MORAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY MEDICINE
BIOL 4590.002
Spring 2017
Dr. Andy Piker
TR 3:30-4:45
OCNR 133

Office Information
Office Location: Faculty Center, Rm. 276
Office ph#: 825-6035
Office Hours: MW 10-11:30; TR 10-11; and by appointment

E-mail address
andrew.piker@tamucc.edu

Course Description
We will begin with an examination of the nature of morality, and of various moral theories and principles. In the remainder of the course, we will put this background to use in an exploration of various moral issues that arise in medicine: including informed consent, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, genetics, and the distribution of medical resources. We will read, discuss, and write about articles presenting different viewpoints on the issues, and case studies relevant to the issues.

Learning Outcomes
Students taking the course will be expected to:
1) demonstrate an understanding of a variety of ethical theories and principles
2) apply those theories and principles to moral issues in medicine
3) construct and evaluate arguments in support of moral positions.

Written Assignments and Grading
Two tests (20% each); one paper, at least 4-5 pages (25%); short assignments, including in-class assignments, as well as a progress report and discussion assignment concerning the paper (10%); final exam (25%).

The tests and final exam will include short answer questions (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, definitions, brief explanations) and one essay per test or exam. The short assignments will consist largely of in-class assignments completed in small groups. In the progress report, students will begin formulating arguments on a medical ethics topic of their own choosing; they will also discuss those progress reports in small groups in class, and develop them into a paper in which they present and discuss the arguments in more detail.

Attendance, class participation, and improvement will be considered in deciding borderline cases. I will grade work on a 100 point scale, where A=90-100, B=80-89, etc.
**Late Assignments and Incompletes**

Students who miss a test or fail to turn in another assignment on time for a good reason, will be given a chance to make up the assignment and turn it in during the same or following week, at a time arranged with the instructor. An incomplete for the course is possible only in cases in which the course work is nearly complete, and the student has a legitimate reason for not completing the course work by the end of the semester.

**Attendance, Late Arrivals, Early Departures**

Attendance is not required, but is strongly encouraged. Attending class enables students to participate in discussion and learn from both the instructor and their classmates. Also, lecture material will be covered in detail on tests and the exam, and will include information not covered in the readings; and class periods will include in-class assignments that count towards the overall course grade. So missing classes is likely to have a negative impact on students’ grades.

Late arrivals and early departures tend to disrupt the class, and are therefore discouraged (if they are necessary in exceptional cases, however, please inform the instructor beforehand if possible).

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the presentation of work as one’s own, which was in fact produced by another author (e.g., the submission of a paper as one’s own work, when it was written by someone else; or the submission of a portion of a paper written by another author, without citing the source of the material). University policy strictly prohibits plagiarism. Plagiarized work will be assigned a grade of “F.”

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

**Disability Services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
More Student Support
CASA (Center for Academic Student Achievement; includes Writing Center, tutoring services, etc.): 825-2977
Student Support Services: 825-3266
Counseling Center: 825-3266

Grade Appeals Process
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Text (required)
Ronald Munson, Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics (8th, 9th, or 10th edition)

Course Schedule
All page numbers for readings refer to the 10th edition of the Munson text

January

19 Introduction

24 Part I: Ethical Theories and Principles
Reading: pp. 903-946

26 Reading: pp. 903-946, continued

31 Part II: The Relationship Between the Patient and the Health Care Professional
Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 40-60

February

2 Truth, Lies, and Deception
Reading: Lipkin, hand-out
Cullen and Klein, pp. 94-101

7 Informed Consent
Reading: Canterbury decision, hand-out

9 Reading: Dax case, pp. 3-7; and pp. 76-80
Video: Please Let Me Die

14 **Part III: Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide**

Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 565-594

16 Reading: Gay-Williams, pp. 602-604

21 Review

23 *Test*

28 Reading: Singer, pp. 604-612

March 2 Reading: Rachels, pp. 594-598

7 **Part IV: Abortion and Impaired Infants**

*Abortion*

Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 441-477; and Warren, pp. 492-501

9 Reading: Lee and George, pp. 501-506; and Marquis, pp. 461-465

14 **Spring Break**

16 **Spring Break**

21 **Impaired Infants**

Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 515-534; and Weir, hand-out

23 Reading: Robertson, pp. 547-554

28 **Paper Progress Reports Due**

30 Reading: Smith, pp. 534-538

April 4 Review

6 *Test*

11 **Part V: Genetics**

*Genetic Control*

Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 279-302; and pp. 244-247

Video: Cracking the Code

13 Reading: Savulescu, pp. 315-321; and Sandel, pp. 321-327

18 **Cloning**

Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 361-366, and pp. 386-394; and hand-out on Human Reproductive Cloning

20 Reading: Strong, pp. 416-420

25 **Part VII: Distribution of Health Care**

*Health Care Systems*
Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 681-704
Video: Sick Around the World

27 Reading: Hall and Lord, pp. 712-721; and hand-outs on the Affordable Care Act, Massachusetts health care system, and Canadian approach to health care

May 2 Review

Paper Due

Final Exam Date: Thursday, May 4, 1:45-4:15