

Introduction to Bioethics

DAY 1

Morning

- Expectations
- Paperwork
- Ice Breakers (2 truths and a lie, Knight. Nave, and Normal)
- Course overview: What is Bioethics Anyway?
- Discussion of arguments: what makes a good one?
- Discussion of writing: style and content
- Summary overview of ethical theories

Evening

- Readings from Munson: Utilitarianism (pages 744-746, 751-752), Deontological theory/Kant (752-753, skim “Duty” to “Difficulties with Kantian ethics,” read 756-757), Virtue Ethics (784-786), Morality and Catholic Ethics
- Readings from Pence: “Ethical Theories and Medical Ethics” (1-18)
- Stolberg article “Ought We Do What We Can Do?”

DAY 2

Morning

- Discussion and comments on ethical theories: what are they good for? How are we going to use them? What do they mean to bioethicists? (Activity: Three scenarios: Kant and Mill)
- Applying theories to practice
- What makes these theories good and what makes them vulnerable
- Secular versus non-secular ethics: religion in Modern America (bioethics policy vs. bioethics for individual decision making)
- Expanding theories and arguments

Evening

- Quiz on ethical theories
- Readings from Kristin Luker’s *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, Introduction, pages 1-10. (University of California Press, 1984)
- Excerpts from *Roe v. Wade* and *Casey vs. Planned Parenthood*

DAY 3

Morning

- Introduction to “What is Life”?
- The most important question in talking about what is life in America: abortion; review of Luker
- Exercise with the Constitution: examining the 9th and 14th Amendments and understanding the legal basis of abortion
- Explanation of the meaning of the abortion debate for IVF/ART, prenatal testing, genetic screening, stem cells, and cloning
- Timeline of events: human development, physiology, and embryology

- Terms for vocabulary – begin a running list
- In depth explanation of IVF/ART
- What’s out there: exercise with Pickering article

Evening

- Writing exercise: one of three paragraphs (best friend, weather, sandwich making)
- Ethical theories applied: short discussion of how theories work when applied to ART (30 minutes)
- Readings: Pickering, 3 chapters from Holland

DAY 4

Morning

- Wrapping up on IVF/ART
- Introduction to stem cells: understanding basic science
- The promise of stem cells
- The moral status of the embryo

Evening

- Review Holland chapters
- Essay writing exercise: 5-paragraph essay on question of personhood or parenthood

DAY 5

Morning

- Stem cells continued
- What’s in the dish?
- Introduction to cloning
- Activity: what would your clone look like?

Evening

- *Gattaca*

DAY 6

Morning

- Review of “what is life?” thus far
- Cloning: distinguishing hype from science
- In class work with Kass article “The Wisdom of Repugnance”

Afternoon

- Why do we care about cloning?
- Crisis bioethics: The Raelians (Talbot and Zitner articles)

Evening

- Wrapping up “What is life” and review for quiz

DAY 7

Morning

- Quiz
- Discussion of papers/choosing of topics
- Available resources and how to do research

Afternoon

- Overview of next section: what is death?
- Meaning/definition of death in different contexts
- Death and the law: cases Vacco, Bouvia, Cruzan

Evening

- Readings on physician assisted suicide: Quill Article, Goodbye Debbie

DAY 8

Morning

- Discussion on PAS
- Categorization: can we do it? What might this mean? PAS vs. euthanasia and the blurring of the line
- Singer article: what are the implications for a view like this? Compare utilitarianism to other ethical theories

Afternoon

- Death with dignity or grotesque practice?
- Oregon's Death with Dignity statute
- DeLisser's arguments on end of life (biological life, cognitive life, preferred life)

Evening

- Work on papers
- Reading: Hardwig "Is There a Duty to Die?"

DAY 9

Morning

- A right to die? Dax's case
- Medical Futility?
- Activity: case studies from Munson
- Withholding care versus withdrawing care
- Advanced directives

Evening

- Review for test
- Work on papers

DAY 10

Morning

- Discussion and wrapping up what is death
- Quiz
- Discussion of papers: progress, concerns, etc.

Afternoon

- Overview to next section: the healthcare system: confidentiality, consent, human subjects research, organ donation

Evening

- Readings: *Tarasoff* and “Confidentiality in Medicine”
- Work on papers

DAY 11

Morning

- Discussion of confidentiality: the doctor, the patient, the government and more!
- Two activities: modified questions from HIPAA guidelines and role playing exercise

Afternoon

- Confidentiality in different contexts: psychiatric patients, minors, etc.
- Extemp speaking exercise: defense and criticism of *Tarasoff*

Evening

- Readings: Beecher, Belmont, Helsinki, and Nuremberg
- Work on papers

DAY 12

Morning

- Informed consent and its manifestations
- Consent in research versus consent in clinical practice (Subject to Payment?)
- Readings from Moreno and other materials on consent

Afternoon

- Human subjects research
 - Tuskegee
 - Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital
 - Willowbrook
 - Jesse Gelsinger

Evening

- Milstein article: is there really such a thing as informed consent?
- Work on papers

DAY 13

Morning

- Organ donation: UNOS policy statement
- Allocation of resources: organs are a resource?
- Activity: rating patients

Afternoon

- What does allocation actually mean?
- Brief overview of insurance and the American health system
- Application of ethical theories

Evening

- Completion of papers

DAY 14

Morning

- Presentation of papers
- Wrapping up

Afternoon

- Remaining paper presentations

DAY 15

- Conclusions