

PHILOSOPHY 327—BIOMEDICAL ETHICS—Fall 2011

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Office Hours: TR 3:20-4:50 PM; W: 9:00 AM —noon; or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: An examination of moral issues in health care. Topics discussed include moral problem solving, reproductive authority and technology, genetic engineering, and allocation of health care resources. This is an approved GE Upper Division Theme course.

COURSE GOALS: Mastery of a framework for ethical reasoning that will enable students to:

- understand the nature of a moral dilemma, a moral action, and a good life;
- appreciate the interrelationship of these concepts; and
- recognize & use philosophical tools to resolve moral dilemmas & identify moral actions.

CAVEATS:

1. PHIL 327 fulfills the Area C requirement for the GE UDT, Contemporary Health Issues. **You must have completed at least 45 units to gain theme credit.**
2. **Method/workload/commitment:** You are required to read complex articles every day. Keeping up with and understanding the required reading is crucial if you are to succeed in the class. You are also required to take a quiz on the reading material every day. In short, this class demands a serious commitment on your part. Competing requirements—extracurricular activities, jobs, etc.—may negatively effect your success in this class. If you don't think you want or can manage such a commitment, you should consider taking another class.
3. My **policy on late assignments** is simple and straightforward: **no late assignments will be accepted.** *It is therefore crucial that you do not miss discussions, papers, or exams.*

DISABILITY POLICY: If you have a disability with course-related accommodation needs, you have a right, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to request such accommodations. **Please inform me of your required accommodations immediately.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Your final grade will be based on 1000 possible points.** These points are gained through:
 - a. Daily **5-point** quizzes on daily assignments (100 points): **given at start of class each day you have a reading, listening, or viewing assignment (if you are late, too bad).** You may miss 2 without penalty. **Quizzes = 10% course grade**
 - b. Three (3) in-class group discussions on dates and topics assigned below (100 points): **Discussions = 10% course grade** (#1 = 30 points; #2 = 30 points; #3 = 40 points)
 - c. Three (3) 500-1000-word written analyses on topics assigned below (300 points: Paper #1 = 50 points; #2 = 100 points; #3 = 150 points): **Papers = 30% course grade**
 - d. Three **comprehensive, multiple choice** exams (500 total points: #1 = 100 points; #2 =150 points; and #3 (final) = 250 points) = **50% course grade.**
2. Final grade will be based on a total of 1000 points.

950-1000 pts = A	870-899 pts = B+	770-799 pts = C+	650-699 pts = D+
900-949 pts = A-	830-869 pts = B	730-769 pts = C	600-649 pts = D
	800-829 pts = B-	700-729 pts = C-	599 and ↓ = F
3. **A note on the meaning of letter grades:**
 - a. 'A' indicates outstanding work: a first-rate level of comprehension of course material.
 - b. 'B' indicates above-average (*not* simply average) comprehension.

- c. 'C'—the average grade—indicates achievement of an acceptable, but not noteworthy, level of comprehension.
- d. 'D' indicates the minimal level of comprehension for passing the course (or assignment).
- e. 'F' indicates the minimal level of comprehension for passing has not be demonstrated.

REQUIRED TEXT: Available in AS Bookstore and Limited Loan, Meriam Library

Jessica Pierce & Geo. Randels, Contemporary Bioethics: A Reader With Cases (OUP 2010).

NB: Always bring your text to class.

RULES OF THE GAME: *I will do all I can to help you succeed in this class (really, I will).* I keep office hours in the cheerful hope that you will come to discuss philosophy (really, I do). Such conversations are both fun and likely to improve your grasp of course material (really, they will). Besides, you pay to have my expertise available to you, so you may as well get your money's worth. Your role in your success includes the following:

1. **This is not a memorization course! Come to class prepared to discuss your *analyses of the day's assignments*.** This is impossible if you have not read and studied the material.
2. I will randomly call on students to discuss readings. If you are truly unable (as opposed to merely unwilling) to respond, you may pass. You should pass rarely.
3. Do not get behind on the readings! Playing catch-up in this class is an unsuccessful strategy.
4. If you have problems understanding course material, come see me as soon as you realize you are in trouble. If you wait until dead week, you are dead meat.
5. If you miss class, contact a classmate to get notes.
6. To prevent unpleasant surprises, I post grades after each graded paper and exam. I curve grades only at semester's end, and only if no one gets a natural 'A'. Typically someone gets a natural 'A', so you should hone your skills in philosophical analysis rather than prayer.
7. Anyone cheating on a quiz, paper, or exam will be shot. Survivors will fail the class and be referred to Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. I will recommend expulsion from university, as anyone who cheats in an ethics course clearly lacks the intellect needed to appreciate complex concepts and was admitted to university by mistake.
8. Mere seat time will not guarantee you a "Gentleman's [sic] C." Your grade is based on mastery of the material. If you want a guaranteed 'C', go to Princeton on Daddy's money.

READING PHILOSOPHY FOR FUN AND PROFIT: Readings are theoretical and demand careful study.

