

BIOETHICS (BIOE)

BIOE 4010 Introduction to Bioethics

This course is intended to serve as an introduction to the academic field of bioethics. Students will be introduced to classic papers, basic concepts, field history and important legal cases in the field. But rather than being a broad survey course of many content areas in bioethics, this course will examine how bioethical arguments are constructed with the objective of mastering both the critique of bioethical arguments and their construction. Therefore, most importantly, this course serves as a "methods course" for learning the skill of persuasive bioethics argument, i.e., "the art of conversion." In some of the course sessions, we will focus on the analysis of arguments made by others. In many of the weeks of the course, we will focus on the process of constructing our own, effective bioethical arguments.

Fall

Mutually Exclusive: BIOE 6010

1 Course Unit

BIOE 4020 Conceptual Foundations of Bioethics

This course examines the various theoretical approaches to bioethics and critically assesses their underpinnings. Topics to be covered include an examination of various versions of deontological theories, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, principlism, casuistry, feminist ethics, narrative theory, and pragmatism.

Mutually Exclusive: BIOE 6020

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5050 Sex and Bioethics

While the topics of sex and sexuality have a long and storied history in medical culture, they have been especially complex and problematic in the past century. With the creation of distinct sexually-minded medical fields since the late 19th-century including sexology, psychiatry, and hormonal studies, medicine has also occasioned the very categories and labels of the homosexual, the hermaphrodite, the invert, and the nymphomaniac, to name a few. While medical historians and queer theorists have paid almost obsessive attention to these subjects, bioethicists have intervened to a lesser degree and on only a handful of relevant subjects. In this course, we will address the range of historical and theoretical matters that speak to this intersection of bioethics and sex, paying special attention to the health concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) persons. Who has sex with whom? What does it mean to pathologize or diagnose such desires? How do we raise the stakes when considering persons who question their sex or who are in sexual transition? And how do such questions reveal the dilemmas of bioethicists at large, not just those related to matters of sex and sexuality? Accordingly, this course will consider a range of historical and contemporary topics which speak to the bioethical dilemmas of the intersection of medicine, sex, and sexuality, including: the gay adolescent, the intersex person, gay-conversion therapies, the prospect of gay gene studies, sex addiction, and blood/organ donation policies in wake of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Specifically, we will focus on literary sources (poetry, memoirs, diaries, and films) as well as on non-literary accounts (medical texts, bioethical scholarship, legal cases, and historical records) that explore the emotional and somatic aspects of matters related to sex and bioethics.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5400 Challenging Clinical Ethics: Managing patient/caregiver conflicts through mediation.

The contemporary healthcare system in which patients, families, institutions and a multiplicity of caregivers interact over matters of life and death with legal, ethical, emotional and scientific complexities inherently gives rise to a variety of disputes. Such disputes are frequently highly charged and are often emergent in nature. In recent years, mediation has grown exponentially as a dispute resolution mechanism of choice. Not surprisingly, the success of mediation and a wider understanding of the process, has led to its application in the realm of healthcare disputes with encouraging results. This course will initially provide an overview of classical mediation theory and practice. Students will be introduced to negotiation fundamentals critical to the practice of mediation. Similarities and differences between mediation in the healthcare field, as distinct from other contexts, will be examined. All class members will participate in mediation role-plays designed to simulate disputes of the kind prevalent in healthcare landscape

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5450 Mediation Intensive I

Students will be placed in a variety of clinical situations in which they will play the roles of disputants and mediators, with ongoing discussions and critiques of mediator performance. Each student will be videotaped during their mediation to elicit feedback from the group and to catalyze self-criticism. As distinct from the course, BIOE 5400: Challenging Clinical Ethics, in which negotiation and mediation theory are taught as a prelude to clinical simulations, this course references the literature solely in relation to problems encountered in the hands-on mediation of specific cases. Students may take the mediation intensives in any order; they do not need to be taken from I to IV. Students may take all 4 intensive courses, as the material will not be repeated.

