The University of Colorado
School of Medicine

PRMD 5000
Ethics in Medicine
Spring Quarter 1996

Course Syllabus

Role and Purpose of Course:
To provide students with foundational knowledge and skills in responsible professional behavior that will enable them to competently reflect upon, address and resolve the ethical and socio-cultural issues that each student will confront in Primary Care I, II and III, the clinical clerkships in years three and four, residency training, and professional practice.

Course Director:
Mark Yarborough, Ph.D.
270-5096

Course Representatives:
Bob Brockman
Anthony Leo
Grading: The course will be taught on a pass/fail basis with an honors option. In order to receive a grade of pass students must have a final course grade average score of 80% or better:

Midterm exam: 25%

Attendance and participation in small groups: 25%

Final paper: 50%. The final paper will be a 6 - 8 page paper, typed double-spaced, which will be a case analysis. The case summary portion of the paper should not exceed one page in length.

Honors option: 90% grade average or higher plus the satisfactory completion of an oral exam.

Attendance: A student who misses any class session must submit a three page paper, typed double-spaced, which covers the assigned material for that class session. Papers are due the week following the missed class session. Students with more than two absences will receive a failing grade.

Texts: At the Will of the Body, by Arthur Frank; selections from The Silent World of Doctor and Patient, by Jay Katz; selections from Principles of Biomedical Ethics, 4th ed, by Tom L. Beauchamp and James Childress; and various essays and short stories contained in this syllabus.

Course Learning objectives:
Develop students' abilities to
1. Recognize and reflect on the humanistic dimensions of the practice of medicine and the moral values which frame that practice;
2. communicate effectively with patients and colleagues regarding the value components of medical practice. This will be done by teaching students how to
   a) discuss patients' values and goals with them, b) obtain informed consent or informed refusal regarding medical treatment, c) respect patient confidentiality, and d) respect a patient's right to receive truthful disclosure;
3. Personally formulate a framework for ethical decision-making;
4. Consider how contextual influences, e.g. personal values, gender, religion, culture, ethnicity, affect the practice of medicine.
Course Outline

Weeks 1 - 3: The Doctor/Patient Relationship

Week 1: Course Introduction and Introduction to the Patient/Physician Relationship

Learning objectives for March 7:
1. Learn the course objectives and requirements.
2. Learn the expectations and procedures pertaining to the small groups.
3. Consider the characteristics which contribute to positive and negative physician/patient relationships.

Class Schedule
A. Introduction of course faculty: Mark Yarborough

B. Introduction to the Patient/Physician Relationship: Chancellor Fulginiti

C. View excerpts from “The Doctor” followed by a panel discussion.
Panelists:
   Ms. Eileen Hahn
   Dr. Bob Pensack
   Dr. Gail Mizner

D. Break to Small groups

Small group activities:
Discuss course syllabus and course mechanics
Establish ground rules for the small groups.
Discuss the panelists’ remarks.
Learning objectives for March 14:
1. Examine illness as the patient’s personal experience.
2. Examine how illness is objectified as medical diagnosis, social stigma, and institutional anonymity.

Class Schedule
A. Embodiment and illness: Sally Gadow, Ph.D.
Overview: Illness has two dimensions. Its objective dimension is accessible to description and interpretation by someone other than the patient; that is the importance of science. The subjective dimension is accessible only to the patient, and therefore can be described and interpreted only by the patient. A complete clinical assessment incorporates both dimensions. In a clinical situation that raises ethical problems, the subjective aspects are especially important, because only from that dimension comes information about the person’s degree of suffering, desire for treatment and hope for cure or desire for peaceful death.

B. Break to small groups.

Small group activities:
Discuss At the Will of the Body and Dr. Gadow’s remarks.
Consider Arthur Frank’s description of his body as existential crisis, “quicksand”, social humiliation, personal challenge, scientific object, medical territory.
Propose examples of a physician alleviating the experiences Frank describes.
Identify subjective aspects of illness that you consider beyond the ability or the ethical obligation of medicine to alleviate.
Examine the implications for patient and physician if medicine addressed the objective dimension of illness exclusively.

Reading Assignment: At the Will of the Body, by Arthur W. Frank
Learning objectives for March 21:
1. Describe and discuss various models of the physician/patient relationship.
2. Through case study analysis explore the boundaries of the physician/patient relationship in terms of the strengths and limitations of various models of the physician/patient relationship.

