credit”.

Midterms and final. Both of the midterms as well as the final will be in-class essay exams. Students should bring blue-books for all exams. The dates of each exam are included below, in the class schedule. You cannot pass the course unless you take each of the exams. Make-up exams after the exam has been administered will only be permissible with a documented medical excuse. All other make-up exams must be taken *prior* to the official date of the exam. More information on the exams will be made available during the course of the semester.

Class participation. Since this is a comparatively small, seminar-sized upper-division course, class participation is of utmost importance. Class participation can take the form of asking questions, answering questions, engaging members of the class in constructive debate about the issues presented in class, and participation in role-playing in class. You cannot participate in class unless you both read the materials assigned for each day and attend class. Therefore, I may occasionally take roll and use attendance towards calculating participation grades. Class attendance as a determination of performance in the class participation component of your final grade will be determined “on a curve”.

Class Management. The official registration deadline for this course is September 13, 2009. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashFast) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.

The last day to withdraw is November 8, 2009.

If you miss a class for any reason, it is recommended that you get notes from at least two other students in the class. After getting notes from other students, if you still have questions about that class, please see your teaching assistant or the professor in office hours.

It is recommended that you turn off your cell phone, pager, etc., during class. If you are expecting an emergency call, then you may leave it on. However, in such an emergency you should both 1) tell the professor before class that you may be expecting an emergency call, and 2) sit close to the door so that you can discretely leave class once you receive the call. It is understood that if this is an emergency that you will be unable to return to class.

Since this is an ethics class, it is expected that students will be discussing significant issues about which there may be strong disagreements. Agreement isn't necessary, but respectful debate and discussion are.

Class Schedule: (subject to change during the course of the semester, with appropriate notice by the Professor):

GENETICS

Week #1: Introduction to ethical theory and its implications for genetic decisionmaking

FCC Chpt 1, FCC Appendix 2

Week #2: More review of ethical theory, wide reflective equilibrium vs. foundationalism

FCC Chpt 1, FCC Appendix 2

No class on Monday, September 1—Labor Day

Week #3: Eugenics and public health models of genetic decisionmaking: the Carrie Buck case

FCC Chpt 2

Week #4: What's wrong with genetic inequality? Two types of egalitarianism, genetic barriers vs. social barriers to equality.

FCC Chpt 3

Week #5: One type of genetic interventions to remedy injustice: positive vs. negative genetic interventions

FCC Chpt 4

Week #6: A second type of genetic intervention to remedy injustice: “enhancement” vs. “therapy”. Defining ‘normal’.

FCC Chpt 4

Wednesday, October 7 – Midterm

ORGAN DONATION

Week #7: Sources of organs, when is someone “dead”? The DCD debate.

TEOT Part I: Introduction, Ott, Truog

Week #8: Presumed consent as a means of organ procurement

TEOT Part II: Futterman, Veatch and Pitt

Week #9: Jarvis's social contract solution and Pascal's Wager

TEOT Part II: Jarvis

Week #10: Commodification of organs

TEOT Part III: entire

Wednesday, November 4 – Midterm

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Week #11: Conceptual distinctions: euthanasia, voluntary vs. nonvoluntary euthanasia, killing vs. letting die

ID Introduction

No Class on Wednesday, November 11 – Veteran’s Day

Week #12: The doctrine of double effect (DDE, also known as the Rule of Double Effect, or RDE)

ID Introduction

Week #13: The role of intentions, the role of consent

ID Part I: Buchanan

Week #14: Methods in Bioethics, Macklin’s argument against euthanasia

ID Part I: Jonsen, Macklin

Week #15: The Oregon Plan

handouts

Final Exam Period: 10:15 am – 12:30 pm, Thursday, December 17

Students with Disabilities: University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. **Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services** (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).

Academic Complaints: The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure for handling student grievances is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 3342-16 in the University Policy Register. For information concerning the details of the grievance procedure, please see the departmental chairperson.

Academic Dishonesty: University policy 3342-3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/3-01-8.cfm> and/or ask.