0.5-1 Course Unit

BIOE 5460 Mediation Intensive II

Students will have an immersion experience, learning mediation through role-playing simulations. Note that the format is similar to Mediation Intensive I, but the Mediation Intensive II will NOT duplicate simulations. Students in this course will: learn to effectively manage clinical disputes among and between caregivers, patients, and surrogates through mediation; discover how to define problems and assess underlying interests to generate mutually acceptable options; role play in a variety of clinical situations as both disputants and mediators; practice mediation with professional actors; and receive constructive feedback in a supportive environment. Students will also be required to complete a written research paper. Students may take the mediation intensives in any order; they do not need to be taken from I to IV. Students may take all 4 intensive courses, as the material will not be repeated.

0.5-1 Course Unit

BIOE 5470 Mediation Intensive III

Students will have an immersion experience, learning mediation through role-playing simulations. Note that the format is similar to Mediation Intensive I and II, but med. intensive III will NOT duplicate simulations. Students in this course will: learn to effectively manage clinical disputes among and between caregivers, patients, and surrogates through mediation; discover how to define problems and assess underlying interests to generate mutually acceptable options; role play in a variety of clinical situations as both disputants and mediators; practice mediation with professional actors; and receive constructive feedback in a supportive environment. Students will also be required to complete a written research paper. 6 students may take the mediation intensives in any order; they do not need to be taken from I to IV. Students may take all 4 intensive courses, as the material will not be repeated.

0.5-1 Course Unit

BIOE 5480 Mediation Intensive IV

Students will have an immersion experience, learning mediation through role-playing simulations. Note that the format is similar to earlier mediation intensives but the mediation intensive IV will NOT duplicate simulations. Students in this course will: learn to effectively manage clinical disputes among and between caregivers, patients, and surrogates through mediation; discover how to define problems and assess underlying interests to generate mutually acceptable options; role play in a variety of clinical situations as both disputants and mediators; practice mediation with professional actors; use video-tapes of simulations to improve mediation techniques and strengthen interpersonal skills; receive constructive feedback in a supportive environment. Students may take the mediation intensives in any order; they do not need to be taken from I to IV. Students may take all 4 intensive courses, as the material will not be repeated.

0.5-1 Course Unit

BIOE 5500 Bioethics and Society

This set of courses will deal with bioethical issues in popular culture addressed from a social science perspective. Courses to be offered include: "Sociology of Bioethics," and "Media and the Doctor-Patient Relationship." This is a topics course - for information on the topic currently being offered, please go to the course listing on the Bioethics website: <http://www.med.upenn.edu/mbe>.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5510 Race and Bioethics

Much of the mainstream dialogue regarding medicine, technological advances, and healthcare has relied on the premise of fairness and equality. However, this is not the entire story. Many of the advancements we take for granted were produced at the expense of racially marginalized individuals. This course aims to explore those topics and teach bioethics students how to engage with them in a practical way. The course will cover historical bioethical incidents that shaped racially marginalized individuals relationships with healthcare and science. It will also examine bioethics through the lens of racially marginalized peoples. Lastly, it will also cover various approaches to integrating anti-racist principles into the practice of bioethics.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5520 Anthropological Topics in Bioethics

This set of courses provides an introduction to the use of anthropological methods and approaches to address bioethical issues. Courses might include cross-cultural studies of medicine and doctoring, diversity and the culture of medicine, cross-cultural bioethics. This is a topics course - for information on the topics currently being offered, please go to the course listing on the Bioethics website: <https://www.med.upenn.edu/mbe>.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5530 Medicine on the Fringes: the Ethics of Alternative, Experimental, and Do-It-Yourself Treatments

Much bioethics literature focuses on issues in mainstream, established medicine — but what are the ethics of therapies, treatments and techniques utilized outside of common practice? This course begins with a historical exploration of "quack medicine" and medical professionalization. We then explore ethical and regulatory issues regarding complementary and alternative medicine, as well as the ethics of providing experimental, off-label, and placebo treatments. Finally, we will examine how individuals are accessing therapeutic techniques outside of the physician's office, via do-it-yourself medical movements, direct-to-consumer health technologies, and medical tourism.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5540 Bioethics and Law

This course will present a broad survey of topics at the intersection of law and bioethics. Much of bioethics deals with topics of public policy, and law is the tool of policy. Areas to be covered will range from an overview of American law making to enforcement mechanisms, topics including FDA regulations, state interventions into beginning and end of life issues, privacy, malpractice, healthcare reform, and international issues, including those related to innovation and access to medicines.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5550 Bioethics and Technology: Neuroethics

Neuroethics might well be the most rapidly growing area within bioethics; indeed, in some respects neuroethics has grown as an independent field, with its own journals, professional society and institutional centers.