Class Schedule
A. Models of the Patient/Physician Relationship: Mark Yarborough, Ph.D.

B. Break to small groups

Small group activities:
Discuss various examples of patient/physician relationships drawn from the week's reading assignments, personal experience, and from Primary Care Preceptors in which the physician is "too close" to a patient to cases in which a physician clearly dislikes a patient.

Reading Assignment: “The Laundry” and “The Good Doctor” by Susan Mates; “Brute”, by Richard Selzer; “Mistakes” by David Hilfiker; and Chapter 4 in The Silent World of Doctor and Patient
Learning objectives for March 28:
1. Identify the major principles of bioethics.
2. Through case study analysis, discuss the moral context of health care and the various purposes of the health care delivery system.
3. Discuss the significance of the act of profession in medicine.

Class Schedule
A. The moral context of healthcare and the basic principles of medical ethical decision-making: Mark Yarborough, Ph.D.

B. Break to small groups

Small group activities:
Discussion of case studies which raise issues of justice and the nature of the implicit social contract between society and the medical care system.

Reading assignment: Read pages 120-128, 189-196, 259-275, & 326-348 in Principles of Biomedical Ethics.
Week 5: Ethical Theories, Part I

Learning objectives for April 4:
1. Discuss how theory influences decision-making.
2. Discuss the strengths and limitations of the three theoretical models presented in the class lecture.
3. Use the theories presented in the lecture and the framework for case analysis which was presented in the class lecture to discuss selected cases.

Class Schedule
A. The Nature of Theories, Narrative Ethics, Casuistry, The Ethics of Caring, Frameworks of decision-making:
   Mark Yarborough, Ph.D.
   Jane Battaglia, M.D., M.A.
   Richard Martinez, M.D., M.H.

B. Break to Small Groups

Small group activities:
Discuss case studies to explore the three theories of ethical decision-making.

Reading Assignment: Pages 45-47, 62-69, 85-100 in Principles of Biomedical Ethics; “From Facts to Fiction” and “Physician as Novelist” by Walker Percy; “Knowledge in Medicine” by Kathryn Hunter; “A Doctor’s Visit” and “Enemies” by Anton Chekhov; and “Toenails” and “Brute” by Richard Selzer
Study Guide for Narrative Ethics and Ethics of Care
1. Understand medical knowledge as a form of narrative knowledge.
2. Understand and appreciate how a narrative perspective in medicine allows for attention to particulars, ambiguity, and nuance in the patient/physician relationship.
3. Learn how a narrative perspective brings order, cohesion, and continuity to identity.
4. Learn how illness and injury are events, often discontinuities, which can better be understood in the narrative approach.
5. Learn how principles of medical ethics and narrative ethics complement each other in the search for the “moral good.”
6. Learn the distinguishing aspects of an “ethics of care”. How is this different from the traditional view of medical care?
Week 6 Ethical Theories, Part II:

Learning objectives for April 11
1. Discuss the strengths and limitations of the three theoretical models presented in the class lecture.
2. Use the framework for case analysis which was presented in the class lecture to discuss “Please Let Me Die” and other selected cases.

Class Schedule
A. Formalist, Consequentialist and Virtue-Based Ethical Theories:
   Mark Yarborough, Ph.D.

B. View “Please Let Me Die”

C. Break to small groups

Small group activities:
Discuss case studies to explore how the various theories work.

Reading Assignment: Pages 47-62, 69-77, & 100-111 in Principles of Biomedical Ethics
Weeks 7-10: Communicating with patients

Week 7: Communicating with Patients, Part I

Learning Objectives for April 18:
1. Explore the communicative obligations within the physician/patient relationship.
2. Explore the communicative obligations to those outside the physician/patient relationship.
3. Address the conflicts which arise between the obligations to be truthful and to respect confidences to both patients and to others in the community.
4. Discuss how conflicts among various professional obligations can be resolved.

Class Schedule
A. Integral Aspects of the Physician/Patient Relationship: Truth telling and Confidentiality: Ben Rich, J.D., Ph.D. and Robin Harvan, Ed.D.

B. Break to Small Groups

Small Group Activities:
The group will analyze a case by appealing to the ethical principles and by applying the ethical rules discussed in this class session and in previous sessions. As a guiding framework for this discussion, students will explore the following questions:
1. Identify the problem(s) or issue(s) presented to you in the case.
2. Identify at least three options you have in reaching a decision.
3. Discuss the implications or consequences of these options.
4. State your position in this case and justify your decision.

