

UGED 2855: Bioethics

Course Outline

Course description

English:

This is a general introduction to bioethics. Various ethical theories (such as utilitarianism, deontology, non-consequentialism, contractualism, and virtue ethics) and their implications in bioethics will be introduced. The bioethical problems to be covered include abortion, animal ethics, assisted suicide and euthanasia, genetic enhancement, surrogacy and human reproductive technology, informed consent, and sale of human organs.

Chinese*;

本科介紹生命倫理學的主要問題包括: 道德理論 (包括效益主義、義務論、非後果論、契約論、及德性倫理學)、墮胎、動物倫理、醫生協助自殺、安樂死、基因改良、代母、生育科技、知情同意及買賣人體器官等。

本科介绍生命伦理学的主要问题包括: 道德理论 (包括效益主义、义务论、非后果论、契约论、及德性伦理学)、堕胎、动物伦理、医生协助自杀、安乐死、基因改良、代母、生育科技、知情同意、及买卖人体器官等。

Learning outcomes

Through reading research papers published in journals and books, students are expected to understand and to reflect on the central issues in bioethics. Through regular tutorials, they will exchange ideas with other students taking the course, and realize that their own views have limitations. Through written works, they will be able to think deeply about some issues in bioethics, and articulate as well as defend their own views.

Topics

The major topics to cover include:

- (1) Introduction to Moral Theories**
- (2) The Problem of Abortion**
- (3) Animal Ethics**
- (4) Physician-Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia**
- (5) Genetic Enhancement**
- (6) Surrogacy and Human Reproductive Technology**
- (7) Informed Consent**
- (8) Sale of Human Organs**

Learning activities and workload

In-class:

1. Lecture: 2 hours per week.
2. Tutorial: 1 hour per week.

Homework:

1. Reading: 3–4 hours per week on reading assignments. It is important to think about the implications of the readings, and be prepared to discuss them during tutorial.
2. Presentation during Tutorial: Once or twice during the Term.
3. Papers: Two papers. Paper #1 will be assigned early in the Term. It will carry 25% of the grade. Paper #2 will be due at the end of the course. It will count for 40% of the grade. The amount of time required to write each paper cannot be quantified.

Assessment

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Paper 1	A five-page paper	25%
Paper 2	A 6-8 page paper	40%
Presentation	Presentation(s) during tutorial	10%
Class contribution	Contribution to discussion during tutorial	25%

Readings

Here are relevant readings for the topics. About 25 pages of readings will be assigned for each week.

(1) Introduction to Moral Theories

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, excerpts.
- Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, excerpts.
- Mill, *Utilitarianism*, excerpts.
- Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*, 1986 excerpts.
- T. M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*, 1998, excerpts.

(2) The problem of abortion

- Judith Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1971), vol.1, no. 1, pp.47-66.
- Mary Ann Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion," *Monist* (1973) vol. 57, no. 1, pp.43-61.
- Michael Lockwood, "When does a Life Begin?" in Michael Lockwood, ed., *Moral Dilemmas in Modern Medicine*, pp.9-31.
- Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," *Journal of Philosophy* (1989), vol. 86, no. 4, pp. 183-202.
- Robert Veatch, "Definitions of Life and Death: Should There Be Consistency?" in Margery W. Shaw and A. Edward Doudera, eds., *Defining Human Life: Medical, Legal, and Ethical Implications*, 1983, pp.99-103.
- Hon-Lam Li, "Abortion and Degrees of Personhood," *Public Affairs Quarterly* (1997), vol. 11, no. 1, pp.1-19.

