Advances in medicine and biology occur at a rapid pace and have a profound impact upon our lives. In the west, we now live longer, reproduce later, and have smaller and planned families. New technologies have raised novel possibilities in both medical therapy and biological enhancement that have raised new ethical issues for our society. It is now possible to sustain a person's life indefinitely, to detect disorders before their symptoms appear, and to screen and select embryos according to our preferences. These developments raise both novel as well as perennial ethical questions of us as citizens, of our society, and of our medical practitioners. In “Biomedical Ethics” we shall consider just a few of the most pressing of these and their histories: the patient/doctor relationship, medical research on humans and animals, reproductive rights and technologies, genetics, medical decisions at the end of life, and the allocation of scarce medical resources. This will give us important insights into the relationship between science, medicine and society.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Other readings will be provided on D2L
Course Formalities and Expectations

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance in class is mandatory. If you have good cause to miss class, it is imperative that you discuss this with your instructor BEFOREHAND. **Note:** Any student who misses ten or more classes without documented and justifiable cause may receive a failing grade irrespective of any written work submitted.

OU policies on reasonable accommodation, and codes of behaviour:

*Reasonable Accommodation Policy*

Any student in this course who has a documented disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

*Codes and Policies of Behaviour*

Each student should acquaint his or her self with the University's codes, policies, and procedures involving academic misconduct, grievances, sexual, racial and ethnic harassment, and discrimination based on physical handicap.

*Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:*

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged appropriation of someone else’s words, ideas, or work, which is then represented as your own. It will not be tolerated and carries significant and serious penalties. At a minimum you will receive 0% for the assignment, and your name put on record. It is possible that you might receive 0% for the course, and in extreme cases may be expelled from the University. You are therefore strongly recommended to educate yourself regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Your instructor and/or teaching assistants will be happy to advise you on this matter if you are in any doubt.

We will talk more about academic conventions, referencing the authors you write about and what constitutes adequate citation in class. All written work for this class will be expected to meet these basic standards of academic integrity.

**NB:** Be aware that ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism will not be accepted as an excuse for it. If at any time you are unsure of how to cite material, your instructor or writing centre staff will be happy to advise you.

**YOU SHOULD CHECK THIS LINK**

http://libraries.ou.edu/help/tutorials/academicintegrity/player.html

*OU operates an equal opportunities policy.* For information on Disability Resources and Policy see: The Disability Resource Centre web site: http://drc.ou.edu/
ASSESSMENT

- **First in-class written assessment:** [5%]
  This will be explained in class.

- **Students will write five summary reports:** [50%]
  Each will be worth 10% of the overall grade for the class. These will be approximately 750 words in length. *The aim of these exercises is to show that you can identify and understand the main issues at stake and current approaches to the topic under discussion.*
  [Notice: seven reports are assigned, your best five will count.]

- **In class quizzes:** [20%]
  4 short in-class quizzes will be assigned throughout the semester each will be worth up to 5% of the total grade.

- **Term paper final examination:** [25%]
  Students will write a 2000 word research paper using material from a topic or topics we will have discussed to demonstrate that “modern healthcare is a deeply ethical issue.”

**TOTAL** [100%]

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Due dates for both written work and quizzes are highlighted in yellow in the class schedule below.

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CLASS SCHEDULE

PART ONE

What makes a good answer to a difficult question…

Week One:
Monday 16th January: No Class Martin Luther King Jr. day.

Wednesday 18th January: Defining the good.
• Questions to think about:
  What makes an ethical act ethical?

Friday: 20th January: Individual rights and ethical duties
Reading:
  ➢ Take home essay due in class Monday.

Week Two: [essay due: “What is ‘the good’?”]
Monday 23rd January: Deontology and Kantian ethics (lecture)
Reading:
Walter Glannon, Biomedical Ethics, pp.1-22

Wednesday 25th January: “Consequentialism” and the ethics of utility (lecture)
Reading:
Extracts provided in class.

Friday 27th January: The merits and limits of these and other theories of ethics (discussion)

PART TWO

The Patient-Doctor Relationship
(Walter Glannon, Biomedical Ethics, pp.23-46)

Week Three:
Monday 30th January: A history of consent… and its abuses (lecture)
Reading:
Harry H. Laughlin, Eugenical Sterilization (1926)
Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. BUCK v. BELL, U.S. Supreme Court Decision (1927)

Wednesday 1st February: Nazi science, Nazi medicine (lecture)
Reading:
Nuremberg code

Friday 3rd February: debating the aims of eugenics.

Week Four:
Monday 6th February: First I will… obtain consent.
Reading:
Wednesday 8th February:
Reading:

Friday 10th February: the merits and limits of consent
   ➢ In-class quiz #1

Week Five: [summary report #1 on informed consent due Monday]
Monday 13th February: “Confidentiality”
Reading:

Wednesday 15th February: “Where confidentiality ends”
Reading:
California Supreme Court. Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California, 131 California Reporter 14, Decided July 1, 1976.