You should allot AT LEAST 2 hours (3 are even better) to read/watch/listen to each assignment. You should read/watch/listen to assignments before and after class discussions. (Yes, I am suggesting you read/watch/listen to each assignment twice. No, I am not insane.) **As you read/watch/listen to assignments, attempt to determine the following:**

- What is the author's **position**? What does s/he want to convince you to believe?
- What **reasons—moral and factual**—does the author give to support the position?
- What **evidence** supports the reasons the author gives?
- If you approach readings critically, you will almost always:
 - get much more out of them;
 - learn to identify good arguments and recognize when to take a claim seriously; and
 - get a better grade.

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENTS:

8/23 Introduction to Bioethics and ethical problem solving

8/25 **MORAL DILEMMAS AND THEIR RESOLUTION**

READ: (1) Syllabus—available at <http://www.csuchico.edu/phil/course/course.html> and <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/> (2) “AJ Basic Process”; (3) “Wanted: Blue-eyed blonde...” (#2,#3 @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>); (4) “Egg-donor business..” @ http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/health/2006-03-15-egg-donors-usat_x.htm

TYPE/BRING TO CLASS: A chart listing pros and cons for Andrea’s ovum donation.

8/30 Moral Dilemmas and the Appeal to Consequences

READ: (1) P&R: 112; (2) “Appeal to Consequences”; (3) “Obligation to Rescue” (#2 & #3 @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>.) (4) “Feuding Over Vaccines” @

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/04/AR2005110402193.html>; (5) “An early cure for parents’ vaccine panic” @

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/an-early-cure-for-parents-vaccine-panic/2011/06/08/AGzM5MPH_story.html

WATCH: “The Vaccine War” @ <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/vaccines/>

TYPE: Complete steps 1 & 2 identified in the “Appeal to Consequences” reading for this dilemma: Should parents be allowed to refuse to vaccinate their children? Pick one of the consequences you identified in step 2 and complete steps 3-5 for that consequence.

9/1 Autonomy in Moral Analysis

READ: (1) P&R: 54-63, 86-7, and 114; (2) “Appeal to Autonomy”; (3) “Appeal to RFP” —(2) & (3) @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>; (4) “Wake Up, Little Susie” @

<http://www.slate.com/id/2079113/>; and (5) “Modafinil” @

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0000196/>

TYPE: **AJ** steps 1-3—using **both and only** the appeals to autonomy and respect for persons—for the dilemma: Should Dr. Beckwith give Grete a prescription for modafinil?

9/6 Rights in Moral Analysis

READ: (1) P&R: 53, 177-182; (2) “Appeal to Rights” and (3) “ELBW—Interplay...” @

<http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>; (4) “Neonatal ICU Issues” @

<http://depts.washington.edu/bioethx/topics/nicu.html>; (5) “Extremely Low Birth Weight (ELBW)

Infant” @ <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/979717>; (6) “Law and ethics at the border of viability” @ <http://www.nature.com/jp/journal/v26/n6/pdf/7211529a.pdf>

TYPE: **AJ** steps 1-4—use **both and only appeals to rights and RFPs**—to resolve the dilemma: Should parents of ELBW infants be allowed to refuse treatment for them?

9/8 Virtues in Moral Analysis

READ: (1) P&R 29-37, 48-52, 76-82 (yes, just the middle of this article), 114 (yes, again); (2)

“Professionalism.Appeal to Virtues”; (3) “In Practice” (2 & 3 @

<http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>); (4) “The Two-Minus-One Pregnancy” @

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/14/magazine/the-two-minus-one-pregnancy.html?pagewanted=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha210>

TYPE: Using **both and only** the appeals to autonomy AND virtues, complete ALL 5 **AJ** steps for the dilemma: Should physicians reduce twins to singletons for nonmedical reasons?

9/13 Justice in Moral Analysis

READ: (1) Appeal to Justice; (2) Appeal to Cost effectiveness @

<http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>; (3) review web readings from 9/6/2011

TYPE: Using **both and only** the appeals to justice and to consequences, complete ALL 5 **AJ** steps for the dilemma: Should parents of ELBW infants be allowed to refuse treatment for them?

9/15 **IN-CLASS DISCUSSION #1:** Type & bring to class a full AJ—all 5 steps incorporating all 5 CARVE principles—in which you determine: Should HCPs caring for ELBW infants honor parents' refusals of treatment for them.

9/20 In-class review session for first midterm exam—Study questions for Midterm Exam #1 @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>
PAPER #1 (based on in-class discussion #1) IS DUE.

9/22 **MIDTERM EXAM #1**

9/27—10-25 ETHICAL ISSUES IN GENETIC AND REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE

NOTE: *As you read the assignments each day, “plug in” information and moral concerns that will assist you in constructing your next paper.*

9/27 Ethical Issues in Reproductive Medicine: Abortion
Class will not meet today. **READ:** P&R: 362 **and, on your own, WATCH:** The Last Clinic @ <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/clinic/> (quiz on 9/27).