(3) Animal ethics

- Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 1975, excerpts.
- Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, 1983, excerpts.
- Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, 1986.
- Bonnie Steinbock, "Speciesism and the Idea of Equality," *Philosophy* (1978), 53, no. 204, pp.247-56.
- Carl Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research," *The New England Journal of Medicine* (1986), vol. 315, pp. 865-870.
- R. D. Guthrie, "The ethical relationship between humans and other organisms," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* (1967-68), vol. 12, 52-62.
- R. G. Frey, "Moral Standing, the Value of Lives, and Speciesism," H. LaFollette, ed., *Ethics in Practice*, pp. 139-152, 1997. Originally published in *Between the Species* (1988), vol. 4, pp.191-201.
- Hon-Lam Li, "Animal Research, Non-vegetarianism, and the Moral Status of Animals," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* (2002), vol. 27, no. 5, pp. 589-615.

(4) Physician-assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

- James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 292, January 9, 1975, pp. 78-80.
- Philippa Foot, "Euthanasia," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 6 (1977), 85-112.
- Ronald Dworkin et al, "Assisted Suicide: The Philosophers' Brief," *New York Review of Books*, 44, March 27, 1997.
- F. M. Kamm, "Problems with Assisted Suicide: The Philosophers' Brief," in her *Bioethical Prescriptions*, 2013.
- F. M. Kamm, "Four-Step Arguments for Physician-Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia," *Bioethical Prescription*, pp.53-83.
- F. M. Kamm, "Some Arguments by Velleman Concerning Suicide and Assisted Suicide," in *Bioethical Prescriptions*, pp.84-98.
- Dan Brock, D., "Voluntary Active Euthanasia", *Hastings Center Report* (1993), vol. 22, no. 2, pp.10-22.
- Ronald Dworkin, *Life's Dominion: An Argument About Abortion, Euthanasia, and Individual Freedom*, 1993, excerpts.
- John Finnis, "A Philosophical Case Against Euthanasia" in J. Keown (ed.), *Euthanasia Examined: Ethical, Clinical and Legal Perspectives*, 1995.

(5) Genetic Enhancement

- Thomas Nagel, "Justice and Nature," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* (1997), vol. 17, no. 2, pp.303-321.
- Allen Buchanan, Dan Brock, Norman Daniels, and Daniel Wikler, *From Chance to Choice*, 2000, excerpts.
- Sean Shrifin, "Wrongful Life, Procreative Responsibility, and the Significance of Harm," *Legal Theory* (1999), vol. 5, pp. 117-148.
- Peter Singer, "Shopping at the Genetic Supermarket," in S. Y. Song, et al., eds., *Asian Bioethics in the 21st Century*, 2003, pp. 143-156.
- Michael Sandel, *The Case Against Perfection*, 2007, excerpts.
- Jonathan Glover, *Choosing Children*, 2008, excerpts.
- Savulescu, J. and Persson, I., *Unfit for the Future: The Need for Moral Enhancement*, 2012, excerpts.
- F. M. Kamm, "Genes, Justice, and Obligations in Creating People," in *Bioethical Prescriptions*.

(6) Surrogacy and Human Reproductive Technology

- Anderson, Elizabeth, 1990, "Is Women's Labor a Commodity", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 19(1): 71-92.
- Debra Satz, Debra, 1992, "Markets in Women's Reproductive Labor", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1992), 21(2): 107-131.
- Mary Lyndon Shanley, 2001, *Making Babies, Making Families: What Matters Most in an Age of Reproductive Technologies, Surrogacy, Adoption, and Same-Sex and Unwed Parents*, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Debora Spar, 2006, *The Baby Business: How Money, Science and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception*, Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Hugh LaFollette, 1980, "Licensing Parents", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 9(2): 183-97.
- Anne Phillips, 2013, *Our Bodies, Whose Property?*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Margaret Jane Radin, 1988, “Market Inalienability”, *Harvard Law Review*, 100: 1849–1937.

