Medical Ethics  
Phil. V234-001 [Classroom: Bobet 212]  
Sp. 2009  
MWF 9:30-10:20 a.m.  
Fr. Stephen Rowntree  
Bobet 417  
Phone: 865-2781  
rowntree@loyno.edu  
Office Hours: MWF 10:30-11:20  
TTR: 9:00-11:00

If you need to see me, your best bet is to make an appointment. I can probably accommodate your schedule if my office hours are not convenient.

Prerequisite for this course is Introduction to Philosophy: Phil. 122.

Introduction: This course will introduce students to the already vast, and fast-growing field of medical ethics (also known as bioethics or biomedical ethics). The interplay of moral theories and moral problems of medicine will characterize the course: moral theories that can help illuminate the ethical issues involved in medicine will be investigated, while at the same time our firm judgments about particular issues will be used to test moral theories. The course is ambitious in the amount of material it will cover. Prepare to work! After a brief introduction to the field, moral issues associated with experimentation on human subjects will be examined to get a feel for the kinds of ethical issues characteristic of the area. Then a variety of moral theories will be studied in order to develop conceptual tools for the clarification and assessment of ethical problems. Among the broad issues that will be treated are: (1) interpretations of the patient—health professional relation, including truth-telling, respect for patient autonomy, informed consent to treatment, personal responsibility for one’s own health, and the relation of physician practice to demands to cut costs; (2) end of life issues, including termination of treatment, deciding for incompetent patients, and physician-assisted suicide; (3) just allocation of health care in the United States context of rapidly increasing costs, increasing numbers of uninsured, and other factors which to many observers makes for a genuine crisis demanding major policy reforms, (4) genetics and reproduction: prenatal genetic screening, selective abortion, assisted reproduction (in-vitro fertilization, surrogacy, egg donation, and so forth).

Format: Lecture and discussion.

Blackboard: Assignments and links to texts and other relevant materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Goals and Objectives: Please consult the Department of Philosophy: Goals and Learning Objectives (http://cas.loyno.edu/philosophy/programs.html) for Upper Level Philosophy Common Curriculum and also the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences Goals and Objectives of the Common Curriculum (http://cas.loyno.edu/common/purpose.html)
This course has been designed to satisfy Department Objectives for Upper Level Common Curriculum Classes Objective 5: Development of student capacity ‘to reflect on and critique presupposed values,’ especially ethical norms and standards in their variety and complexity ‘latent within contemporary [medical practices] and institutions, [including new technologies], and Objective 7a: Development of student capacity to summarize with clarity and evaluation with insight some of the philosophical arguments, problems, questions, or issues arguably germane to the meaning and practical implementation of justice [in allocation of medical resources].

It has also been designed to satisfy the College of Arts and Science Common Curriculum Objectives by helping students to develop comprehension of historical, economic, political, social and technological forces that shape [in particular], our society [’s current practices of medicine and medical research].

Required Assignments:

(1) Short written assignments to help students assimilate materials as the course proceeds and/or quizzes to show mastery of assigned reading materials. Since assignments are meant to prepare for class, late assignments will not be accepted for credit, nor will make-up quizzes be permitted. Short assignments must be posted on the Blackboard Discussion board by 8:30 a.m. (20 % of grade).

(2) A 750 word paper analyzing a medical ethics case in terms of the moral theories studied. Paper is due M Feb. 2 Case (or cases) will be provided to students (10%).

(3) A 750 word paper on personal challenges and personal responsibility for one’s own good health. Paper is due W Mar. 11 (10%).

(4) A 1200 word paper on the current crisis in access to medical care in the United States. Briefly describe the crisis. Examine arguments given for proposed solutions. Focus especially on the ethical arguments given for the different proposals. Which solution do you favor? Explain why you favor it. Focus on the ethical arguments for your proposed solution. Due F Apr 3. (20%)

Unexcused late assignments may be penalized. Extensions will be granted reluctantly and by prior negotiation.

(4) Midterm exam: M Mar. 2 Midterm Exam

(5) Final exam: W May 6 [9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.]

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at each class. ‘After 6 absences the student will receive an F in the course. If the student goes beyond the maximum number of allowed absences before the last day for an administrative withdrawal, the student may
still withdraw from the course in the normal way to avoid an F.” (College of Arts and Sciences, Office of the Dean, Guide for New Faculty, Fall 2001, p.7)

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“Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodation in this class should contact Disability Services at 865-2990 as soon as possible so that warranted accommodations can be implemented in a timely fashion. Disability Services are located in the Academic Enrichment Center, Monroe Hall 405.” (Statement suggested by the Office of Disability Services in the Academic Resource Center, Beginning of the Year Reminders to All A&S Faculty, p. 2)

**Tentative Schedule of Topics and Assignments:**

- **M Jan. 12** Introduction to the Course
- **W Jan. 14** The Field of Bioethics
- **F Jan. 16** Human Experimentation 1
- **M Jan. 19** Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- **W Jan. 21** Human Experimentation 2
- **F Jan. 23** Human Experimentation 3
- **M Jan. 26** Human Experimentation 4
- **W Jan. 28** Ethical Interpretations 1
- **F Jan. 30** Ethical Interpretations 2
- **M Feb. 2** Ethical Interpretations 3
- **W Feb. 4** Ethical Interpretations 4
F Feb. 6 Ethical Interpretations 5
M Feb. 9 Ethical Interpretations 6
W Feb. 11 Health Professional-Patient Relationship 1
F Feb. 13 Health Professional-Patient Relationship 2
M Feb. 16 Health Professional-Patient Relationship 3
W Feb. 18 Health Professional-Patient Relationship 4
F Feb. 20 Health Professional-Patient Relationship 5
M-T Feb. 23-24 Mardi Gras Holidays
W Feb. 25 TBA
F Feb. 27 Review
M Mar. 2 Midterm Exam
W Mar. 4 End of Life/Assisted Suicide 1
F Mar. 6 End of Life/Assisted Suicide 2
M Mar. 9 End of Life/Assisted Suicide 3
W Mar. 11 End of Life/Assisted Suicide 4

Paper on personal responsibility for health is due.
F Mar. 13 End of Life/Assisted Suicide 5
M Mar. 16 Just Allocation of Health Care 1
W Mar. 18 Just Allocation of Health Care 2
F Mar. 20 Just Allocation of Health Care 3
M Mar. 23 Just Allocation of Health Care 4
W Mar. 25 Just Allocation of Health Care 5
F Mar. 27 Just Allocation of Health Care 6
M Mar. 30 Just Allocation of Health Care 7
W Apr. 1 Reproductive Issues 1
F Apr. 3 Reproductive Issues 2

Paper on just allocation of health care is due.

M Apr. 6-M Apr. 13 Easter Holidays
W Apr. 15 Reproductive Issues 3
F Apr. 17 Reproductive Issues 4
M Apr. 20 Reproductive Issues 5
W Apr. 22 Reproductive Issues 6
F Apr. 24 Reproductive Issues 7
M Apr. 27 Reproductive Issues 8
W Apr. 29 Review

W May 6 Final Exam: 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Have a Great Summer!