This growth over the past decade is partly attributable to the growth of neuroscience itself and to the challenging philosophical and moral questions it inherently raises. A 2012 Royal Society report, observes that an increasingly mechanistic understanding of the brain raises a host of ethical, legal, and social implications. This has laid the foundation for the emergent field of Neuroethics, which examines ethical issues governing the conceptual and practical developments of neuroscience. Irrespective of their validity, even the claims that modern neuroscience entails the re-examination of complex and sensitive topics like free will, consciousness, identity, and responsibility raises significant ethical issues. As such, neuroethics asks questions that extend beyond the usual umbrella of biomedical ethics. This course will, therefore, consider the new knowledge and ways of learning about the brain from scientific and ethico-legal and social standpoints. We will examine the core themes of neuroethics, including cognitive enhancement, the nature of the self and personhood, neuroimaging and privacy, and the ways that all these themes are brought together in matters affecting national security.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5560 Evidence in Bioethics and Health Policy

The ability to critically appraise scholarly work is a necessary skill to effectively contribute to bioethics and health policy debates, and for development and implementation of health interventions. The object of this course is to provide students with the skills needed to become fluent in reading and assessment of empirical bioethics and health service research. The course will review and evaluate a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods utilized in bioethics, health policy, and medical research. Specifically, students will learn the conceptual rational for standard qualitative and quantitative methods, their strengths and weakness. At course completion, students should be able to critically evaluate empirical research published in top bioethics, health policy, and medical journals.

Fall

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5570 Disability Bioethics

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5580 Sexual and Reproductive Health

This class will survey the current landscape of sexual and reproductive healthcare from the perspective of an intersectional and feminist bioethics rooted in disability justice. From the politically charged debates over abortion rights, birth control access, and assistive reproductive technologies to gender-affirming care, sexual education, and reproductive health access for marginalized groups, we'll explore the underlying power dynamics, tensions, and cultural and ethical controversies that characterize this varied field. We will examine these issues through an array of sources, including academic writing, podcasts, and other media, as well as first-hand accounts from patients themselves.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5590 Speaking For Patients: Ethical Issues in Patient Advocacy

This course examines the role that activism and advocacy play in shaping health care in the United States and abroad. The course combines in-depth exploration of particular case studies—AIDS activism in the 1980s, the billion-dollar breast cancer movement, the anti-vaccine movement—with an analysis of cross-cutting questions and themes. We consider how health advocates contribute to forming personal identities around certain illnesses and conditions, how they mobilize constituents and recruit allies, and how they influence decisions about health policy, research, and practice. We also consider the implications of an increasingly professionalized health advocacy industry and ask how corporate sponsorship has changed the landscape of health activism. In addition, we examine the ethical issues involved in speaking on behalf of others, particularly those (e.g., young children, persons with intellectual disabilities) who cannot speak for themselves.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5600 Pediatric Ethics

In this course, we will explore the history, conceptual frameworks, and landmark debates of bioethics related to children. We will examine common ethical challenges (e.g., transplantation, critical illness, end of life) when the patient is a child. We will also examine issues unique to children, such as newborn screening, consent vs. assent, the rights and responsibilities of parents, and the role of the courts and the state. We will draw upon theories from moral philosophy, clinical cases, and seminal legal decisions to demonstrate the breadth and complexity of pediatric ethics.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5610 Ethics, Regulation, and Politics of Science

The conduct of science poses both profound ethical questions and important challenges for policymakers and the public. How should society deploy its limited resources in the pursuit of science? How can we respect research participants and protect their interests? What are the roles of norms, laws, regulations, public engagement, and other governance mechanisms in ensuring that the right science is done and that science is done right? How can we ensure that science benefits rather than harms individuals and communities and that it combats rather than reinforces injustice? Is there some science that simply shouldn't be done? What can we learn from science "gone wrong?" To address these and other questions, this course will first articulate the fundamental ethical and policy issues raised by the conduct of biomedical science and will then apply those frameworks to a series of timeless and timely case studies, with attention to science and race, science in public health emergencies, and more. Students will engage with a mixed selection of foundational and modern academic articles and newspaper or magazine-style narratives. Assessment will be based on midterm and final essay exams. Students will also be expected to complete brief written replies (ungraded) in advance of 5 class sessions.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5620 Propaganda

