

Boston University Dublin Internship Program

Syllabus for SAR HS 422 – *Ethics in Health Care*

Lecturer: Dr. Dónal O'Mathúna

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Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays: 1:00 – 2:00 pm or by appointment

Term Time: September 1 – October 8, 2008

Class Times: Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays: 2:00 – 4:30 pm

Exam: Wednesday October 8, 10:30 – 12:30 pm

Required Texts:

Dooley, D. and McCarthy, J. 2005. *Nursing ethics: Irish cases and concerns*. Dublin: Gill and McMillan.

Richman, K. A. 2004. *Ethics and the metaphysics of medicine*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Brown, C. 1954. *My left foot*. London: Vintage.

Additional readings will be distributed in class or are made available online.

Course Overview:

This course provides an introduction to ethics and common ethical issues in healthcare. We will address several topics specific to biomedical ethics, including end of life issues, reproductive technologies, and issues in biomedical research. These issues will be used to examine ethical reasoning, ethical theories and principles, and the use of cases and narratives in ethics. Special attention will be paid to developing skills of ethical analysis through an examination of philosophical arguments.

By the end of the course you should:

- Understand the major ethical theories and principles relevant to biomedical practice
- Be familiar with some of the major ethical issues raised by contemporary healthcare
- Recognise and develop valid arguments for use in ethical reasoning
- Understand the role of cases and narratives in the perception and resolution of ethical issues.

Class Time:

Class time will be used for a combination of lecture, discussion, group exercises, and multimedia presentations. Students will be called on to explain readings and concepts, to offer analysis of cases and topics, or to offer opinions. Students are responsible for understanding each reading assignment, even if it is not explicitly discussed in class.

Grading:

Further details on the assignments will be distributed during lectures and discussed. Opportunities for questions about and clarification of all the assignments will be given during the course. Your grade for the course will be based on your work as follows:

Case Presentation:	20%
Essay:	40%
Final Examination:	40%

The case presentation will be given during one of the lectures after September 15. Students should pick a topic from the Lecture Outline that interests them and pick a related case from the Dooley and McCarthy book. Each student will be assigned a specific day depending on the topic chosen. Students will be asked to identify the core ethical issues in the case and explain how two different ethical theories would address those issues. The presentation should last 10-15 minutes and students should submit a written summary of the presentation which will be graded, along with the presentation itself.

The topic for the essay will be chosen by each student. It should be an ethically controversial topic and the essay should develop the arguments for and against the issue. The essay must incorporate relevant ethical theories and principles. Detailed guidelines for the essay will be given during the course. All essays should be submitted on Monday September 29.

The final examination will be present a small number of questions which will need to be answered in essay format. Again, details will be distributed closer to the time.

Late assignments will be deducted 10% per day unless prior arrangements are made and documentation submitted to support the extenuating circumstances (doctor's note, etc.).

Lecture Outline:

LECTURE NUMBER	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	WORK DUE
1.	Case Discussion: Ethics on Everest What is ethics? Ethical decision making. The making of a good argument Syllabus distributed and discussed	
2.	Attend ethics presentations at the Health4Life Conference, School of Nursing, DCU	No readings assigned, but note the longer section due tomorrow.

3.	<p>Case presentation sign-up</p> <p>I. Ethical theory: Utilitarianism and Deontology</p> <p>Scenes from <i>Johnny Got his Gun</i></p>	Read Dooley on moral theory, pp. 227-272
4.	<p>I. Logic and Argumentation</p> <p>Argument exercises</p> <p>II. Ethical Theory: Principlism</p> <p>III. Issues: Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide</p>	<p>I. Read handout from Hope, "A Tool-box for Reasoning," pp. 58-74</p> <p>II. Read Dooley on End of Life issues, pp. 156-181</p>
5.	<p>Guest Lecturer: Mr John Keane, philosophy graduate student and patient.</p> <p>The role of narrative in ethics</p>	<p>I. Read Dooley on the nurse-patient relationship, pp. 1-53</p> <p>II. Read Brown, chapters I-VII</p>
6.	<p>I. What does it mean to be sick?</p> <p>II. Definitions of health and their impact on ethics</p>	I. Read Richman, Theories of Health, pp. 3-59
7.	<p><u>Case presentations begin</u></p> <p>I. Justice and Health Care Research</p> <p>II. Global justice and health research</p>	Read Dooley, Justice, pp. 183-226
8.	<p>Guest Lecture: Dr Alan Kearns, Mater Dei College of Education</p> <p>Principles of justice and the Irish Health Care System</p>	<p>I. Read Emanuel and Wertheimer, "Who Should Get Influenza Vaccine When Not All Can?"</p> <p>II. Read O'Mathúna, "Decision-Making and Health Research: Ethics and the 10/90 Gap," <i>Research Practitioner</i> 8.5 (September-October 2007): 164-172.</p>
9.	<p>Eugenics and New Reproductive Technologies</p> <p>Midweek Movie! Watch GATTACA with the class and complete the worksheet given out in class</p>	<p><i>No at-home reading or writing.</i></p> <p><i>Bring your own popcorn!</i></p>

10.	I. Reproductive Control: Reproductive Autonomy II. Reproductive Control: Procreative Beneficence	Read Dooley on reproductive issues, pp. 105-155
11.	The Influence of Big Pharma	I. Read Richman, Health and Ethics, pp. 63-132 II. Read Thomas Szasz, "Pharmacocracy in America" <u>Society</u> July/Aug 2004, pp. 54-58
12.	Narrative Ethics	I. Read Richman, Clinical Connections, pp. 135-187 II. Read Brown, chapters VIII-XVI
13.	Guest Lecturer: Ms Chanel Watson, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland Research Ethics	<u>Essays to be submitted.</u>
14.	I. Research Ethics Principles of the Belmont Report and their practical application II. Ethics and International Research	I. Read the Belmont Report II. Read Dooley, Informed Consent, pp. 74-104.
15.	Research Ethics: Randomized Clinical Trials Evidence and Ethics	I. Read Hellman and Hellman, "Of Mice but Not Men: Problems of the Randomized Clinical Trial"
16.	I. Ethical theory: ethics of care II. Review for exam	Read Reich on care ethics
17.	Final Exam	

Plagiarism:

It is every student's responsibility to read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean."

Students must keep an electronic copy of all written work submitted for assessment.