UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
SCHOOL OF NURSING

N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care
Judith A. Erlen, Ph.D., R.N.

Fall Term, 1987
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
SCHOOL OF NURSING

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE: N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care
CREDITS: Three (3) Credits
COURSE HOURS: Two and one-half (2-1/2) hours lecture/week
PLACEMENT: Fall Term, Senior Year
PREREQUISITES: Completion of Junior Year or by permission of instructor.

FACULTY:
Judith A. Erlen, Ph.D., R.N., Assistant Professor
467 Victoria Building
Telephone: 624-1905

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 8:00-9:00 a.m. and 3:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Contemporary health issues having impact on society and the nursing profession will be identified. A review of cultural, ethical, legal, economic, and political systems and their influences upon health matters will provide the framework for examining the identified issues. Emphasis will be placed on cultural groups, current legislation, political controversy, economic constraints, and personal and professional ethics related to the issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of Nursing 138, the student will be able to:

1. Identify contemporary ethical issues in health care.

2. Explain the influence of the cultural, ethical, legal, economic, and political systems on health issues in American society.

3. Analyze selected health issues in relation to cultural groups, current legislation, political controversy, economic constraints, and personal and professional ethics.

4. Explain the controversial aspects and the various arguments involved in the health issues selected for study.

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture, discussion, films, guest speakers, case studies.
CONTENT OUTLINE:

I. Moral foundations of health care
   A. Significance of ethics in health care
   B. Ethics/ethical dilemmas
   C. Professionalism
      1. Values and value clarification
      2. Codes of ethics
      3. Responsibility and accountability
      4. Advocacy
      5. Caring
   D. Historical perspectives
   E. Ethical theories
   F. Ethical principles
   G. Ethical decision making

II. Ethical issues related to
   A. Rights and health care
   B. Reproductive technologies
   C. Abortion
   D. Care of infants and children
   E. Dying and death
   F. Informed consent
   G. Behavior control
   H. Public policy and health care delivery

EVALUATION:

1) Issues Paper
2) 3 Examinations - content from class, audio-visuals, and required readings will be included on the examinations. Examinations are not cumulative. Students are expected to be present on the dates that the examinations are given.

The final grade will be determined by calculating each student's total points on the three (3) Examinations and the Issues Paper and dividing that sum by the total of the highest achieved points on each of the three (3) Examinations and the Issues Paper. Letter grades will be assigned as follows;

   92 - 100 = A  
   83 - 91 = B  
   74 - 82 = C  
   65 - 73 = D  
   less than 64 = F

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:


UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
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N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ISSUES PAPER

I. Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate understanding of differing philosophical perspectives/arguments used in resolving an ethical issue in health care.

II. Topics for Issues Paper -

Each student must select one of the Case Studies described in Chapter 13, Ethical dilemmas and nursing practice by Davis and Aroskar for the focus of his/her paper.

Please note: When the papers are evaluated, they will be read according to the case and not at random.

III. Guidelines

1. The content of the paper must include:

   A. the identification of the particular case to be discussed.

   B. the identification of one major ethical issue in the case.

   C. an explanation of why the selected issue in the case is ethically troublesome.

   D. a detailed discussion of both the utilitarian and the deontologic ethical approaches/arguments for resolving the selected major ethical issue in the case.

   E. the inclusion of the values and the ethical/moral principles related to each ethical position that were considered in resolving the selected issue in the case.

   F. the use of a minimum of five (5) articles from professional journals as documentation and support for the content in your paper. At least five (5) of the articles that you use must be annotated. The annotations of the five (5) selected articles should follow the reference list.
Guidelines for Writing Issues Paper, cont'd. 2

2. The paper must be:
   A. typed on 8 1/2 x 11 white paper.
   B. only five (5) pages in length, excluding the reference list and the annotations of the five (5) selected articles.
   C. documented correctly using APA format. Refer to Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (3rd ed.). (A copy is on reserve in LRC).
   D. written in standard English, and following rules of grammar, sentence structure, and punctuation for formal writing. **Please note:** There will be no rewriting of papers.