Is "propaganda" a dirty word? First there was the word, then there was propaganda. This participatory seminar course will involve exploration of propaganda, misinformation, disinformation, and persuasion in the health domain. We will address how propaganda is defined, how to identify it, analyze it, and counter it; examine actors, sources, and methods of communication, interests promoted, audiences targeted, outcomes, and the roles of values and uncertainty; and consider the related ethical issues. Students will research, present, and lead a discussion on an example of propaganda in the health realm. Topics will range from race, eugenics, wars on cancer and illegal drugs, firearms, climate change, income inequality, drug marketing, abortion, public hygiene, smoking, STDs, GMO, obesity, healthcare reform, vaccines, vivisection, new technologies, Covid-19, and other relevant topics.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5630 History of Bioethics

This course will take an historical approach to the emergence of modern bioethics, the study of ethical issues in medicine and the life sciences. The course will consider pre-20th century medical ethics; the scandals, tragedies and controversies that motivated the modern field; the institutionalization of bioethics in the academy, government, industry and the military; and the recent growing emphasis on ethics in basic life sciences research and development, including genetics, stem cell biology and neuroscience; and the role of bioethics in the rules-based global order. Recurring themes will include physician-patient relations, the ethics of human experimentation, military medical ethics, and human rights theory.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5640 Social Media, Healthcare, and Medical Ethics

It is difficult to overstate the impact of the internet and social media on our lives. Individuals, families, communities, and societies have been transformed. People now relate to and communicate with one another in ways previously unimagined. Social media platforms have redefined our understanding and expectations about friendship, citizenship, individual privacy, and, most fundamentally, reality. In this course, we will examine the conceptual and ethical challenges posed by the use of artificial intelligence, social media, and the 'internet of things' in healthcare contexts. We will begin with selections from the philosophy of technology and then explore ethical issues in the application of social media and artificial intelligence across health care. The course will combine both didactics and discussion to engage students on these issues.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5650 Rationing & Resource Allocation

You have one liver but three patients awaiting a liver transplant. Who should get the liver? What criteria should be used to select the recipient? Is it fair to give it to an alcoholic? These are some of the questions that arise in the context of rationing and allocating scarce health care resources among particular individuals, and concern what are called micro-allocation decisions. But trade-offs also need to be made at the meso- and macro-level. Budgets of public payers of healthcare, such as governments, and of private ones, such as health plans, are limited: they cannot cover all drugs and services that appear beneficial to patients or physicians. So what services should they provide? Is there a core set of benefits that everyone should be entitled to? If so, by what process should we determine these? How can we make fair decisions, if we know from the outset that not all needs can be met? Using the cases of organs for transplantation, the rationing for vaccines in a flu pandemic, and drug shortages, the course will critically examine alternative theories for allocating scarce resources among individuals. Using both the need to establish priorities for global health aid and to define an essential benefit package for health insurance, the course will critically examine diverse theories for allocation decisions, including cost-effectiveness analysis, age-based rationing and accountability for reasonableness.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5660 Personal Responsibility for Health in Policy and Practice

Excess body weight is often associated with higher healthcare cost. Should overweight and obese people pay more for health insurance? If we want to encourage people to quit smoking, is it best to give insurance discounts to those who succeed, or impose surcharges on those who do not? Should companies be permitted not to hire smokers? Globally, more than seven in ten deaths are due to chronic diseases, such as stroke, cancer, diabetes or heart disease. In the US, rates are even higher. Good or poor health is typically the result of a number of interacting factors. Genetics, social status, environmental conditions and personal behavior all play a role. In the best case, appeals to personal responsibility can motivate people to achieve oftentimes challenging behavior change. But in the worst case, policies penalize people for factors that are beyond their control. We will critically assess how personal responsibility is conceptualized in law and policy in different countries, and evaluate philosophical, political, economic and health-science related rationales in favor and against personal responsibility for health. Some of the material will be conceptual in nature, but throughout, the discussion will be focused on concrete cases, including obesity, smoking, breast screening, organ donation and medication adherence. We will also discuss controversial new work requirements and other policies aimed at strengthening personal responsibility in Medicaid.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5670 Ethical Issues in Carceral Healthcare