Reading Assignments: Pages 395-412, & 418-429 in Principles of Biomedical Ethics; Page XIV and Sections 5.05, 5.055, 5.06-5.08, 8.12, and 8.13 in AMA Code of Medical Ethics, and pages 130-142 in The Silent World of Doctor and Patient by Jay Katz.
To guide facilitation of group discussion regarding each of these questions, the following suggestions are offered:

For Question 1: Students should explore the nature of the ethical dilemma, that is, what is in "conflict" ...... Is it issues, principles, rules, duties, rights?

For Question 2: Students should identify options that would address resolving the "conflict" between rules/duties/rights.

For Question 3: Students should identify the theory/framework they are using to address the conflict. For instance, if a student adopts:

- a consequentialist approach, then enunciate the "If ... then statements for each option identified in #3

- a deontological approach, then identify and address the duties in conflict

For Question 4: Students state and justify their position ... Sharing, exploring, reflecting, and analyzing their rationale and reasoning.
Week 8: Communicating with Patients, Part II

Learning Objectives for April 25:
1. Learn about the history and elements of and the ethical and legal basis for informed consent.
2. Explore the process of obtaining informed consent.
3. Learn how to document informed consent.
4. Consider and evaluate informed consent form the perspective of Jay Katz.

Class Schedule
A. Informed Consent: Ben Rich, J.D., Ph.D.

B. Break to Small groups.

Small group activities:
1. Discuss the significance of informed consent as both a legal requirement and ethical responsibility for physicians.
2. Understand the role of informed consent in the different models of the patient/physician relationship.

Reading Assignment: Read Chapter 3 in The Silent World of Doctor and Patient by Jay Katz and section 8.08 in the AMA Code.
Week 9: Communicating with Patients, Part III

Learning Objectives for May 2:
1. Become familiar with the different types of Advance Directives
2. Become familiar with the standards of proxy decision-making.
3. Explore strategies for obtaining valid Advance Directives and surrogate decisions.

Class Schedule
A. Advance Directives and Surrogate Decision-making, Ben Rich, J.D., Ph.D.

B. Break to small groups.

Small groups Activities:
Use role playing to explore how to discuss advance directives with patients and how to work with difficult surrogate decision-makers.

Reading Assignment: University Hospital "Health Care Decisions" brochure; Medical Directive and Values History forms; and Article 18.5 of Colorado Revised Statutes: Proxy Decision-Makers for Medical Treatment
Week 10: Communicating with Patients, Part IV

Learning Objectives for May 9:
1. Explore the scope of the physician role with terminally ill patients.
2. Explore strategies for recognizing and addressing pain and suffering.

Class Schedule

B. Break to small groups

Small group activity:
Discuss one another's understanding and experience with dying and death.

Reading Assignment: Epilogue from *The Nature of Suffering* by Eric Cassell, Chapter 8 in *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient* by Jay Katz; "Case D" by Erich Lindemann; "Ways of Thinking About Death"; and "Elements of a Strategy for Better Communication"
Week 11 (May 16): Final exam is due!

Paper assignment

During the time you have spent this year with your Primary Care I preceptor in the outpatient setting you should have encountered cases which raised significant ethical issues. Select one of these cases and provide a thorough ethical analysis of it. The paper should be 6 - 8 pages in length, typed double-spaced. Your paper should include a brief summary, not exceeding one page in length, of the case; a clear statement of what ethical issues are at stake; and a critical discussion of how you think the case could best be resolved. A minimum of three outside references should be included in your paper. The paper should not be a simple retelling of what you observed in your preceptor’s office. Rather, you should critically discuss the ethical issues involved in the case and pose a resolution of those issues. Your discussion should draw on the readings, lectures and discussions of this course and should reflect what you have learned regarding the moral values important to medicine and the ethical decision-making strategies available for preserving these values.

The following bioethics journals are available in Denison for your use.
Hastings Center Report
Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal
Journal of Clinical Ethics
Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics
Hastings Center Reports
Journal of Medical Ethics
Theoretical Medicine
Bioethics Quarterly
Social Science and Medicine
The Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics
American Journal of Law and Medicine
Journal of Legal Medicine