GOAL AND SCOPE

AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a late and thus-far terminal phase of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). In this course we will focus on some of the central ethical and public-policy questions surrounding the national and international epidemic of HIV infection and AIDS. We will begin with a factual base, asking how HIV originated, how it is transmitted, and how and when it affects human beings. We will also review current data on the number of people affected by the epidemic. We will then turn to ethical and public-policy issues in three arenas: public health and health policy, the professional-patient relationship, and biomedical research. Because HIV infection is most often transmitted through sexual contact or through intravenous drug use with unsterilized needles, we will pay particular attention to the difficult ethical and policy questions surrounding sexual behavior and the use of illegal drugs.

OVERVIEW OF CLASS SESSIONS

Class 1 (January 15): Introduction to the Course
Class 2 (January 22): History and Overview I
Class 3 (January 29): History and Overview II
Class 4 (February 5): Factual Background on HIV Infection and on the Current Status of the Epidemic
Class 5 (February 12): Prevention and Education I
Class 6 (February 19): Prevention and Education II
Class 7 (February 26): Prevention and Education III
Class 8 (March 4): Site Visit or Guest Speaker
Spring Break
Class 9 (March 18): The Experience of Being Infected with HIV
Class 10 (March 25): HIV Infection and the Patient-Professional Relationship I

Class 11 (April 1): HIV Infection and the Patient-Professional Relationship II

Class 12 (April 8): HIV Infection and the Health-Care System

Class 13 (April 15): Site Visit or Guest Speaker

Class 14 (April 22): HIV Infection and Biomedical Research

Class 15 (April 29): International Perspective; the Responsibility of the States and the Federal Government in the U.S.

TEXTBOOKS


ASSIGNED READINGS

Note: Reading selections not marked with asterisks are included in the textbooks. Selections marked with asterisks either will be distributed in class or are available in a readings packet at Kinko's, 3329 M Street.

Class 2 (January 22): History and Overview I

Shilts, Band, Parts I-V, pp. xi-335.
Class 3 (January 29): History and Overview II


Class 4 (February 5): Factual Background on HIV Infection and on the Current Status of the Epidemic


Nichols, Mobilizing, chaps. 1-5 (pp. 1-143).


Class 5 (February 12): Prevention and Education I

National Commission on AIDS, Living, chap. 2.

Nichols, Mobilizing, chap. 6.


Class 6 (February 19): Prevention and Education II


Class 7 (February 26): Prevention and Education III

James F. Childress, "Mandatory HIV Screening and Testing," in Reamer, AIDS, pp. 50-76.


Class 8 (March 4): Site Visit or Guest Speaker

Readings to be assigned.

Spring Break

Class 9 (March 18): The Experience of Being Infected with HIV

Nichols, Mobilizing, chap. 8.

David G. Ostrow and Jeff Stryker, "Neuropsychiatric Aspects of HIV Disease," in Gostin, AIDS, pp. 32-44.


Class 10 (March 25): HIV Infection and the Patient-Professional Relationship I


Ferdinand Schoeman, "AIDS and Privacy," in Reamer, AIDS, 240-278.


Class 11 (April 1): HIV Infection and the Patient-Professional Relationship II


Allan M. Brandt, Paul D. Cleary, and Lawrence O. Gostin, "Routine Hospital Testing for HIV: Health Policy Considerations," in Gostin, AIDS, 125-139.


Class 12 (April 8): HIV Infection and the Health Care System

National Commission on AIDS, Living, chaps. 3 and 4.

Nichols, Mobilizing, chap. 9


Class 13 (April 15): Site Visit or Guest Speaker

Readings to be assigned.

Class 14 (April 22): HIV Infection and Biomedical Research

Nichols, Confronting, chap. 7.


Class 15 (April 29): International Perspective; the Responsibility of the States and the Federal Government in the U.S.


National Commission on AIDS, Living, chap. 6.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are requested to complete all assigned readings in advance of the class for which they are assigned and to participate actively in class discussions. This facet of each student's work will constitute 25% of the final grade.

There will be two written assignments for the course. The first is a short paper, preferably not more than 10 double-spaced pages in length, which can take one of two forms: (1) a site-visit report on an organization or government agency that is involved with the HIV epidemic; or (2) a critical analysis of one argument that is used in the ethical discussion surrounding the HIV epidemic. The site visit report should focus on the central ethical questions confronted by the organization or agency you visit, as you perceive them. The critical analysis should show why the argument you treat is philosophically compelling or flawed. In either case, the short paper should reflect your capacity for independent philosophical reflection and argumentation. This assignment is due on Wednesday, March 25th. The short paper constitutes 25% of the final grade.

The second written assignment is a semester-end term paper on some aspect of ethics and the HIV epidemic. Criteria for the evaluation of term papers will be distributed later in the semester. Again, the approach in the term paper should be critical and analytical, rather than merely descriptive or narrative. The term paper should not exceed 20 double-spaced pages in length and is due on Friday, May 6th. The term paper constitutes 50% of the final grade.

Please try to submit papers on time, both in the interest of justice (equal time for all students) and in the interest of efficiency. Personal or familial emergencies can, of course, constitute legitimate grounds for extensions beyond deadlines.