This graduate course explores ethical challenges at the intersection of criminal justice and healthcare, focusing on how medical conditions are treated inside jails and prisons. We will cover psychiatric care, addiction, women's health, LGBTQ health, and pediatrics in carceral settings. Additionally, students will examine the rise of mass incarceration and the history of healthcare in correctional facilities. Key ethical issues such as consent, privacy, access to care, and the dual loyalty of healthcare providers will be critically analyzed. We will also discuss ethical considerations in carceral research. Students will be required to attend a class visit to Curran Fromhold Correctional Facility on July 9th. This experience will provide firsthand insight into the complexities of carceral healthcare, and will include discussions with healthcare providers and administrators working in these challenging environments.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5680 Science, Technology, Medicine and Society

This course will explore the relationship between science, technology, medicine, and society, thinking critically about the role that power, politics, culture, and history play in the framing and shaping of scientific and medical practice. We will consider how science, technology, and medicine both construct the world around us and how we construct the understanding of them. What role has culture played in diagnostic practice from the nineteenth century to the present? How do we consider political and social debates on the development of technologies from x-rays to photographs to cars to the bomb? Case studies will include biometric surveillance, appearance and beauty, and AIDS activism.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5690 Genetics and Ethics

More than 20 years have passed since the inception of the Human Genome Project. Where are we now? The results of the HGP have shaped medical practice and have changed the way people talk about themselves and their relationships. In this course students will be introduced to basic genetics and to recent advances in the genetic and genomic sciences. We will explore the ethical, legal, and social implications of these trends while discussing topics such as whole genome testing, ancestry and race, forensic genetics, and the relationship of genetics to health disparities.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5700 Public Health Ethics

When New York City passed a ban on the sale of large sugary drinks, critics denounced the law as an abuse of government power and an attack on personal freedom. "If people want to be fat, let them be fat," protested one opponent of the law. Though the controversy surrounding the so-called "soda ban" garnered national attention, there is nothing unusual about policies that restrict or shape personal choice in the name of public health. From controls on the sale of certain drugs to healthy eating campaigns, governments regularly take measures to promote healthy behaviors and prevent people from engaging in actions that are harmful to themselves or others. What ethical values justify these sorts of public health interventions and how do they differ from the ethical values that inform clinical care? How far should governments go in limiting individual autonomy in order to achieve public health goals? How should governments and other actors prioritize different public health interventions? This course will explore these and other ethical questions in the context of case studies involving childhood vaccination, infectious disease monitoring and control, safe-injection sites, tobacco control, and other public health efforts.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5710 Anthropology of Medicine

How do social, cultural, and political forces shape health as well as understandings and experiences of the body and practices of caring for it? Medical anthropology is the sub-field of anthropology devoted to the interaction of biological, sociopolitical, cultural, and economic factors that impact disease and illness. We will engage work that studies biomedicine itself as a sociocultural system. We will explore how medical practitioners come to see their patients, explore practices of producing medical knowledge and technological intervention, and consider what it is like to be a subject of biomedical practice and healing. In doing so, we will discuss theories of the role of power, culture, history, and identity in illness, healing, and disease, reading core texts that critically ground medical anthropology today and inform contemporary understandings of clinical ethics. This course heavily engages ethnographic materials in its exploration of culture and society, considering a broad range of health-related experiences, discourses, knowledge, and practice among different cultures and along the hierarchy of power. Topics include diverse concepts of disease etiology and healing practice; theories of embodiment and somatization; ethnomedicine, medical pluralism, and (bio)medicalization; structural violence, inequalities, and social suffering; political and moral economies of global health and medical humanitarianism; HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases; and effects of new medical technologies on how we live and die.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5720 Global Bioethics