Friday 17th February: case studies in consent

**PART THREE**

Medical Research on Animals and Humans
(Walter Glannon, Biomedical Ethics, pp.47-70)

**Week Six:** [summary report #2 on confidentiality due Monday]
**Monday 20th February: The Tuskegee Syphilis experiment**
Reading:
will be provided in class.

Wednesday 22nd February: Henry K. Beecher’s ‘Ethics in Clinical Research’.
Reading:

Friday 24th February: Jay Katz: Revisiting Ethics and Clinical Research.
Reading:

**Week Seven:**
**Monday 27th February: Equipoise**
Reading:

Wednesday 29th February: Stanley Milgram’s ‘Obedience’
No assigned reading for this class.

Friday 2nd March: The many implications of Milgram’s study (discussion)
Week Eight:
Monday 5th March: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
Reading:
Part one.

Wednesday 7th March: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
Reading:
Part two.

Friday 9th March: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
➢ In-class quiz #2
Reading:
Part three.

Week Nine: [summary report #3 on human subject research due Monday]
Monday 12th March:
*On being morally considerable – a history of the study of experimental medicine*
Reading:

Wednesday 14th March:
*The history of vivisection in England* (lecture).
Reading:
(will be provided in class)

Friday 16th March:
*More recent arguments about the moral status of animals* (lecture)
Reading:
Tom Regan: Animal Rights (extracts)

Week Ten:
Monday 19th March: ☑ NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK ☑
Wednesday 21st March: ☑ NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK ☑
Friday 23rd March: ☑ NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK ☑

PART FOUR
*On Being Morally Considerable and the Ethics of Reproductive Rights and Technologies*  
(Walter Glannon, *Biomedical Ethics*, pp.71-94)

Week Eleven: [summary report #4 on the ethical treatment of animals in science due Weds.]
Monday 26th March: “Rights, autonomy and the philosophy behind Roe vs Wade”
Reading:

Wednesday 28th March: *On being the subject of a life*  
Reading:

**Friday 30th March:**
- *in-class quiz #3*

**Week Twelve:**
**Monday 2nd April:** “*Whose View of Life? A history of the embryo.*”
**Reading:**

**Genetics**
(Walter Glannon, *Biomedical Ethics*, pp.95-118)

**Wednesday 4th April:** *A Brave New World? The Ethics of Human Cloning*
**Reading:**
Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, (1932), chapters one and two.

**Friday 6th April:** *scenes from Gattaca: science fiction and science fact* (lecture & movie clips)

**Week Thirteen:** [summary report #5 on the moral status of embryos is due Monday]
**Monday 9th April:** *In fear of a post-human future.*
**Reading:**

**Wednesday 11th April:** Science, ethics, and policy issues in biotechnology.
**Reading:**

**Friday:** 13th April: *The new eugenics?* (discussion)
**Reading:**

**PART FIVE**

*Medical Decisions at the End of Life*
(Walter Glannon, *Biomedical Ethics*, pp.119-142)

**Week Fourteen:** [summary report #6 on the ethics of genetic technologies is due Mon.]
**Monday 16th April:**
**Reading:**

**Wednesday 18th April:**
**Reading:**
Friday 20th April: *Dax’s Case*
[Movie screening]

**Week Fifteen:**
**Monday 23rd April: Dax’s Case** (discussion).
Reading:

**PART SIX**
*Allocating Scarce Medical Resources*  
(Walter Glannon, *Biomedical Ethics*, pp.143-166)

**Wednesday 25th April:**  
[Summary report #7 on a right to die is due Monday]
Reading:

**Friday 27th April:**  
➢ in-class quiz #4

**Week Sixteen:**  
**Film Screening:** “*Wit*” (Emma Thompson) – Time and venue TBA
**Monday 30th April:** *What is ‘the good’ in terms of healthcare provision?* (discussion)

**Wednesday, 2nd May:** office hour meetings with students.

**Friday 4th May:** office hour meetings with students.

**Exam Week: Monday 7th May – Friday 11th May**

Your term paper ‘examination’ is due on Tuesday 8th May at 3:30pm.
Tips on Effective Essay Writing

Since writing an effective essay is not a straightforward task, and improving your essay technique is one of the most important skills you will learn during any class, here are some initial suggestions. First write some general notes on what you already know about the subject of your essay, outlining the most striking points. Think why these points are so important, and what they entail for the particular methodological or ethical approach with which you are concerned. Then turn to the notes you have taken during class and to the set readings themselves—as well as any further background readings you may have identified through bibliographic surveys or other relevant classes. Continually re-examine your list of striking features and the organisational structure you have imposed upon them, and think how these materials might help you to articulate your analysis more clearly. When you are ready, sketch an outline of your argument, and then write your first draft. Make sure that to the best of your knowledge there are no logical gaps in your argument. If you can identify some, go back to the literature to see if you can close them. This second look at the literature (and your reading notes) is important. Once you have constructed a hypothesis, you will be able to test it against the arguments of the various authors, and to find those who support your case, and those who are your opponents. (note: having your own hypothesis is the point at which the essay truly becomes your own contribution to the debate). You are then ready to proceed to the second phase.