9/29 Ethical Issues in Reproductive Medicine: Women and Choice
READ: (1) P&R: 362-365, 300-304, 321-329; and (2) “Insurance Coverage for Contraception Is Required” @ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/02/health/policy/02health.html>

10/4 Ethical Issues: Genetic and Reproductive Medicine: Genes and Disability
READ: (1) P&R: 590-591, 594-597, 607-611; (2) “The Ethics of Testing Embryos for Disease” @ <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/OnCall/story?id=5275445&page=1>; (3) “Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis” @ <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/273415-overview>

10/6 Ethical Issues: Genetic and Reproductive Medicine: Genetic Enhancement
READ: (1) P&R 598-606, 612-619; (2) “National Pastime” @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>
WATCH: “Designer Babies Ethical?” (~ 4 minutes) @ <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4840229n&tag=related>

10/11 Ethical Issues: Genetic and Reproductive Medicine: Better than Human?
READ: P&R 619-630

10/13 Ethical Issues: Genetic and Reproductive Medicine: Extended Applications
READ: P&R 657-660, 647-651

10/18 Ethical Issues: Genetic and Reproductive Medicine: Memory and Happiness
READ: P&R: 657-59, 631-639

10/20 **IN-CLASS DISCUSSION #2** Type & bring to class a full AJ in which you resolve the dilemma: Under what conditions, if any, should the US government permit PGD?

10/25 Review for second midterm exam—Study questions for Midterm Exam #2 @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>
PAPER #2 (based on IN-CLASS DISCUSSION #2) IS DUE.

10/27 MIDTERM EXAM #2

11/1—12-8 ETHICAL ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE ALLOCATION

NOTE: *Again, as you read assignments each day, “plug in” relevant moral info.*

11/1 **ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE**
READ: (1) P&R 371-377 & 477-479; (2) “Future Health Consequences of the Current Decline in US Household Income”; (3) “Health Care Premiums Surpass Minimum Wage”; (4) “Prescription drug cost” (2-4 at: <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>);(5) Summary of Affordable Care Act” @

<http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8061.pdf>; (6) OECD Health Data 2011: How Does the United States Compare?" @ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/46/2/38980580.pdf>

LISTEN TO: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=98387481> (~40min) and "The Affordable Care Act: One Year Later" @ <http://www.healthcare.gov/law/introduction/index.html>

WRITE: A list indicating where, in a full AJ, you would incorporate **at least one item from each of the day's readings/"listensings"**.

IN-CLASS FILM: "One Care Now"

11/3 Justice in Health Care: The Egalitarian Perspective
READ: P&R 386-395

11/8 Justice in Health Care: The Libertarian Perspective
READ: (1) P&R 396-400 (yes, only the first 5 pages of this essay); (2) American Values — A Smoke Screen @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>

11/10 Potential for principled agreement?
READ: P&R 404-411

11/15 What about illegal immigrants?
READ: (1) P&R 479-480, 412-419; (2) "A Worker With No ID and Great Medical Need" @ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/02/health/views/02cases.html>

11/17 Rationing healthcare
READ: (1) P&R: 477-482, 426-439

LISTEN (again) TO: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=98387481>

WATCH: "Evidence-based Medicine" @ <http://video.pbs.org/video/1346662087> (@ minute 17: 35 (approx. 13 minutes))

11/22-11/24 THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/29 Who else needs health care? Why don't they get health care?
READ: (1) "Cost of Treating Veterans Will Rise Long Past Wars" @ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/28/us/28veterans.html?emc=eta1>; (2) "Justices Are Asked to Hear Challenge to Health Care Law" @ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/28/us/28scotus.html?emc=eta1>; (3) "Single-Payer's Impact on Physician Income" @ <http://www.policyprescriptions.org/?p=1837>; (4) "Treating the Cause, Not the Illness" @ <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/28/treating-the-cause-not-the-illness/?emc=eta1>; and (5) "Doctor: Universal Health Care Opponents Play Public for Fools" @ <http://pnhpcalifornia.org/2011/07/doctor-universal-health-care-opponents-play-public-for-fools/>

12/1 In-class film: "Sicko"
READ: "National Health Spending Projections Through 2020:..." @ http://www.cdhsolutionsmag.com/en/communities/policy_legislation/national-health-spending-projections-through-2020_gqudjlr.html; and "Debt Deal Threatens Health of Seniors and Disabled" @ <http://www.commondreams.org/newswire/2011/08/05-6>

12/6 **IN-CLASS DISCUSSION #3 Type/bring to class a full AJ in which you resolve the dilemma: From a moral point of view should the US Congress have adopted the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act?**

12/8 Review for final exam—Study questions for Final Exam @ <http://sites.google.com/site/phil327csuc/>
PAPER #3 (based on DISCUSSION #3) IS DUE.

FINAL EXAM: **Section 01(TR 9:30AM):** **Tuesday, December 13, 12-1:50 PM**
 Section 05 (TR 12:30 PM): **Tuesday, December 13, 2-3:50 PM**

OFFICE HOURS DURING FINALS WEEK: MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY, 1:00-3:30 PM