

## **Course Outline Biomedical Ethics**

### Course Description:

In this course, students will learn about some of the core issues of biomedical ethics. Biomedical ethics is an area of philosophy which focuses primarily on ethical issues associated with the medical profession. In the first section of this course students will cover basics in philosophical reading, writing, and methodology. Students will also learn some basic concepts from moral theory. In the second section of this course students will examine the patient-physician relationship and related issues, including truth, autonomy, privacy, consent, refusal of treatment, and rights to health care. In the third section of this course students will examine several issues related to reproduction, including abortion, surrogacy, gamete donation, and genetic screening. In the fourth section of this course students will briefly survey ethical issues associated with research and allocation of resources. The remaining section of this course will cover select topics, including mandatory vaccination, genetic editing and therapy, cloning, and euthanasia.

### Course Texts:

I am aware of the financial impediments posed by acquiring materials for class. To remove this potential barrier to your academic success, all readings are free-to-use and made available electronically.

### Course Reading Schedule:

#### **Day 1: Introduction**

#### **Day 2: Reading and Writing Philosophy; University Resources**

Reading: 1,000 Word Philosophy, “How to Read Philosophy”

Reading: Harvard Writing Center, “A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper”

#### **Day 3: Logic, Arguments, and Philosophical Methodology**

Reading: James Rachels, “Some Basic Points About Arguments”

Reading: Tom Regan, “Introduction to Moral Reasoning”

#### **Day 4: Consequentialism and Utilitarianism**

Reading: J.J.C. Smart, “Act-Utilitarianism and Rule Utilitarianism”

#### **Day 5: Deontology and Rights**

Reading: Onora O’Neill, “A Simplified Version of Kant’s Ethics”

#### **Day 6: Virtue Ethics and Care Ethics**

Reading: Rosalind Hursthouse, “Normative Virtue Ethics”

#### **Day 7: Medical Paternalism and Patient Autonomy**

Reading: Mark Komrad, “A Defence of Medical Paternalism: Maximizing Patients’ Autonomy”

#### **Day 8: Truth, Autonomy, and the Patient-Physician Relationship**

Reading: James Childress and Mark Siegler, “Metaphors and Models in the Doctor-Patient Relationship: Their Implications for Autonomy”

**Day 9: Truth, Autonomy, and the Patient-Physician Relationship**

Reading: Sissela Bok, “Lies to the Sick and Dying”

**Day 10: Privacy**

Reading: Mark Siegler, “Confidentiality in Medicine – A Decrepit Concept”

**Day 11: Informed Consent**

Reading: Howard Brody, “Transparency: Informed Consent in Primary Care”

**Day 12: Refusal to Treat**

Reading: Eva LaFollette and Hugh LaFollette, “Private Conscience, Public Acts”

**Day 13: Surrogacy, Competence, and Patient Autonomy**

Reading: Allen Buchanan and Dan Brock, “Deciding for Others”

**Day 14: Right to Health Care**

Reading: Norman Daniels, “Is There a Right to Health Care and, if So, What Does it Encompass?”

**Day 15: Abortion and Moral Status**

Reading: Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion”

**Day 16: Abortion and Rights**

Reading: Judith Jarvis Thomas, “In Defense of Abortion”

**Day 17: Abortion and Virtue**

Reading: Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory and Abortion”

**Day 18: Reproduction and Genetic Screening**

Reading: Jeff McMahan, “The Ethics of Testing for Disability”

**Day 19: Commercial Surrogacy**

Reading: Sara Ketchum, “Selling Babies and Selling Bodies”

**Day 20: Gamete Donation**

Reading: David Benatar, “The Unbearable Lightness of Bringing into Being”

**Day 21: Biomedical Research, Randomized Clinical Trials, and Humans**

Reading: Samuel Hellman and Deborah Hellman, “Of Mice But Not Men: Problems of Randomized Clinical Trials”

**Day 22: Biomedical Research and Animals**

Reading: Carl Cohen, “The Case for Use of Animals in Biomedical Research”

**Day 23: Stem Cell Research**

Reading: Bonnie Steinbock, “What Does “Respect for Embryos” Mean in the Context of Stem Cell Research”

**Day 24: Allocation of Scarce Resources**

Reading: Norman Daniels, “Four Unsolved Rationing Problems: A Challenge”

**Day 25: Organ Commodification and Scarcity**

Reading: Lewis Burrows, “Selling Organs for Transplantation”

**Day 26: Mandatory Vaccination**

Reading: Jessica Flanigan, “A Defense of Compulsory Vaccination”

**Day 27: Gene Editing and Enhancement**

Reading: Walter Glannon, “Genetic Enhancement”

**Day 28: Cloning**

Reading: Leon Kass, “The Wisdom of Repugnance”

**Day 29: Euthanasia**

Reading: Dan Brock, “Voluntary Active Euthanasia”

**Day 30: Euthanasia**

Reading: Peter Singer, “Voluntary Euthanasia: A Utilitarian Perspective”