

Institute for the Medical Humanities

MEHU 6315 Clinical Ethics (3 Hours)

Thursday 1pm – 4p

Admin. Bldg. Room 2.206J

Course Director:

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is a comprehensive and scholarly seminar examining the methods, evolution, practice settings, and problems associated with the field of clinical ethics. Following full participation in this course, a student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the dominant themes, problematics, methodologies, and critiques of the bioethics field with emphasis on classic cases in clinical ethics.
2. Demonstrate the practical application of this knowledge to concrete cases or contexts.
3. Show facility in the use of ethical concepts, principles, and arguments to justify the decisions he/she would make in specific bioethical case studies.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the skills, virtues, and attitudes required of the clinical ethicist in a health care setting.
5. Demonstrate familiarity with interdisciplinary literature in clinical ethics practice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance at and participation in all seminars and labs is required unless the instructors are notified prior to the session. Classes are not held on days when UTMB offices are closed early or all day due to hazardous weather conditions, or when hazardous weather conditions are probable. Class sessions canceled for any reason will be made up at the discretion of the instructors.
2. Reading assignments will be given at specified times by the course instructors and students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to each class meeting. Reading assignments will in most instances follow the course syllabus, but exceptions will be made in accordance with the needs of the students, instructors, or guest faculty. Students are encouraged to access relevant materials via Web CT as available.
3. Students will be asked to prepare written essays and/or case reports and journal analyses to evaluate how well the student has met the learning objectives discussed above. Specific details of these assignments will be provided by the instructors.

4. All seminar participants are expected to participate in class discussions with critical and constructive comments.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

The instructors are available to each student who may have individual questions or concerns. Meeting times can be arranged.

POLICIES

Grading Criteria

The course is graded on a scale from A to F. There are three graded assignments and a participation grade. These include: a critical essay or expressive art project (30%), an argument/case analysis (30%), and an Ethics Grand Rounds presentation (20%). Specific details of these assignments will be provided. All students are expected to complete all reading and other pre-class assignments before each seminar session and to participate in seminar discussions (20%).

Components of Final Grade

Critical Essay	30%
Argument/Case/Analysis	30%
Ethics Grand Rounds	20%
Seminar Discussions	20%
Total	100%

Appealing a Grade

Any appeals for grading changes must be submitted to the instructors responsible for the writing and grading of the question within 5 business days after the return of the graded assessment to the student. The instructors must report any grade changes to the course director.

Course Evaluations

End-of-course evaluations are required for all GSBS courses that are graded A-F. The GSBS Executive Committee voted in July and August 2007 to reaffirm this policy, which is required for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Students are required to complete evaluations in any course graded A- F in order to receive a grade in the course. If a completed evaluation form is not received from a student, an Incomplete (I) grade will be reported to the Office of Enrollment Services. If the course evaluation is not completed within thirty days, the grade of "I" automatically converts to a grade of F (failure in the course). The evaluations are anonymous and are available to the course director and instructor(s) only after grades have been assigned.

Late Papers

Late papers or assignments will not be accepted unless students have contacted the instructor in advance of the deadline day, formally requested an extension, and thoroughly explained the need for such an extension. Such requests may be approved at the instructor's discretion depending upon extenuating circumstances. In the interest of fairness and equity, grades on late papers may be lowered depending upon the circumstances and length of the extension.

Absence Policy

If a student must be absent from class for any reason, the student must notify the instructor as soon as the student is aware of the need to be absent, preferably before the class meeting time. Because the course depends heavily on participation, absence from more than two class meetings may result in a letter grade reduction, depending on the circumstances.

Honor Pledge

Students are expected to do their own work and to comply fully with the UTMB Honor Code and be able to sign the Honor Pledge at the end of all their papers:

“On my honor, as a member of the UTMB community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors.”

Link to full Honor Pledge statement and access the *Institutional Handbook of Policies and Procedures (IHOP)*, Section 7.1.3. *Student Conduct and Discipline*:

<http://www.utmb.edu/student-services/honorpledge.asp>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan. 5	Course Introduction and Brief Overview of Moral Theory
2	Jan. 12	ON-LINE MODULE: The Clinical Ethics Landscape
3	Jan. 19	The Physician Patient Relationship
4	Jan. 26	The Experience of Illness and Narrative Ethics.
5	Feb. 2	ON-LINE MODULE: The Limits of Medicine and the Texas Advance Directive Act
6	Feb. 9	Life-sustaining Intervention, Physician Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia
7	Feb. 16	Death and the Determination Thereof
8	Feb. 23	Autonomy
9	Mar. 2	Informed Consent
10	Mar. 9	Privacy, Reproductive Liberty and Neonatal Care
11	Mar. 16	Organ Transplantation and Resource Allocation
12	Mar. 23	ON-LINE MODULE: Research Ethics
13	Mar. 30	Ethical Issues in Genetics
14	Apr. 6	Social Justice
15	Apr. 13	The Role of the Ethicist in Health Care
16	Apr. 20	Student grand round presentations

NOTE: There are three sessions that have been designated as “On-Line”. These are sessions for which I will be out of town during our regularly scheduled class time. Readings will still be assigned for those sessions as well as a reflective writing exercise, due prior to next session.