MED 6801 Important Cases in Health Ethics
Winter 2014

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Time Winter Session: Tuesdays, 1:30-4:30pm

Course Description:

In this course we will discuss and analyze famous and important cases in health ethics. Many of these cases have influenced the development of health ethics as an academic discipline and are partly responsible for the presence of ethics committees and clinical ethicists in health organizations. Each week will focus on one case, or on a set of similar cases. Whenever possible, we will feature Canadian cases. Students will learn central concepts in health ethics through discussion of the cases – concepts such as substitute decision-making, the ethics of withdrawing life-sustaining care, clinical equipoise, capacity to consent to treatment, and so on. Students will be required to conduct their own research into these cases, recommend readings and sources to their fellow students, and must be prepared to discuss their research in class.

List of Dates, Cases, Locations: (most classes we will meet in H2869, other rooms are indicated **in bold**)

January 7 2014 – No class

January 14 2014 – Introduction
H2869

January 21 2014 – Baby Doe (**sign up for cases**)
1J409

Readings:
Handout: R. Munson (2008) "The Baby Doe Cases," *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*. 8th Edition. Thomson Wadsworth, pp.636-638.
C. Strong (1984) "The Neonatologist's Duty to Patient and Parents" *Hastings Center Report* 14(4) Aug: 10-16.
J.A. Robertson (2004) "Extreme Prematurity and Parental Rights After Baby Doe" *Hastings Center Report* 34(4) July-Aug: 32-39.
C. Kaposy (2007) "Can Infants Have Interests in Continued Life?" *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 28: 301-330.

January 28 2014 – Dialysis Allocation

Case described in: G.J. Annas (1985) "The Prostitute, the Playboy, and the Poet: Rationing Schemes for Organ Transplantation," *American Journal of Public Health* 75(2): 187-189.

H2869

February 4 2014 – Tuskegee, Willowbrook, Nutritional Experiments with Canadian Aboriginal Populations
H2869

February 11 2014 – *Tremblay v. Daigle* and *Winnipeg Child and Family Services (Northwest Area) v. G.(D.F.)*
H2868

(February 18 2014 – WINTER BREAK)

February 25 2014 – Quinlan, Cruzan, Schiavo
H2869

March 4 2014 – Sue Rodriguez, Gloria Taylor, *Carter v. Canada*
H2869

March 11 2014 – SARS
H2869

March 18 2014 – *Cameron v. Nova Scotia*
H2869

March 25 2014 – ACTG Study 076
H2869

April 1 2014 – Dr. Nancy Olivieri
H2869

April 8 2014 – vote: Henrietta Lacks, **OR** *Five Days at Memorial*, **OR** *Starson v. Swayze*
H2866

(April 15 2014 – Final Research Paper Due – send via email, or submit to Melissa Petten in H2830)

<u>Class Organization</u>:

- One student will be responsible for leading the class each week – with the exception of January 14 and January 21, which will be led by Chris.

- Students will sign up on January 21 for the class for which they will be responsible. Names will be drawn out of a hat to determine the order in which cases are chosen.

- The student responsible for each class will choose the readings, **3-4 article-length readings** each week

- The readings must be given to the class **the week before** and in class (one exception is the readings for the January 28 class)

- Of the 3-4 articles:
    - one must give details about the case being discussed;
    - one must focus on the contemporary discussion of the ethical issue found in the case
        - this article must be a bioethics article that advances a normative argument about how the issue should be handled
    - the content of the 3rd (and possibly 4th) article is up to the student responsible for the class, but should be relevant to the case and issue under discussion
    - Blogs, online content, short pieces of writing that are not peer-reviewed should all be approved by the instructor before assigning them to the class

- In class, the student should present the details of the case, and present the ethical reasoning associated with the issue found in the case. The student may choose to take a position with regard to the ethical issue, and advance an argument of his or her own.

- The student responsible for the class is expected to generate and lead a discussion of the case and the ethical issue

Grading:

- Students will be graded on their **presentations** in accordance with the rubric found in this syllabus

- Students will also be required to write a **research paper** on a new or emerging bioethics case that is getting some attention from bioethicists (due April 15 2014)
    - This paper must consist of an ethical argument that defends a position about some aspect or issue in the case they have chosen
    - Students should discuss their choice of case to write about with the instructor, and get feedback on an early draft
    - Some possible cases:
        - Surfactant, Positive Pressure, Oxygenation Randomized Trial (SUPPORT) http://www.thehastingscenter.org/Bioethicsforum/Post.aspx?id=6306&blogid=140
        - Dan Markingson case – http://markingson.blogspot.ca/
        - "Normalizing Atypical Genitalia…" debate – article by Josephine Johnston article in *Hastings Center Report* Nov-Dec 2012
        - *BMJ* refusal of research funded by tobacco companies
        - Debate about publishing research into human-created deadly influenza virus strains
        - BC policy on mandatory influenza vaccination for health care workers

        - Jahi McMath and/or Marlise Munoz (http://www.bioethics.net/2014/01/its-the-ventilators-fault/)
        - Other cases you might be interested in …
    - The paper should be written in a format as if for submission for publication in a refereed journal. It should be 15 - 20 pages, double spaced, in 12 point font, and it should contain no grammatical or typographic errors.
    - Papers will be graded on the quality of their argument.

- Students will also receive a grade on their contribution to the classroom discussion throughout the semester

40% – Presentation
40% – Research Paper
20% – Class participation

Notes:

If you have a documented disability or require accommodations to complete your work in this course, please meet with me (Chris) as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester. Feel free to visit the Glenn Roy Blundon Centre to check out the resources and services available there.

Contact the Writing Centre for help with writing skills: SN 2053 or call 737-3168 (best early in the semester). As a graduate student you can avail of workshops and a free drop-in service to assist you.

The University Counseling Centre, 737-8874 is available for help with personal concerns or other difficulties. They provide confidential help.

I support and will enforce the University has a policy on academic misconduct. Academic misconduct can takes many forms:

- plagiarism,
- submitting a product prepared by another person, in whole or in part,
- buying or selling term papers, and
- submitting the same piece of work twice for academic credit.

This is not an exhaustive list. You can consult the University Calendar for more details. For further clarification, please talk to me (Chris) or make an appointment with someone in the Writing Centre or possibly with a librarian.

Grading Rubric for Class Presentations **MED 6801** Important Cases in Health Ethics

Student: Topic and Date:

Readings	Inadequate Did not meet requirements	Adequate Met requirements but better articles could have been chosen	Excellent	Comments & Grade out of 10
Presentation				Comments & Grade out of 20
Case Details	Inadequate Important details left out	Adequate Enough background for an intelligent discussion of case(s)	Excellent Thorough knowledge of case(s), (but not too much focus on factual matters)	
Ethical Argumentation	Inadequate Poor grasp of relevant ethical arguments	Adequate Comprehensive grasp of arguments relevant to case(s)	Excellent Comprehensive and critical grasp of arguments relevant to case(s)	
Communication	Inadequate Hard to follow	Adequate Clear	Excellent Clear, engaging, discussed facts of case(s) for long enough, but not too long	
Discussion	Inadequate Failed to generate much discussion	Adequate Generated some discussion	Excellent Deep and probing discussion of ethical arguments	Comments & Grade out of 10