Writing multiple drafts is really the only way to produce a good essay, especially if you can gain some distance from early drafts, for example, by reading them aloud to yourself, your friends, or having someone else read them to you. This is how professional academics work, and so you should try to do so too. You are encouraged to exchange your essays with one another and discuss your work with your colleagues as the course progresses. You should be aware that essays written the night before they are due invariably read like they were written the night before they were due, and as a result often appear ill-considered, disorganised, and incoherent. You should aim to manage your time to allow for at least two drafts and revisions. This will pay significant dividends in terms of the quality of your submitted work, and correspondingly, with the grade you can expect. Your tutor will be happy to discuss early drafts of your work, as will staff at the writing centre.

What makes a good essay

Introduction and argument: A good essay does not simply summarise the argument of the text(s) under examination. It also involves you constructing a coherent narrative about how those texts relate to a broader argument of your own. So, a good essay might start off with a short introduction to the particular element of the topic that you discuss. This might be followed with a similarly brief account of what you intend to say and how you intend to convince the reader of your argument, which brings us to the importance of clear organisation.

Argument and organisation: A good essay should not simply be a list of points about the subject under examination, all arranged in a haphazard manner. It should instead take the reader step by step through the argument so that they will end up seeing the logical progression of your narrative, even if they might not agree with your conclusions. This means that after a good introduction, each subsequent paragraph should introduce one particular idea about the episode and finish with a statement that prepares the reader for the next paragraph and its particular idea. These paragraphs should be arranged in a logical sequence that takes the reader from the introduction to the conclusion, which means, of course, that the paragraphs should not contradict
each other. A good organisation of these steps then depends critically on a very clear understanding of your essays’ aims and objectives. A clear understanding of your readers’ likely assumptions is equally important to avoid their misunderstanding any part of your argument. Think of it as a chess game, and so always try to put yourself in your readers’ shoes! Do not annoy them unnecessarily by forcing them to ask ‘where is this essay going?’

**Evidence:** A good essay should not only be a logical argument, but it should have the aim of convincing your reader of your point of view. To this end each point of the argument should be backed by evidence from the literature you have consulted, as is appropriate to the specific point being made. Importantly, direct quotes or paraphrases of the text or other literature should be carefully referenced, in footnotes and in a full bibliography of all works cited.

**Reference:**

Please use Chicago style of referencing. For more information see:


Accurate referencing is not simply a matter of avoiding any accusation of plagiarism, but also of leaving open the possibility for your readers to explore the point you make in greater detail than is appropriate to the argument of your essay. It is perhaps needless to say, but you must always take care that your quotations or references support your point and this may sometimes mean that you will have to explain how this is the case.

**Style:** A good essay should be written well, attentive to syntax, grammar and spelling. This is not because your reader is pedantic, but because good syntax and grammar helps clarify your argument. You should avoid the passive void, such as “it was said that…” Instead use the active statement ‘so-and-so said that…’, —by doing so you are providing the reader with much more possibly important information and certainly raises new questions,—who is the author? What are their credentials? Where did they write it, and when? Was what they said accepted or controversial? — As you can see, the active voice is a lot more useful for an historian.
The following guidelines offer a characterisation of the type of work that might be associated with various ranges of grades. The intent here is to encourage general consistency across faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, and to give a guide to what is required in academic writing rather than to provide precise specifications.

90% to 100% (A)

“A” grade work is exceptional, showing strong evidence of original thinking and good organisation. The student will have shown a capacity to analyse and synthesize information, as well as a superior grasp of the subject matter in hand and an ability to make sound critical evaluations based upon an extensive knowledge base. Work of this standard should be well argued, well documented, and well written.

80% to 89% (B- to B+)

Work of this grade is competent, showing evidence of a reasonable-to-solid grasp of the subject matter. It should also show evidence of critical and analytical thinking. The work should also indicate a familiarity with the literature. It should be clearly written, accurate and coherent, including major points from the course material and an appreciation of their importance.
70% to 79% (C- to C+)

Work of this grade is of adequate performance, showing a fair understanding of the subject matter and an ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material. It may include some errors and slight misconceptions, but should be indicative of a reasonable engagement with the course material. An acceptable although uninspired piece of work, it should not contain serious errors, but may lack style and vigour in its articulation.

60% to 69% (D- to D+)

Work of this grade is adequate, but poor. Poorly articulated and lacking in a coherent argument it may also lack sufficient documentation. Although it may provide some relevant information, it omits many important points and contains a number of substantial errors or misconceptions.

00% to 59% (F) Inadequate.

Work of this standard is inadequate, showing little or no understanding of the subject matter. Exhibiting little evidence of critical and analytic skills, this work contains only a limited or irrelevant use of the literature. Poorly articulated it is likely to lack coherence and be difficult to comprehend. Work of this grade is not of degree standard.