PHIL 4332.001/BIMS 4590.001
Moral Issues in Contemporary Medicine
Summer I 2020
Fully Online
Dr. Andy Piker

Instructor Email Address
Email: andrew.piker@tamucc.edu

Instructor Telephone Information
Even though I will not be on campus, you can call my office phone number (361-825-6035) and leave a voice mail. I’ll access the voicemail remotely and get back to you. You can also call me on my cell (361-548-9950).

Virtual Office Hours
Monday: 10-11
Tuesday: 1-2
Wednesday: 10-11
Thursday: 5:30-6:30
And by appointment

In order to meet with me during my office hours, use the following url: https://tamucc.webex.com/meet/andrewp

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 online, 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 online discussion forums and a progress report (10%); final exam (25%).

The tests and final exam will include short answer questions (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, definitions, brief explanations), and an essay. In the progress report, students will begin formulating arguments on a medical ethics topic of their own choosing. Then they will develop those arguments further in a paper.

All of the “short assignments” will be “check mark” assignments: in other words, instead of assigning a letter or number grade for the assignment, I will give you a check mark if you complete it. Your overall grade on the short assignments will be determined by how many check marks you have at the end of the
course: if you have check marks for all of the short assignments you will get a grade of 100% for the short assignments.

All written assignments will be posted on BlackBoard, and may be submitted on BlackBoard. I will provide feedback on written assignments via BlackBoard and/or email.

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.

**Lecture Material Delivery Methods**
In the absence of face-to-face class meetings, I will post all of the lecture material on BlackBoard in two forms: recorded video lectures, and lecture notes. We will not have any required class meetings, but I have scheduled live virtual review sessions (which you are not required to attend) during our original class time (3-5) before the tests and the final exam. Those sessions will give us a chance to do some Q&A together, and to go over study questions. I will record the sessions and post them on BlackBoard.

**Online Discussion Forum Assignments**
We will have several online discussion forum assignments, in which you will respond to some material I have posted, and/or to each others’ comments, on BlackBoard (to access the discussion forums go to the class BlackBoard page, and click on “Discussion Forum” under “Collaboration Tools”). The online discussions will be check mark assignments. In order to earn the check mark for a discussion, you will need to contribute at least two posts to the discussion, with each post being at least 50 words long.

**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.

**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.”

**Disabilities Accommodations**
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 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.
Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

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.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Important Dates
June 2: Last day to register or add a class
June 19: Last day to drop a class
July 1: Last day to withdraw from the university

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

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing
As a student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you are experiencing emotional distress or mental health issues, please visit the Counseling Center located in the Driftwood Building during walk-in hours or call (361)825-2703. Counselors are available by phone 24/7 to assist students who are in crisis. Services are free and confidential. For access to self-help resources and anonymous mental health screenings, visit the
Counseling Center website at https://counseling.tamucc.edu. In an emergency, call 911 or University Police at (361)825-4444.

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

Week One (June 1-4)
Introduction: The Nature of Morality and The Hippocratic Oath
Video lecture
Lecture notes

Part I: Ethical Theories and Principles
Video lectures
Lecture notes
Reading: pp. 903-946
Discussion forum on ethical theory application (June 4-9)

Part II: The Relationship Between the Patient and the Health Care Professional
Introduction on Paternalism and Autonomy
Video lecture
Lecture notes

Week Two (June 8-11)
Truth and Paternalistic Deception
Video lecture
Lecture notes
Reading: Cullen and Klein, pp. 94-101

Informed Consent
Video lecture
Reading:
Canterbury decision (posted on BlackBoard)
Dax case, pp. 3-7; and pp. 76-80
AMA guidelines (posted on BlackBoard)

Live virtual review (attendance optional; June 9, 3-5)
Test (June 10, posted 10 a.m. and due by 11:59 p.m.)

Part III: Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide
Video lecture
Lecture notes
Video: The Right to Die in Belgium, YouTube,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo8Hn0DEcpxw&t=6s
Reading: Introductory Material, pp. 565-594
**Week Three (June 15-18)**

**Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide, continued**

Video lecture
Lecture notes
Reading:
- Gay-Williams, pp. 602-604
- Singer, pp. 604-612
- Rachels, pp. 594-598

**Discussion forum on euthanasia (June 17-22)**

**Part IV: Abortion and Impaired Infants**

**Abortion**

Video lectures
Lecture Notes
Reading:
- Introductory Material, pp. 441-477
- Warren, pp. 492-501
- Lee and George, pp. 501-506
- Marquis, pp. 461-465

**Progress Reports Due June 18**

**Week Four (June 22-26)**

**Part V: Genetics**

**IVF, PGD and Genetic Selection**

Video Lecture
Lecture notes
Reading: Savulescu, pp. 315-321

**Live Virtual Review (attendance not required; June 23, 3-5)**

**Test June 24 (posted at 10 a.m., due by 11:59 p.m.)**

**Cloning**

Video lecture
Lecture notes
Reading: Strong, pp. 416-420

**Discussion Forum on cloning (June 25-July 1)**

**Week Five (June 29-July 2)**

**Genetic Engineering**

Video lecture
Lecture notes
Videos:
- Genome Editing with CRISPR-Cas9, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pp17E4E-O8&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pp17E4E-O8&t=8s)
- Ethics of Gene Editing, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O49KmMg671E&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O49KmMg671E&t=8s)
Part VII: Distribution of Health Care

Health Care Systems
Video lectures
Lecture notes
WHO Health System Rankings (posted on BlackBoard)

Live Virtual Review (attendance not required; June 2, 3-5)
Paper Due, June 2

Final Exam June 3 (posted 10 a.m., due by 11:50 p.m.)