IV. Criteria for Evaluation

1. Required content is included and sufficiently discussed.
   A. Case identification
   B. Major ethical issue (3 points)
   C. Rationale for troublesome nature of issue (7 points)
   D. Utilitarian position (15 points)
   E. Deontologic position (15 points)
   F. Values and moral/ethical principles (10 points)
   G. Use of a minimum of five (5) references
   H. Annotation of five (5) references

2. If the Guidelines #2 concerning the specifications for the paper are not followed and if items 1A, 1G, and 1H under Required Content are not included, a maximum of fifteen (15) points will be deducted from the overall score.

V. Due Date

The paper is to be submitted on or before **November 18, 1987**. Any paper submitted after that date will lose five (5) points for each day the paper is late.

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**N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care**  
**CLASS SCHEDULE**  
**Fall, 1987**

*Wednesdays, 9:00-11:30 a.m. - Room 125, Victoria Building*

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N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care

September 2, 1987 - Moral Foundations

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. identify at least four reasons signifying the importance of the
   study of ethics in health care.

2. define ethics and ethical dilemma.

3. understand professionalism as it relates to ethics and health
   care.

CONTENT:

I. Significance of ethics in health care

II. Ethics

III. Ethical dilemma

IV. Professionalism
   A. Values and value clarification
   B. Codes of ethics
   C. Responsibility and accountability
   D. Advocacy
   E. Caring

REQUIRED READING:

values: A guide to making your own decisions. New Haven, CT:
Yale University Press, pages vii-xv.

practice (2nd ed.). Norwalk, CT: Appleton-Century-Crofts, chapters
1 and 2.

nursing (2nd ed.). St. Louis: C. V. Mosby, pages 63-69 and
105-109.


SUGGESTED READING:

Curtin, L. L. (1979). The nurse as advocate: A philosophical foundation
for nursing. Advances in Nursing Science, 1 (3), 1-10.

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N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care

September 9, 1987 - Historical Perspectives
Ethical Theories and Principles

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. identify historic milestones in the development of various codes of ethics in the health professions.

2. discuss the ethical theories of utilitarianism and deontologism.

3. define the ethical principles of autonomy, nonmaleficence/beneficence, justice.

4. describe the process of ethical decision making.

CONTENT:

I. Historical perspectives
   A. Hippocratic Oath/Hippocratic Corpus
   B. Sir Thomas Percival
   C. AMA Code - 1847
   D. Florence Nightingale Pledge
   E. ANA Code

II. Ethical theories
   A. Utilitarianism
      1. Act
      2. Rule
   B. Deontologism
      1. Act
      2. Rule

III. Ethical principles
   A. Autonomy/Respect for persons
      1. Veracity
      2. Fidelity
      3. Confidentiality/Privacy
   B. Nonmaleficence/Beneficence
   C. Justice

IV. Ethical decision making
REQUIRED READING:


Davis & Aroskar, chapters 3, 4, and 5.


SUGGESTED READING:


Act—Utilitarian Ethical Method

Problem perception

List alternatives

For each alternative:

Predict consequences

Assign value of happiness produced

1. +++
2. --
3. +
etc.

Select alternative with highest value for happiness

Ethically Correct Choice

Method fails if:
1) Unable to predict consequences accurately
2) Unable to estimate accurate happiness values

Deontological Ethical Method

- Problem perception
  - List alternatives
  - List rules or principles
  - Compare
  - One alternative consistent with rules
    - One right action
  - Several alternatives consistent with rules
    - Several right actions—one may choose among them by preference, convenience, etc.
  - Alternative consistent with one rule, conflicts with another
    - Appeal to higher-level rule to solve conflict
      - Appeal is successful
        - One right action
      - Appeal is unsuccessful
        - ??????
PLURALISTIC ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL*

Dilemma Exists

(1) Two or more action options present
(2) Significantly different values attached to options

Identify ALL possible action options.

Rule out all options not acceptable on an a priori basis.

From remaining action options, formulate an ethical statement for action appearing most desirable. Include X, Y, Z (who, what, what condition).

Determine consequences of chosen action.

Compare each consequence with personal value of the "goods."
Assume universalizability.

