



Issues of Life and Death

(EP4) Fall 2022

Instructor

Miguel José Paley

Email

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Hours

Tuesday & Friday 1:00-2:15 pm
Keating Hall 204
Office Hours: Tue 11:30am-1pm

General Information

Description

This course will examine philosophical issues related to death and dying, with a particular emphasis on ethical issues. The course is designed so that students can engage with issues at the theoretical level but also gain an appreciation for how ethical issues related to death and dying manifest in the practical world of health care.

Expectations and Goals

Throughout the course, you will come to:

- Consider concepts central to ethical reasoning about life, dying, and death
- Consider some of the issues that arise in contemporary health care contexts, especially surrounding end-of-life decisions
- Develop the ability to critically engage with philosophical texts/debates
- Develop the skills necessary to write a philosophy paper
- Develop the ability to engage in philosophical discussion with peers

Required Materials

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Assignments

- Participation 20%
- Presentation 15%
- Concept paper 15%
- Research Paper 50%

Assignment Details:

Oral In-Class Participation 10%

Dialogue is essential for doing philosophy, so please be on time and be ready to participate. This means having done the required reading, being willing to present your thoughts to the class, and **respectfully** commenting on other's thoughts.

Written In-Class Participation 10%

There will be frequent in-class writing exercises, ranging from very short response pieces to longer exercises targeting specific skills. There will be no make-up opportunities for these writing exercises, as they count as a form of in-class participation.

Presentation 15%

All students will prepare a presentation on their research papers, which will take place in the final phase of the course. Further details will be discussed in class.

Concept Paper 15%

Topics will be distributed by late September.

Research Paper 50%

This is titled 'Research Paper' because it will require you to do the kind of planning, reading, thinking, writing, and revising of a sustained research project. Here are the components that will lead to your final product:

Proposal (5%) You will submit a written proposal outlining your project, including key questions/arguments/hypotheses you will address and sources that you will use.

Peer Review (5%) You will read and comment on the first draft of a colleague's paper during our peer review workshop, and submit your comments to Miguel, who will assess them before passing them on to the paper's author. Peer review will be done anonymously.

First draft (10%) You will submit 2 copies of a first draft of your research paper during our Peer Review workshop – one will be given to a colleague by Miguel, and one is for Miguel. Miguel will grade your draft separately, review your colleague's comments, and return both sets of comments to you.

Final draft (30%) You will submit the final draft of your research paper to Miguel via SafeAssign on its due date (i.e. by 11:59pm that day).

Class policies

Attendance

This course is heavily discussion-oriented, thus your attendance is absolutely imperative. Regular and punctual attendance at every session is expected. If you do have to miss a class, you are expected to get the material from a classmate, however, you are encouraged to come by and talk to me about the material afterwards. Excessive absence (more than 3-4 sessions) may result in failure of the course. Repeated tardiness counts as absence. Using electronic devices in class counts as absence.

Academic Honesty / Plagiarism

Plagiarism: Using any work or ideas that are not your own (whether summarizing or quoting, whether from a book, article, internet, or other source) without clearly indicating the author or source is considered plagiarism and will receive an automatic F for that assignment (and possibly the course). Please refer to the undergraduate standards of academic integrity and the University Code of Conduct.

Electronics

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class and refrain from eating or other activities that cause any kind of disturbing noise in the classroom. The use of cell phones or any other digital devices during class will count as an absence for that session. If your cell phone is in your lap or on the desk, it is assumed you are using it. Please put them away for the duration of the class session. The use of laptops is not permitted. Either print texts or take very careful notes for discussion.

Turning in Written Work

All written assignments including must be turned in on blackboard on time. Do not send papers by e-mail. Late assignments will be reduced by a letter grade per class session that they are late. Be sure to also bring copies of your essays and drafts to class for our peer-review workshops.

Disability Statement

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill – O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, ext. 0655).

Course Schedule

Date	Theme	Reading
Part 1: Frameworks & Concepts		
September 2	Introductions Diagnostic	N/A
September 6	Conceiving the Good	Normative Ethics Review: Aristotle, Kant, Mill
September 9		“QALYs: The Basics,” Weinstein et al; “Health outcomes in economic evaluation: the QALY and utilities,” Whitehead & Ali
September 13		“Well-being,” Crisp
September 16	A Good Life?	“The Significance of Life’s Shape,” Dorsey

Date	Theme	Reading
September 20		Discussion groups
September 23	A Good Death?	Selections from Epicurus & Lucretius
September 27		"Defining Death in Theory and Practice," Bernat et al; "The Evolution of Death and Dying Controversies," Veatch; "The Death Debates: A Call for Public Deliberation," Rodrigues-Arias & Veliz
September 30		Discussion groups
October 4	Concept Paper Draft Due (Final Draft due Oct 6!)	Writing Workshop
Phase 2: Issues in Health Care		
October 7	Decision-Making	Excerpt from <i>Principles of Biomedical Ethics</i> , Beauchamp & Childress
October 11		"Patient Choices, Family Interests, and Physician Obligations," Mappes & Zembaty
	End of Life Decisions	
October 14		"Active and Passive Euthanasia," Rachels
October 18		"A Right to Self-Termination,?" Velleman
October 21	Voluntary Euthanasia	When Self-Determination Runs Amok," Callahan
October 25		"When Abstract Moralizing Runs Amok," Lachs
October 28	Advance Directives	"Life Past Reason," Dworkin
November 1		"Dworkin on Dementia: Elegant Theory, Questionable Policy," Dresser
November 4	Allocation	"The Allocation of Exotic Medical Lifesaving Therapy," Rescher
November 8		"Rescuing Lives: Can't We Count?" Menzel; "Bubbles Under the Wallpaper: Healthcare Rationalizing

Date	Theme	Reading
		and Discrimination,” Beckstead & Ord
November 11	Equipoise	“Equipoise and the Ethics of Clinical Research,” Freedman; “We’re Trying to Help Our Sickest People, Not Exploit Them,” Bagenda & Musoke Mudido
November 15		“Clinical Equipoise: Actual or Hypothetical Disagreement?” Gelfand
November 18		Individual Research Proposal Meetings
Phase 3: Research Projects		
November 22	Paper Proposal Due	Proposal Meetings
November 29		Presenters TBD
December 2		Presenters TBD
December 6	First Draft Due	Professor @ conference Online Writing Workshop and Peer Review
December 9		Presenters TBD
December 20	Final Draft Due (No Exam)	