PHIL 240: Biomedical Ethics
Lisa N. Hickman
Wednesdays 6 to 9 p.m.
Westminster College – Spring 2019

Contact Information
Instructor: Lisa Nichols Hickman, Ph.D.
Office: Patterson 334
Email: hickmaln@westminster.edu
Office Hours: 1 – 2:30 on Tuesdays

Classroom: 110

Course Description
This course explores theoretical and practical issues in the field of healthcare ethics. Subjects covered include: ethical theory; healthcare provider-patient relationships; abortion and maternal-fetal conflicts; genetic engineering, reproductive technologies; human experimentation; euthanasia and end-of-life questions; and the just distribution of healthcare and healthcare policy.

Learning Outcomes
1. Introduce students to influential ethical theories that are currently operative in the field of health care ethics.
2. Provide students with an in-depth understanding of the moral issues at stake in the subject areas identified in the course description (above).
3. Develop students' abilities to apply the insights of ethical theories to the complex moral issues raised by contemporary medical technologies.
4. Increase students' analytical capabilities by encouraging careful reading of assigned texts and requiring written analysis of these assigned texts throughout the semester.
5. Equip students to engage in thoughtful discernment in their vocation when ethical review boards are necessary.
6. Gain clarity on the student’s own moral response to various situations; alongside the ability to listen to and respect the moral evaluations of others.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance (10%) and Participation (10%)
Attendance is required. Because we are an evening course, one week of coursework is included in each class. Students may miss ONE Wednesday without penalty. After that, a grade deduction of eight points from the final grade will be taken for any additional absences. If you do miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed in class and if any additional assignments were made during the class you missed.
2. Short Written Assignments (20%)  Four assignments, five points each
An important goal of this course is to build your capacity to discuss difficult moral issues in a clear and rational way with persons who may or may not hold the same position as you do. To facilitate this kind of discussion, I will ask you to prepare written responses to questions over “primary” texts. Further instruction, as well as the assigning of text, will occur in class. 

See note at end of this document.

3. Example Case Presentation (10%)
Details on this will be provided on a separate sheet and discussed in class.

4. Review of Reading Material (10%)
Each of you are assigned four documents to read and be able to present to the class. Each of these are worth 2.25 points each.

5. Exams (20% each)  There will be two exams, a midterm and final.

Required Texts

And, additional readings as noted on the syllabus.

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
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<td>80-83</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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Student Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations if needed. If you need accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

Westminster College has clear policies and procedures regarding violations of academic integrity such as cheating and plagiarism. Professors are required to report violations of academic integrity. Cheating and/or plagiarism will result minimally in a failing grade for that assignment. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly cite other’s work and ideas please do not hesitate to ask for more help.
Course Schedule

Principles and Theories in Morality and Ethics

Wednesday, January 16
Introduction to Course
Vaughn, Chapter 1 – Moral Reasoning in Bioethics

Wednesday, January 23
Vaughn, Chapter 2 – Bioethics and Moral Theories

Healthcare Provider-Patient Relationship

Wednesday, January 30
Class cancelled due to previously scheduled professional conflict

Wednesday, February 6
Film: The Doctor And, in class written response as directed.

Wednesday, February 13
Vaughn, Chapter 3 – Informed Consent
Vaughn, Chapter 4 – Truth Telling and Confidentiality

Wednesday, February 20
Vaughn, Chapter 5 – Informed Consent

Wednesday, February 27
Vaughn, Chapter 6 – Human Research And, review for mid-term exam

Wednesday, March 6
Mid-Term Exam

Ethics through Life

Wednesday, March 13
No class – Westminster Spring Break

Wednesday, March 20
Vaughn, Chapter 7 – Abortion
Vaughn, Chapter 8 – Reproductive Technology
Wednesday, March 27
Vaughn, Chapter 9 – Genetic Choices  W/additional reading and discussion - disability

Ethics in Death

Wednesday, April 3
Vaughn, Chapter 10 – Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Suicide

Wednesday, April 10
Excerpts from movie, Wit.

Justice, Equality and Health Care

Wednesday, April 17
Film: “Sicko”  Discussion and Written Response

Wednesday, April 24
NO CLASS – URAC
Proof of attendance, as discussed in class, will contribute to participation grade.

Wednesday, May 1
Vaughn, Chapter 11 – Dividing Up Healthcare Resources
Excerpts from “Unnatural Causes”

TBD – Exam Week
Final Exam as scheduled

Short Written Assignments:

1. Chapter 2 – assigned one of the five readings. Will explain in class.
2. Response to “The Doctor” guided by prompt given.
3. Response to “Wit” guided by prompt given.
4. Response to “Sicko” or “Unnatural Causes” guided by prompt given.

Review of Reading Material:

Each student will be assigned four of the readings at end of each chapter to present in outline form. These are essential.