ETHICAL STATEMENT VALID IF CONSISTENT
ETHICAL STATEMENT NOT VALID IF INCONSISTENT

On cycle return in case of invalid result:

(1) Ethical Statement may be reformulated modifying the conditions.
(2) Alternate action option (still available after rule in) may be explored going through all remaining steps.

Remember—the decision to take no action is in itself action.

*An original synthesis of the deontological and teleological decision-making models of Brody (1976).

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Presented at the American Nurses’ Association Clinical and Scientific Sessions, November 8, 1979.
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September 16, 1987 - Rights and Health Care

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. define the concepts of rights, privileges, and duties.
2. contrast the right to health with the right to health care.
3. discuss the concept of patient rights.

CONTENT:

I. Rights
   A. Positive
   B. Negative

II. Privileges

III. Duties

IV. Right to health

V. Right to health care
   A. Decent minimum
   B. Cost/benefit

VI. Patient rights
   A. Bill of rights
   B. Advocacy

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, pages 8-10 and chapter 6.

Davis & Aroskar, chapter 6.


SUGGESTED READING:


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September 23 and 30, 1987 - Reproductive Technologies

OBJECTIVES: At the end of these sessions the student will be able to:

1. describe the impact of overpopulation on the health of the world.

2. discuss ethical, legal, and socioeconomic issues related to contraception, sterilization, artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, and surrogate motherhood.

CONTENT:

I. Overpopulation
   A. "Right" to procreate
   B. Consequences

II. Contraception and sterilization
   A. Historical perspectives
      1. Comstock Laws
      2. Margaret Sanger
   B. Freedom to control one's body
   C. Mandatory contraception
   D. Voluntary sterilization
   E. Involuntary sterilization

III. Artificial insemination
   A. Donor
   B. Husband
   C. Storage for future

IV. In vitro fertilization
V. Surrogate motherhood

REQUIRED READING:


SUGGESTED READING:


OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. define abortion.
2. identify historical and legal milestones related to abortion.
3. discuss the ethical issues of abortion related to the fetus, woman, and society.

CONTENT:

I. Abortion

A. Definition
B. Historical perspectives
C. Legal aspects
   1. Roe v. Wade
   2. Planned Parenthood v. Danforth
   3. Hyde Amendment
   4. Harris v. McRae

D. Ethical issues
   1. Rights of fetus
   2. Rights of woman
   3. Rights of father
   4. Obligation of society

REQUIRED READING:


Davis & Aroskar, chapter 8.


SUGGESTED READING:


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October 7, 1987 - Care of Infants and Children

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. discuss the historical, legal, ethical, and socioeconomic issues involved in the care of high-risk infants.
2. discuss the legal, ethical, and socioeconomic issues concerning children's rights to health care and well-being.

CONTENT:

I. High-risk infants

A. Infanticide
B. Treatment vs. non-treatment
C. Quality of life
D. Personhood
E. Baby Doe regulations

II. Children's health care

A. Rights of children
B. Proxy consent

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, page 47.

Davis & Aroskar, pages 140 and 147.


SUGGESTED READING:


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October 14, 1987 - Mental Retardation
Applied Genetics

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. describe the influence of public attitudes toward the mentally retarded.
2. discuss the rights of the mentally retarded.
3. discuss the value and possible consequences for the family/society of genetic screening and genetic engineering.

CONTENT:

I. Mentally retarded

A. Labeling
B. Legislation
C. Eugenics
   1. Positive
   2. Negative
D. Rights

II. Applied genetics

A. Genetic screening
B. Genetic counseling
C. Genetic engineering
   1. Risk
   2. Benefits

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, chapter 8.

Davis & Aroskar, chapter 11.


SUGGESTED READING:


OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. define behavior control.
2. identify the impact of various behavior control methods on the individual.
3. discuss the notions of acceptable behavior and changing behavior as they relate to individual freedom and societal responsibility.
4. discuss the concepts of coercion and freedom/autonomy as they relate to the issue of behavior control.

CONTENT:

I. Behavior control
   A. Definition
   B. Methods
      1. Information controls
      2. Coercive controls

II. Acceptable behavior
   A. Freedom of individual
   B. Societal definition

III. Changing behavior
   A. Freedom/autonomy
   B. Coercion
   C. Societal responsibility

REQUIRED READING:

Davis and Aroskar, chapter 10.


