

PL277

Medical Ethics

Seminar Leader

Sinem D Kılıç

“Illness is the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship. Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick. Although we all prefer to use only the good passport, sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a spell, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place.”

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—Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*

Course Times

Thursdays, 10 am–1 pm

Course Description

The decisions taken in medical treatment are often the subject of complex philosophical and moral debate, drawing on concepts and principles that long predate new technological developments.

Office Hours

Online & by appointment

This course addresses the ethical basis of medical research and practice, including distinct ideas of autonomy, health, well-being, and disease. We cover some of the most prominent and fraught issues that have arisen in the legal regulation of medical care, such as euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, cultural and historical differences surrounding questions of reproduction, and issues of information-flow, informed consent, privacy, truth-telling and confidentiality, as well as questions of medical racism, social justice and rights to healthcare, human research, genetic enhancement, and the ethical dilemmas that arise during global pandemics as we experience them today.

Course Readings

All required readings will be available in a Course Reader (print version), which will be distributed in the library. All additional readings will be available via Google Classroom.

* Recommended Book: Lewis Vaughn (ed) (2020) *Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases*, Fourth Edition, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press (ISBN: 9780190903268)

Requirements

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, one absence from a once-per-week course should not affect the participation grade or require documentation. More than one absence (that is an absence from a once-per-week session of 180 minutes) in a semester will significantly affect the participation grade for the course. Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2022: Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Required Texts

Generally, there will be some compulsory and some recommended readings for each session. These are mainly selected contributions by different authors, many of them from *Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases*. All students are responsible for preparing all the required readings in advance of each week (with the exception of the first session). In addition to the printed course reader, a digital reader will be provided at the beginning of the semester via Google Classroom. However, all texts should be physically printed at best, and be available for reference during our course time. The recommended readings, also uploaded to our Google Classroom, are not mandatory, but highly encouraged.

Assessment

Participation

Students should arrive to each class on time (also during online sessions!) **and prepared**. Being prepared means

- (1) having completed the assigned reading,
- (2) bringing to class a non-electronic copy of the assigned reading, and
- (3) being ready to initiate and to contribute to discussion.

Engagement in class discussion should be regular as well as productive; quantity alone will not favorably affect the participation grade.

Class Presentations

Every student is expected to present on one text as per a sign-up sheet online. Each presentation of about 15 minutes will examine key passages of their choice, ideally using either PowerPoint or a handout for the class. You are encouraged to write your midterm or final paper on the text that you present on. In this manner, your essay can expand on the insights and questions that arose from your class contribution and the discussion that follows your readings.

Writing Assignments

There will be two principal assignments over the course of the term: **a midterm essay of 2000 words** due at 23:59 **on March 20** and **a final essay of 3000 words** due at 23:59 on **May 15 for graduating students** and 23:59 on **May 20** for other students. All essays are to be **submitted electronically via Google Classroom**.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Class participation: 25%

Presentation: 20%

Midterm essay (2000 words): 25%

Final essay (3000 words): 30%

Course Schedule


Medical Ethics

SESSION / DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
1 / Feb. 3, 2022	INTRODUCTION	
2 / Feb. 10, 2022	MORAL REASONING & MORAL PRINCIPLES	Chapter 1 “Moral Reasoning in Bioethics,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , ed. by Lewis Vaughn, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press 2020, 3–33
3 / Feb. 17, 2022	MORAL THEORIES	Chapter 2 “Bioethics and Moral Theories,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 34–63
4 / Feb. 24, 2022	AUTONOMY & PATERNALISM	(1) Chapter 3 “Paternalism and Patient Autonomy,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 97–110 (2) Gerald Dworkin, “Paternalism,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 111–120
5 / Mar. 3, 2022	TRUTH-TELLING & CONFIDENTIALITY	(1) David C. Thomasma, “Telling the Truth to Patients,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 187–191 (2) Mack Lipkin, “On Telling Patients the Truth,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 191–193 (3) Shelly K. Schwartz, “Is It Ever OK to Lie to Patients?,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 193–196 (4) Susan Cullen & Margaret Klein, “Respect for Patients, Physicians, and the Truth,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 196–203
6 / Mar. 10, 2022	PATIENT AUTONOMY & INFORMED CONSENT	(1) Chapter 5 “Informed Consent,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 228–240 (2) Robert J. Levine, “Informed Consent: Some Challenges to the

