HEALTHCARE ETHICS, 90-708
Syllabus
Spring 2016

Instructor

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Classroom: 1001 HBH

Course Description

This course will survey several important ethical issues, problems and dilemmas that arise in the context of the delivery of healthcare. It will begin with discussions that focus upon the nature of ethics in general and applied ethics in particular. The goal of this introductory portion of the course will be to establish a healthcare decision making framework that will be used during the remaining sections of the course. Topics introduced here will include: theoretical and applied ethics, moral pluralism, principalism, the differences between absolutism, relativism and pluralsim and prudential reasoning as a tool for ethical analysis in healthcare.

The specific healthcare areas that will be discussed and analyzed from a normative perspective include: determining the beginning and the end of human life, the ethical questions surrounding abortion, end of life issues such as euthanasia and physician assisted suicide, various reproductive issues, medical research ethics, ethics in the medical treatment of infants and children, transplantation issues and the ethics of medical genetics.

The course will proceed by means of lectures, small and large group discussions and the analysis of well-known essays and case studies in healthcare ethics.

Course Goals

The educational goals of the course include the following competencies where students will:

1. learn basic ethical concepts, principles and theories and how to apply them in the healthcare arena

2. become familiar with various ethical issues that arise in the delivery of healthcare
3. articulate defensible positions on topics in ethics and healthcare in both written and oral formats

4. be prepared to make defensible ethical and normative judgments about hard choices and cases in healthcare

5. be able to analyze the ethical considerations in public policies dealing with healthcare and emerging issues in biomedical technology

**Textbook**


**Tentative Course Schedule**

March 14
Introduction to the course; Introduction to ethics and applied ethics; The elements of moral pluralism
Chapters 1 and 2

March 21
Health care decision making; Prudential reasoning; An overview of ethics in healthcare; Introduction and Chapters 3, 4 and 5

March 28
Determining Life: Reproductive issues; Abortion
Chapters 6, 10 and 11

April 4
Determining Death: Life-prolonging treatments; Euthanasia; Physician assisted suicide
Chapters 7 and 13

April 11
Medical research ethics; Genetics and ethics; Biotechnology, medicine and ethics
Chapters 14 and 16

April 18
Infants and children; Transplantation Ethics
Chapters 12 and 15

April 25
Student case studies due date, discussion of case studies and course evaluation
Course Assignment

There is only one project in the course that will determine your final grade. This project is a healthcare ethics case writing and analysis project. Students will choose a particular ethical issue in healthcare early in the course and write a case based upon this issue, analyze it and propose and justify alternative solutions.

Your case should contain an ethical issue, problem or dilemma that needs to be managed appropriately and resolved by a good action plan. The case that you write can be based upon a healthcare ethics issue that is an unfolding current event, a recent event or it can be one based upon and adapted from an actual case found in the healthcare ethics literature -- however, you should not submit an already written case account (although these can be used in your case research). In other words, submit a case that you have written and not another author. Those cases that we have discussed already in class should not be used in this project either (e.g. the case of Karen Quinlan).

You should write and analyze a case that has a healthcare ethical issue, problem or dilemma that is interesting and meaningful to you and thereby can serve you as a good learning experience and preparation for the real world. The ethical analysis that you perform on your case should demonstrate that you have mastered the application of the concepts, principles and theories in ethics that we have developed in the course.

This is the main educational goal of the course. You should have built skills of analytic reasoning that are based upon the uses of concepts, principles and theories that can assist you in resolving ethical issues, problems or dilemmas in healthcare and let you justify the resolution that you offer in your case analysis. We will discuss the progress of the case writing and case analysis at the start of each class. You should share your topic with the instructor either in class or via email to make sure that it is appropriate and of sufficient depth to serve you well as a vehicle in which you demonstrate your abilities to apply ethical concepts, principles and theories.

This assignment is due to the course instructor via email <pm2n@andrew.cmu.edu> not later than the beginning of the last scheduled class in the course. Please send a Word version file of your paper (no PDFs please) attached to your email submission.

Grading

Grading for the course assignment and for the course will follow the Heinz College grading scale:

- 97-100: A+
- 93-96: A
- 90-92: A-
- 87-89: B+
- 83-86: B
- 80-82: B-
- 77-79: C+
- 73-76: C
- 70-72: C-
Course Policies

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory and absences can be excused for medial reasons or in unforeseen emergency situations. Unexcused absences will result in a penalty of five grade points.

Extensions of Assignment Due Dates

Requests for extensions of assignment due date or for course incompletes should be made only for medical reasons with evidence of medical need or in cases of a non-medical emergency. Having a heavy end of the term workload is not good grounds for requesting an assignment extension.

Extra Credit

It is the policy of this course that no extra credit work is available to change a student grade.

Class Decorum

Please put your cell phone or beeper on its silent mode during class time. There will be no texting during class. Arrive to class on time and remain for the entire class period unless otherwise excused. Class discussions should be based upon CMU community standards. Although it is likely that you want to challenge the positions of others on issues of health care ethics, you should always do so with respect for the other person.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a qualifying disability, please feel free to request accommodation from your instructor. In addition, Carnegie Mellon recommends that you contact Equal Opportunity Services (EOS). Contact Larry Powell, Disability Services Manager, 412-268-2013. See http://www.cmu.edu/hr/eos/index.html

Academic Integrity

The following is taken from a Heinz Student Manual:

“ETHICS & DISCIPLINE

The Heinz School is a professional school that is designed to prepare students for responsible positions requiring the trust and confidence of the public. Therefore, the School must demand the highest ethical standards of its students. The two cornerstones of these ethical standards are honesty and concern for others. The Heinz School will not tolerate plagiarism, false presentation of the extent of individual contributions to joint
efforts, cheating, or falsification of records. It will also not tolerate disruptive behavior, ethnic intimidation, sexual harassment, moral turpitude, illegal activities, or violation of Heinz School or university regulations. Students who do so will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including possible expulsion.

8.1 Cheating and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misrepresentation are viewed as extremely serious matters. Misrepresentation of another's work as one's own is widely recognized as among the most serious violations. The violation is clearly flagrant when it occurs as plagiarism on a required paper or as cheating on an examination, including take-home as well as in-class examinations. The punishment for such offenses can involve expulsion from the School. There are many other ways in which violations can occur. The circumstances and the rules may vary for different courses, and each instructor will establish his or her own rules for a particular course. Each student is responsible for understanding these rules. If a student has failed a course because of a cheating violation and then retakes the course, both the failing grade and the new grade will be used in the calculation of the student's QPA. Cases of cheating and plagiarism will be reviewed by the Dean, who may impose additional penalties up to and including expulsion from the school. Students should understand clearly that such offenses are not tolerated in this community.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: 1. Plagiarism (explained below); 2. Submission of work that is not the student's own; 3. Submission or use of falsified data; 4. Unauthorized access to an exam or assignment; 5. Use of a stand-in for an exam; 6. Use of unauthorized material in the preparation of an assignment or during an examination; 7. Supplying or communicating unauthorized information to another student for use in an assignment or exam; 8. Unauthorized collaboration on an assignment. Collaboration must be explicitly permitted by an instructor for it to be considered authorized. 9. Submission of the same work for credit in more than one course.

Plagiarism is the failure to indicate the source of work - either with quotation marks or footnotes. The source can be: 1. A phrase; 2. A graphic element; 3. A proof; 4. Specific language; 5. An idea derived from the work of another person. Note that material on the web is another person's work and is therefore equally subject to the rules on plagiarism and cheating as any other source material.”

(See the remainder of Section 8 that discusses disciplinary procedures, student rights to appeal, etc.)