SUGGESTED READING:

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October 28, 1987 - Informed Consent

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session the student will be able to:

1. identify historic milestones related to informed consent and research with human subjects.
2. define informed consent.
3. discuss informed consent as it relates to both experimental and nonexperimental procedures.
4. describe the role/function of institutional review boards.
5. discuss the relationship of informed consent to vulnerable populations.

CONTENT:

I. Historic perspectives
   A. Court decisions related to informed consent
   B. Nuremberg Code
   C. Declaration of Helsinki
   D. Examples of unethical research

II. Informed consent
   A. Definition
   B. Elements
   C. Related to experimental procedures
   D. Related to nonexperimental procedures

III. Institutional review boards
   A. Composition
   B. Role/function

IV. Vulnerable populations

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, chapter 5.

Davis & Aroskar, chapter 7.


SUGGESTED READING:


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November 4 and 18, 1987 - Dying and Death  

OBJECTIVES: At the end of these sessions the students will be able to:  

1. define death and brain death.  
2. describe the impact of technology on dying, death, and personhood.  
3. discuss the rights of the dying.  
4. discuss the role of advance directives.  
5. define euthanasia, passive and active euthanasia, and voluntary and nonvoluntary euthanasia.  
6. discuss ethical issues related to code, no code, and "slow" code.  
7. describe the relationship between dying and death, personhood, and hospice.  
8. discuss suicide as an ethical dilemma.  

CONTENT:  

I. Death  
   A. Definition  
   B. Brain death  
   C. Philosphic issues  

II. Impact of technology  
   A. Prolonging living vs. prolonging dying  
   B. Personhood/quality of life  

III. Rights of the dying  
   A. Right to know the truth  
   B. Right of informed consent  
   C. Right to refuse treatment  
      1. Ordinary vs. extraordinary care  
      2. Code, no code, "slow" code  

IV. Euthanasia  
   A. Definition  
   B. Passive vs. active  
   C. Voluntary vs. nonvoluntary  
   D. Advance directives  
      1. Living Will  
      2. Durable power of attorney  

V. Hospice  
   A. Definition  
   B. Relationship to  
      1. Dying and death  
      2. Personhood/quality of life
V. Microallocation

A. Definition

B. Bases for decision making
   1. Social worth criteria
   2. Random selection
   3. First come, first served
   4. Need

VI. Organ transplantation/donation

A. Donation
   1. Living vs. cadaveric donor
   2. Supply vs. demand
      a. Uniform Anatomical Gift Act
      b. Increasing the supply

B. Transplantation
   1. Deciding who receives
   2. Quality of life
   3. Financial burden

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, pages 73-76, 140-164.

Davis and Aroskar, pages 34-35, 45-46 and chapter 12.


SUGGESTED READING:


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VI. Suicide

A. Reasons for suicide
B. Professional/societal responsibilities

REQUIRED READING:

Harron, Burnside, & Beauchamp, chapter 3 and pages 63-73, 76-84.

Davis & Aroskar, chapter 9.


SUGGESTED READING:


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N138 - Ethical Issues in Health Care

December 2 and 9, 1987 - Public Policy and Health Care Delivery

OBJECTIVES: At the end of these sessions the student will be able to:

1. identify historical and legislative influences on the development of public policy related to health care.
2. define justice, distributive justice, comparative justice, retributive justice, compensatory justice.
3. describe theories of distributive justice.
4. differentiate macroallocation and microallocation.
5. discuss the ethical considerations when arranging priorities for allocating health care.
6. identify the bases for making microallocation decisions.
7. discuss the ethical issues of organ transplantation/donation.

CONTENT:

I. Public policy

A. Historical influences
B. Legislative influences

II. Justice

A. Definition
B. Work of John Rawls
C. Formal principle (Aristotle)
D. Types
   1. Distributive
   2. Comparative
   3. Retributive
   4. Compensatory

III. Theories of distributive justice

A. Utilitarian
B. Egalitarian
C. Libertarian

IV. Macroallocation

A. Definition
B. Arranging priorities
   1. Who allocates
   2. How to distribute
   3. Which focus