

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2011-12**

Philosophy 2071E (650) Biomedical Ethics

Fall Winter 2011 -2012

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DESCRIPTION

Should assisted suicide for terminally ill patients be permitted? Must the patient be always told the truth? Should the parents be allowed to select the physical characteristics of their future child? Should the parents be allowed to deny blood transfusions for their child on religious grounds? In addition to tackling this sort of questions, this course will provide an introduction to ethical issues that arise in the delivery of health care such as human experimentation, informed consent, and the allocation of scarce resources. Most course units contain real cases that have been reported in the media. Based on the study of these real cases the students will offer and defend their own views about what's right or wrong.

TEXT

Health Care Ethics In Canada. (2nd Ed.) edited by Francoise Baylis, Jocelyn Downie, Barry Hoffmaster and Susan Sherwin. (Nelson, 2004).

OBJECTIVES

- Understand and explain the concepts and theories pertaining to biomedical ethics.
- Identify, understand and explain traditional and current issues in biomedical ethics
- Develop the ability to think critically about contemporary moral problems in medicine and health care.
- Engage critically and politely with other students.
- Develop the ability to formulate your own arguments and views about various issues in biomedical ethics through the philosophical analysis of cases studies and ethical dilemmas.

REQUIREMENTS

45% 3 essays (5-6 pages) - 15% each

Essay 1 due at the end of Unit 4 (first week of November)

Essay 2 due at the end of Unit 7 (last week of January)

Essay 3 due at the end of Unit 10 (last week of March)

20% Midterm examination (open book, essay format. To be written during December exam period)

25% Final examination (scheduled by Registrar's office during exam period)

10% Participation (graded according to the contribution to the discussion threads online; each substantial contribution is worth 1%; students are required to participate in the discussion topics of at least 10 units out of 12)

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.