According to the WHO, around 30 million people with HIV/AIDS should receive anti-retroviral treatment. But only 10 million do. Drugs containing tenofovir—the standard of care in developed countries are expensive. Stavudine-based treatments are much cheaper but have worse side-effects. Is it ethical to use stavudine-based rather than tenofovir-based treatments in sub-Saharan Africa? Smoking rates have decreased drastically in most developed countries. But they are increasing in many developing countries. Established public health measures are not implemented, and the tobacco industry pursues a range of marketing activities that would be unacceptable in developed countries. As a consequence, global deaths from smoking are expected to increase to 1bn by the end of the 21st century, with 80% of deaths in developing countries. Is industry's behavior immoral or normal in a global market? ARDS is a disease of premature newborns. Is it ethical to test a new ARDS drug in Bolivia if the drug—if proven to be effective—will be very expensive and accessible only to the richest people in Bolivia and other developing countries? An overarching question that these different cases raise is whether there are universal ethical standards that should apply to all people, or whether regional variations should be acceptable. Universalists typically argue that there must be no double standards, and that people should be treated the same regardless of where they live. Pragmatists raise concerns about moral imperialism, neo-colonialism, or insufficient respect for cultural or other differences. Increasing globalization fuels debates about which of competing sets of moral standards is the right one. Looking at a range of diverse cases including healthcare research, health policy, flu pandemics, family planning, smoking and obesity policy, and genetically modified crops, this course explores controversies in the cross winds of market forces, politics and ethics, and examines the roles and responsibilities of key actors and international policy guidance.

Fall

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5730 Medicine Through the Artist's Eyes

From Matthias Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece (c. 1512-1516) with its pox-ridden, emaciated Christ, displayed in a hospital for sick and dying peasants, to Frida Kahlo's The Broken Column (1944), a gut-wrenching self-portrait visualizing her chronic pain after spinal surgery, for hundreds of years, artists have used their work to document, explain, critique, challenge, and glorify medicine, its practitioners, and its institutions. This course will examine artworks from 1450 to today that depict illness and disease, doctors and patients, and medical treatments – or lack thereof. This class offers students an art historical approach to the history of medicine and its critical reception by artists working in different times and geographies. Through class discussions and close readings of scholarly articles, we will consider how the ethics of medicine have or have not changed over the centuries, and how the categories of gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and physical and mental ability influence medical care. In addition to situating their own approaches to patient care in a vivid, art historical context, students will gain skills in visual analysis and written and oral communication.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5740 The Concepts of Health, Disease, and Illness

This graduate course explores the philosophical concepts of health, disease, and illness, examining their historical evolution and impact on medical and bioethical debates. Through the introduction of key texts in philosophy of medicine, we will investigate how these concepts have shifted over time, from pre-scientific nosologies to modern biomedical classifications. The course will also address how racism, sexism, and moralism have influenced the definitions and perceptions of health and disease, impacting medical practices, healthcare disparities, and the medicalization of life experiences. Topics include the classification of psychiatric conditions, the boundaries between normality and pathology, and the ethical implications of contested diagnoses.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5750 Health Care Reform and the Future of the American Health Care System

This course provides students with a rigorous understanding of the current American health care system and how it is likely to evolve over the next decade. The course will focus on six topics: 1) the development of the current health care system; 2) challenges of health care costs, quality, and access; 3) lessons of previous attempts to reform the system including the Affordable Care Act (ACA); 4) analysis of current policies regarding provider payment, technology, and electronic health records and how various sectors (e.g. public health and hospitals) are evolving in the current system; 5) drug pricing and potential strategies for reform, and 6) future megatrends in American health care system. Throughout the course, lessons will integrate basic health economics, history, health policy, and politics to elucidate key principles for understanding the health care system. The course will also examine at least one other country's health system for comparison. The course will end with a consideration of the long-term outlook for the structure of the US health system and potential reform. Numerous expert guest speakers will give their perspectives throughout the semester.