SESSION / DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
		<p>Universal Validity of the Western Model,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 261–267</p> <p>(3) M. Kuczewski / P.J. McCrudden, “Informed Consent: Does It Take a Village? The Problem of Culture and Truth Telling,” <i>Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics</i> 10(1), 2011, 34–46</p>
7 / Mar. 17, 2022	PANDEMIC ETHICS: COVID-19	<p>(1) Julian Savulescu, “Good Reasons to Vaccinate: Mandatory or Payment for Risk?,” <i>Journal of Medical Ethics</i> 47(2), 2020, 78–85</p> <p>(2) Alberto Giubilini, “Vaccination Ethics,” <i>British Medical Bulletin</i> 137(1), 2021, 4–12</p> <p>(3) Julian Savulescu / Ingmar Persson / Dominic Wilkinson, “Utilitarianism and the Pandemic,” <i>Bioethics</i> 34, 2020, 620–632</p>
Sunday, Mar. 20, 2022	<i>Midterm Papers Due</i>	
8 / Mar. 24, 2022	ABORTION	<p>(1) Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 357–367</p> <p>(2) Don Marquis, “Why Abortion Is Immoral,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 367–379</p> <p>(3) Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 383–394</p> <p>(4) Marianne Le Nabat, “Is Abortion Candy?” (online)</p>
9 / Mar. 31, 2022	HUMAN RESEARCH	<p>(1) Marcia Angell, “The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 328–332</p> <p>(2) Baruch Brody, “Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials in Developing</p>

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		<p>Countries,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 332–336</p> <p>(3) “The Nuremberg Code,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 291–292</p> <p>(4) “Declaration of Helsinki,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 292–295</p>
10 / Apr. 7, 2022	GENETIC ENHANCEMENT	<p>(1) Chapter 9 “Genetic Choices,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 562–582</p> <p>(2) Walter Glannon, “Genetic Enhancement,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 622–627</p> <p>(3) Julian Savulescu, “Genetic Interventions and the Ethics of Enhancement of Human Beings,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 627–636</p> <p>(4) Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birth Mark”</p>
Apr. 11 – Apr. 18, 2022	SPRING BREAK 	
11 / Apr. 21, 2022	REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY	<p>(1) Peter Singer, “IVF: The Simple Case,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 460–463</p> <p>(2) Elizabeth S. Anderson, “Is Women’s Labor a Commodity?,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 514–526</p> <p>(3) Leon R. Kass, “The Wisdom of Repugnance,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 535–550</p>
12 / Apr. 28, 2022	RACE & MEDICINE	<p>(1) Allan M. Brandt, “Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 314–326</p> <p>(2) Angus Chen, “Is It Time to Stop Using Race in Medical</p>

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		<p>Research?," <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 326–328</p> <p>(3) Michael Yudell et al., "Taking Race Out of Human Genetics. Engaging a Century-Long Debate about the Role of Race in Science" <i>Science</i> 351(6273), 2016, 564–565</p> <p>(4) Ruqaiijah Yearby, "Race Based Medicine, Colorblind Disease: How Racism in Medicine Harms Us All," <i>The American Journal of Bioethics</i> 21(2), 2021, 19–27</p>
13 / May 5, 2022	<p>EUTHANASIA & PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE</p>	<p> * Documentary Film <i>How To Die in Oregon</i> (2011)</p> <p>(1) Chapter 10 "Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide," <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 648–665</p> <p>(2) Daniel Callahan, "When Self-Determination Runs Amok," <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 682–686</p> <p>(3) John D. Arras, "Physician-Assisted Suicide: A Tragic View," <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 687–702</p> <p>(4) Ronald Dworkin et al., "The Philosopher's Brief," <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i>, 717–725</p>
14 / May 12, 2022	<p>JUSTICE & HEALTH CARE / FINAL DISCUSSION</p>	<p>(1) John Harris, "The Survival Lottery," <i>The Ethical Life. Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems</i>, ed. by Russ Shafer-Landau, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018, 258–266</p> <p>(2) Norman Daniels, "Is There a Right to Health Care and, if So, What Does It Encompass?,"</p>

SESSION / DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
		<i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 763–769 (3) Allan E. Buchanan, “The Right to a Decent Minimum of Health Care,” <i>Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases</i> , 770–775
15 / May 16 – May 20, 2022	COMPLETION WEEK  (No Class) <i>Final Papers Due Friday, May 15 for graduating students & May 20, 2022 for other students</i>	

ESSAY DEADLINES

Midterm Paper (2000 words) by **March 20, 2022, 23:59 CET**

Final Paper (3000 words) by **May 15, 23:59 for graduating students & May 20, 2022, 23:59 CEST for other students**