

BIOMEDICAL ETHICS

Fall 2023 Tu/Th 10:00AM-11:20AM Nelson 118

Scott C. Williamson swilliamson@lpts.edu 502.468.5377

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of decision-making and principles in the interrelated fields of medical ethics, bioethics, and biomedical ethics. Students will learn modes of ethical theorizing and discourse in medical cases. Using a case study methodology, students will unpack the complex issues involved in medical treatment and research.

Required Text:

- Robert M. Veatch, Amy M. Haddad, and Dan C. English *Case Studies in Biomedical Ethics: Decision-Making, Principles, and Cases* [second edition] (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015)
- In addition to the required text, you will read an additional text or texts, of your choosing, throughout the semester, for your Independent Research Project (see below).

Learning Outcomes

Consistent with the goals of Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 3, by the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Evaluate multiple approaches to the study of biomedical ethics.
- Discuss and assess the core principles of biomedical ethics.
- Reflect theologically on a variety of topics in biomedical ethics including medical technology, the personhood and autonomy of the patient, and death.
- Defend a position on an issue about which you are passionate in the field of biomedical ethics.

Requirements:

1. Class participation (30%):
 - Regular attendance
 - Informed participation in class discussions
 - Write approximately 100 words of commentary on a case in the Veatch text that we will discuss in class during the week. Papers should be submitted on Canvas no later than 9:00 AM on each of the following 7 Tuesdays: September 19, September 26, October 3, October

- 10, October 31, November 7, and November 14. These papers will not be graded but will count toward participation credit. Late papers will not count toward participation credit.
2. **Midterm** (20%): A take-home exam will be distributed on October 12. It is due on October 24. The exam should be typed in 12-point font and double-spaced.
 3. **Independent Research Project** (30%): In addition to the course text, students will select and read at least one unassigned text in the field of Biomedical Ethics during the semester. The text you select should be in an area of particular interest. You will complete two assignments that comprise the project:
 - Write a “Letter to the Editor” of a newspaper on an ethical issue in your area of interest. Class letters should be submitted on Canvas no later than November 21.
 - Facilitate a class session [after the class has read your “Letter to the Editor”] in which you present your area of interest in the field of Biomedical Ethics, your particular ethical issue, and your research. Your goal should be to teach the class about an issue that they might know little or nothing about, the subject of your Letter to the Editor. You are free to use videos, case studies, invite a class guest, or use other ways to instruct the class. Good projects will be not only descriptive, but also persuasive. Take a public stand on a contentious biomedical issue.
 4. **Final Essay** (20%): Students will write a 2,500-word essay, double-spaced, on your research project. Your “Letter to the Editor” can be included in your essay. You can also include up to 500 words of an interview with an expert you consulted for your project. Essays are due on December 14.

Calendar of Topics

September 12 Tu

Introduction to Biomedical Ethics

- Medical Ethics
<https://code-medical-ethics.ama-assn.org/principles>
- Bioethics
<https://youtu.be/c3l0Sxl2grM?si=AKim9Xpj4SUNlAjm> [Maggie Little, Director of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, 2014]
- Biomedical Ethics
- Hippocratic Oath (Classic and Contemporary)
https://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/greek/greek_oath.html

Part I: Ethics and Values in Medical Cases

September 14 Th **Four Questions of Ethics & A Model for Ethical Problem Solving**

- Read Introduction and Chapter 1
- Read “The Lie of Primum non Nocere,” by Kenneth Lecroy, MD (2001)
[The Lie of Primum non Nocere | AAFP](#)
- Merriam-Webster pronunciation: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/primum%20non%20nocere>

September 19 Tu **Values in Health and Illness**

- Read Chapter 2
- Submit commentary on a case (case 1-1 to case 2-4)

September 21 Th **Sources of Moral Judgments**

- Read Chapter 3

Part II: Ethical Principles in Medical Ethics

September 26 Tu **Ethical Principles in Medical Ethics**

- Read Chapter 4: Beneficence
- Submit a commentary on a case (case 4-1 to case 4-7)

September 28 Th **Ethical Principles**

- Read Chapter 5: Justice

October 3 Tu **Ethical Principles**

- Read Chapter 6: Autonomy
- Submit commentary on a case (case 6-1 to case 6-6)

October 5 Th **Ethical Principles**

- Read Chapter 7: Veracity

- October 10 Tu** **Ethical Principles**
- Read Chapter 8: Fidelity
 - Submit commentary on a case (case 8-1 to case 8-7)
- October 12 Th** **Ethical Principles**
- Read Chapter 9: Avoidance of Killing
 - Midterm Distributed
- October 17 Tu & 19 Th** **Research and Study break.**

Part III: Special Problem Areas

- October 24 Tu** **Abortion, Sterilization, and Contraception**
- Read Chapter 10
 - *Midterms due
- October 26 Th** **Genetics, Birth, and the Biological Revolution**
- Read Chapter 11
- October 31 Tu** **Mental Health and Behavior Control**
- Read Chapter 12
 - Submit commentary on a case (case 12-1 to case 12-9)
- November 2 Th** **Confidentiality: Ethical Disclosure of Medical Information**
- Read Chapter 13
- November 7 Tu** **Organ Transplants**
- Read Chapter 14
 - Submit commentary on a case (case 14-1 to 14-11)

November 9 Th Health Insurance, Health System Planning, and Rationing

- Read Chapter 15

November 14 Tu Experimentation on Human Subjects

- Read Chapter 16
- Submit a commentary on a case (case 16-1 to case 16-9)

November 16 Th Consent and the Right to Refuse Treatment

- Read Chapter 17

November 21 Tu Death and Dying

- Read Chapter 18
- Submit “Letter to the Editor” on Canvas

November 23 Th Thanksgiving Break

Part IV: Student Presentations

November 28 Tu Student Presentation #1

November 30 Th Student Presentation #2

December 5 Tu Student Presentation #3

December 7 Th Student Presentation #4

(December 14 Th Final papers due by 5pm)

LPTS Policies

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of

images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy and must be attributed to the author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 7th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2020.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 17th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

See also the library's citation help page: <https://lpts.libguides.com/digitalresources/citingsources>

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.