Fall

Also Offered As: HCMG 8500

0.5,1 Course Unit

BIOE 5780 Bioethics and Human Rights

The constitution of the World Health Organization enshrines “the highest attainable standard of health as a fundamental right of every human being.” If such a right exists, it is far from being realized. Worldwide, over 1 billion people are living in hunger. Every day, 21,000 children die before their fifth birthday of pneumonia, malaria, diarrhea and other diseases. Even wealthy countries are marked by significant health disparities. In the U.S., for instance, infants born to African-American women are 1.5 to 3 times more likely to die than infants born to women of other races. This course explores the moral principles and the political and legal structures that inform a human rights approach to health. What sorts of freedoms (e.g., to bodily integrity) and entitlements (e.g., to accessible and affordable health care) does a right to the highest attainable standard of health entail? If countries cannot ensure their citizens’ right to the highest attainable standard of health, what responsibility does the international community bear for intervening? Should undocumented and irregular migrants have the same access to health care as citizens? Is a human rights approach to health compatible with using the market to allocate health-related goods? Finally, what are the limitations of analyzing health and formulating health policy using a human rights framework?

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5800 Research Ethics

This seminar is intended to give students a broad overview of research ethics and regulation. The students will come out of the class with an understanding of the historical evolution, moral bases and practical application of biomedical research ethics. The course includes reading assignments, lectures, discussions and practical review of research protocols and in-class interviews with researchers and study subjects. Course topics include: history of human subjects protections, regulatory and ethical frameworks for biomedical research, informed consent theory and application, selection of fair research subjects and payment, confidentiality, secondary uses of data and stored tissue, ethics of international research, pediatric and genetic research and conflicts of interest in biomedical research.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5810 Narrative Medicine

How can we use the power of storytelling to understand the medical world? How does narrative medicine help us gain insight into the myriad experiences of patients, caregivers, physicians, and other medical professionals? How do we search for and create meaning in the medical context? Why is this search for meaning important not just for patients, but for all those involved in their care? Last, but certainly not least: how can the study of narrative medicine can help us become better doctors, lawyers, bioethicists, and other professionals involved in patient care? Narrative medicine is an interdisciplinary field that uses skills of close reading, radical listening, and creativity to explore the world of patients, caregivers, and those who provide medical care. It helps us turn a critical eye on what we think we know about the experiences of patients and medical providers, as well as allowing us to examine the cultural influences on the medical system and our concepts of disease, wellness, ability, and disability. We will have lively discussions of all of the above questions (and many more) in this narrative medicine course exploring storytelling in many forms, including fiction (novels, films, short stories, poems), creative non-fiction (essays, graphic novels), as well as discussions with doctors and other medical professionals.

1 Course Unit

BIOE 5900 Ethics in Mental Healthcare

Mental healthcare spans disciplines including psychiatry, psychology, and clinical social work, each presenting bioethical challenges. These range from somewhat common issues like informed consent in research and therapy, assessing patient competence, and clinical professionalism. More complex challenges include managing involuntary treatment, interfacing with the criminal justice system, conducting high-risk research with individuals who have a serious mental illness, psychedelic treatment and research, maintaining physical and emotional boundaries, and addressing and learning the history of systemic racism in psychiatry. To examine these topics in detail, this course will begin with an introduction to the philosophy of psychiatry. Students will become conversant in bioethical theories and methods, enabling them to critically analyze complex cases in mental healthcare ethics.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6000 Master of Bioethics Capstone Seminar

This semester-long seminar serves a culminating research experience in the MBE program and is open to all MBE students. In this seminar, students propose a topic for original, independent research and produce a piece of scholarly work with guidance from the course instructor and capstone classmates. Students attend a biweekly seminar while completing their projects to learn research skills and workshop their project with their peers. Students also have one-on-one capstone meetings with the course instructor. The course concludes with a Capstone project event, during which each participant presents their work. This course is only open to students in the Master of Bioethics program. Students must propose a tentative research topic before registering for the course.

Fall or Spring

Prerequisite: BIOE 7010

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6010 Introduction to Bioethics

This course is intended to serve as an introduction to the academic field of bioethics. Students will be introduced to classic papers, basic concepts, field history and important legal cases in the field. But rather than being a broad survey course of many content areas in bioethics, this course will examine how bioethical arguments are constructed with the objective of mastering both the critique of bioethical arguments and their construction. Therefore, most importantly, this course serves as a “methods course” for learning the skill of persuasive bioethics argument, i.e., “the art of conversion.” In some of the course sessions, we will focus on the analysis of arguments made by others. In many of the weeks of the course, we will focus on the process of constructing our own, effective bioethical arguments.