(7) Informed Consent

- David Archard, 2008. Informed Consent: Autonomy and Self-Ownership. *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 25 (1):19–34.
- Jessica W. Berg, , Paul S. Appelbaum, Charles W. Lidz, and Alan Meisel. 2001. *Informed Consent: Legal Theory and Clinical Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sissela Bok. 1995. Shading the Truth in Seeking Informed Consent for Research Purposes. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 5 (1):1–17.
- Allen E. Buchanan, and Dan W. Brock. 1989. *Deciding for Others: The Ethics of Surrogate Decision-Making*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin Gunderson. 1990. Justifying a Principle of Informed Consent: A Case Study in Autonomy-Based Ethics. *Public Affairs Quarterly* 4:249–265.

(8) Sale of Human Organs

- G. Abouna, 1991, “The Negative Impact of Paid Organ Donation” in W. Land & J. Dossetor (eds.), *Organ Replacement Therapy: ethics, justice, commerce*, Berlin: Springer-Verlag.
- G. J. Annas, 1984, “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Organ Sales”, *Hastings Center Report*, 14: 22–3.
- David Archard, D., 2002, “Selling Yourself: Titmuss’s Argument Against a Market in Blood”, *The Journal of Ethics*, 6: 87–103.
- K. Arrow, 1972, “Gifts and Exchanges”, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1: 343–362.
- Alastair Campbell, 2009, *The Body in Bioethics*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- B. Brecher, 1990, “The Kidney Trade: or, the customer is always wrong”, *Journal of medical Ethics*, 16: 120–123.
- —, 1994, “Organs for transplant: donation or payment?” in R. Gillon (ed.), *Principles of Health Care Ethics*, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 993–1002.
- J. Cameron, and R. Hoffenberg, 1999, “The ethics of organ transplantation reconsidered”, *Kidney International*, 55: 724–732.
- Department of Health, England, 2008, *Organs for Transplant: a report from the organ donation taskforce*. ([DoH 2008 online](#))
- C. Erin and J. Harris, 1994, “A Monopsonistic Market” in Robinson, I. (ed.) *The Social Consequences of Life & Death Under High Technology Medicine*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 134–157.
- —, ‘An Ethical Market in Human Organs’, *Journal Of Medical Ethics*, 29: 137–8.
- C. Fabre, 2006, *Whose Body is it Anyway? Justice and the Integrity of the Person*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- R. Gillon, 1997, “Commerce and medical ethics”, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 23: 68.
- R. Goodin, 1987, “Exploiting a Situation and Exploiting a Person,” in Reeve, A. (ed.), *Modern Theories of Exploitation*, London: Sage, 166–200.
- J. Harris, 1985, *The Value of Life*, London: Routledge.

Further recommended readings:

- (1) Alastair Campbell, *Bioethics: The Basics*, 2013.
- (2) Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, 2011.
- (3) Peter Singer, *Applied Ethics: Oxford Reading in Philosophy*, 1986.

- (4) John Harris, *Bioethics*, 2001.
- (5) F. M. Kamm, *Bioethical Prescriptions*, 2013.
- (6) Jonathan Glover, *What Sort of People should there be?*, 1984.
- (7) Thomas Nagel, "Justice and Nature," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* (1997), vol. 17, no. 2, pp.303-321.
- (8) Ronald Dworkin, *Life's Dominion: An Argument About Abortion, Euthanasia, and Individual Freedom*, 1993.
- (9) Jeff McMahan, *The Ethics of Killing*, 2002.

Feedback and Evaluation

1. Students are strongly encouraged to get in touch with the course instructor or tutor if they are not clear about any part of the lecture or the course.
2. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with the instructor via email or after class.
3. Students are urged to discuss with the instructor or tutor regarding their paper topics and how to write them. Students are also encouraged to respond to comments on their papers.
4. Students will be asked to evaluate the course at the end of the course. Students are also encouraged to provide informal feedback during the Term.

Contact details

Course Instructor	
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Ways of Communication

We will rely mostly on email communication.

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Academic honesty is of paramount importance. Students are assumed to know, and must declare that they know, of the university regulations.

Papers must be submitted via VeriGuide. Otherwise, they will not be graded.