Fall

Mutually Exclusive: BIOE 4010

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6020 Conceptual Foundations in Bioethics

In this course, students examine the two moral frameworks – deontology and consequentialism – that individuals use to make decisions about right and wrong both in their personal life and in their professional life. These two moral frameworks provide the foundation for bioethical analysis. Understanding these two moral frameworks not only enables one to understand one's own moral perspective, but also provides the tools to be able to understand ethical arguments made by others. The theory of deontology and consequentialism are supplemented by applications of these frameworks in the bioethical literature. Additionally, students are introduced to the three theoretical contributions to moral analysis created internally in the field of bioethics: casuistry; narrative theory, and principlism.

Spring

Mutually Exclusive: BIOE 4020

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6030 Clinical Ethics

In this course, we will explore paradigmatic clinical ethics debates spanning the life course. Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will consider some of the challenges in clinical decision-making for and with patients, such as assessing patient capacity, deciding for others, rationing at the bedside, and requests for assistance in dying. We will also examine hospital policies related to triage and allocation of scarce medical resources, including ventilators, vaccines, and organs. We will draw upon theories from moral philosophy, legal cases, and contemporaneous reports related to the COVID-19 pandemic to demonstrate the live ethical challenges of clinical practice today.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6050 Mentored Research I

In this research assistantship, MBE or MSME students work closely with a faculty member to produce a piece of publishable-quality co-authored scholarship through engagement in a faculty member's ongoing research. For students in the MBE program, there will be a limited number of projects offered each academic year to which MBE students may apply. Each faculty member will design their own application process for these research assistantships. MSME will work with their faculty advisor to design their independent research agenda with faculty collaboration.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6060 Mentored Research II

This course gives postdoctoral students the opportunity to work with a faculty mentor for one semester. The student chooses a specialized topic in Bioethics and identifies a problem to which they apply research and draw some conclusion. The faculty mentor assesses and submits a grade for this work. This is often resulting in a publishable quality paper.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6070 Mentored Research III

This course gives postdoctoral students the opportunity to work with a faculty mentor for one semester. The student chooses a specialized topic in Bioethics and identifies a problem to which they apply research and draw some conclusion. The faculty mentor assesses and submits a grade for this work. This is often resulting in a publishable quality paper.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit

BIOE 6080 Mentored Research IV

This course gives postdoctoral students the opportunity to work with a faculty mentor for one semester. The student chooses a specialized topic in Bioethics and identifies a problem to which they apply research and draw some conclusion. The faculty mentor assesses and submits a grade for this work. This is often resulting in a publishable quality paper.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit

BIOE 7010 MBE/MSME Proseminar

This course will provide an opportunity to engage, at an advanced level, with contemporary controversies in bioethics. Each week, we will read and discuss a mix of conceptual and empirical papers and cases.

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit

BIOE 7470 Contemporary Research Issues in Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience

This course is intended to take you from a textbook-level acquaintance with psychology and neuroscience to critical engagement with the primary literature, through lectures, discussion and short written assignments. You will learn to extract, from the dense and detail-laden pages of a journal article, its contribution to the "big picture" of human neuroscience. You will also learn to recognize problematic research practices when they arise, and to analyze and communicate about the strengths and weaknesses of research articles.

Spring

Also Offered As: PSYC 7470

1 Course Unit

BIOE 9900 Research Assistantship I

Research Assistantship I

0 Course Units

BIOE 9901 Research Assistantship II

0 Course Units

BIOE 9902 Research Assistantship III

0 Course Units

BIOE 9990 Master of Bioethics Independent Study

This course serves the MBE Independent Study. Directed reading course on a topic not covered in our standard courses WRITTEN REQUIREMENT: negotiated with advisor but there needs to be some written output – similar to regular class. Student creates a syllabus Purpose: To learn a new topic of bioethics Example Topics: Pediatric ethics Transplant ethics End of life Jewish/religion bioethics Examples of a Independent Study: Compare/Contrast of 2 positions in the field and then decide which position you choose A response paper for weeks readings Penn 2 page response papers for different

Fall, Spring, and Summer Terms

1 Course Unit