In 1970 a new word was coined, designating a new discipline, located somewhere at the intersection of medicine, theology, politics, the life sciences, law and moral philosophy. The emergence of bioethics was the outcome of a number of different historical developments, including social movements, technological developments, the setting of legal precedents, the breaking of medical scandals, changes to the institutions of medicine, new ways of saving and prolonging life, and the appearance of new diseases. The course brings together all these different strands to weave a portrait of birth, illness, healing and death in our technologically-driven age.

The social, political and technological upheavals that produced the new discipline raised some of the core questions of moral philosophy. Starting in the late 1960s, medical paternalism and the utilitarian thinking that underpinned it were subjected to a sustained challenge from many different quarters, including the discourse of civil rights, Kantian notions of autonomy, feminist critiques of medicalization and a Christian ethic based on the sanctity of human life. The aim of the course is to enable students to understand the way in which contemporary bioethical debates emerge as the outcome of historical processes.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

*40% of the grade will be based on the quality of your class participation, including postings to the discussion board on the WebCT site sent before class based on the readings. These should be one or two paragraphs long and each student should post one per week starting in second week and excluding the last week of the quarter (eight in total).*

*10% of the grade will be based on a short, easy quiz, which we will do in class towards the end of term.*

*50% will be for the final paper: 10-15 pages double-spaced on a topic of your choice related to the course materials. The essay should demonstrate a grasp of the historical roots of contemporary bioethical debates.*
Outline of major events

1947 Nuremberg Doctors’ Trial and the Nuremberg Code
1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN
1951 Clinical trial of oral contraceptives begun
1953 Elucidation of the double helical structure of DNA
1954 Salk Polio Vaccine trials
1960 Contraceptive Pill approved by FDA
1960 Invention of the Scribner shunt
1961 Convening of the Seattle Admission’s and Policy Committee
1961 Publication of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*
1961 Revelation of the side effects of Thalidomide
1962 Kefauver-Harris amendments to the Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1938
1964 Declaration of Helsinki published by the World Health Organization
1965 Medicare Act
1965 Griswold Versus Connecticut legalizes access to contraception by married couples
1966 Publication of Henry K. Beecher’s ‘Ethics and Clinical Research’ in the NEJM
1967 First heart transplant
1968 Harvard Committee’s report ‘Definition of Irreversible Coma’
1972 Revelation of the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment
1973 American Hospital Association adopts a Patients’ Bill of Rights
1973 Roe versus Wade decision
1975 Asilomar meeting on recombinant DNA technology
1976 Karen Quinlan decision
1976 Founding of Genentech
1978 Publication of the Belmont Report
1978 Declaration of Alma Ata
1980 Diamond v. Chakravarty case
1981 First reported cases of G.R.I.D., later named AIDS
1984 John Moore case
1987 Founding of ACTUP
1988 Eli Lilly release Prozac
1994 Oregon Death with Dignity Act
1997 Birth of ‘Dolly’, the cloned sheep
2000 *Publication of the rough draft of the Human Genome*
2001 Terri Schiavo case
2001 George W. Bush announces stem cell policy
2006 Launching of No Lie MRI
2007 Sperm sorting offered by clinic in Virginia
2008 Health care access on the agenda for the election

History of Bioethics syllabus p.2
FRIDAY 9/26: Introduction to the course

The Hippocratic Oath

First week: the moral laboratory

MONDAY 9/29: Utilitarian medicine

Thomas Southwood-Smith (1832) *Uses of the Dead to the Living*, pp. 1-5, 48-54.

WEDNESDAY 10/1: ‘National Socialism is Applied Biology’


FRIDAY 10/3: Kantianism

No reading

Second week: The voluntary consent of the human subject, 1947 to 1965

MONDAY 10/6: The Nuremberg Trials


WEDNESDAY 10/8: Victors’ justice?

The Nuremberg Code

FRIDAY 10/10: A code for barbarians?


MONDAY 10/13: Brave New World

WEDNESDAY 10/15: Prolongation of Life

FRIDAY 10/17: Who Shall Live?

Fourth week: the birth of bioethics, 1961-1966

MONDAY 10/20: Thalidomide
Helen Taussig ‘Thalidomide and Phocomelia’ in *Pediatrics* 1962, 30, 654-659

WEDNESDAY 10/22: Concentration camps for dogs
No reading

FRIDAY 10/24: Blowing the Whistle

Fifth week: Life, death, and the ‘right to privacy,’ 1968-1973

MONDAY 10/27: Brain death

WEDNESDAY 10/29: Roe versus Wade

FRIDAY 10/31: Karen Quinlan
Supreme Court of New Jersey *In the Matter of Karen Quinlan*, reprinted in *Ethics in Medicine*, pp. 517-528.
Sixth Week: informed consent revolution, 1973-1979

MONDAY 11/3: Patients’ Bill of Rights

WEDNESDAY 11/5: Tuskegee syphilis study

FRIDAY 11/7: The Belmont Report

Seventh week: the end of bioethics and the impact of AIDS, 1978 to 2000

MONDAY 11/10: From protection to access

WEDNESDAY 11/12: Bioethics on its head

FRIDAY 11/14: Alternative medicine
Stephen Kunitz and Jerrold Levy (1997) ‘Dances with Doctors: Navajo Encounters with the Indian Health Service’ in Andrew Cunningham and Bridie Andrews (eds.) Western Medicine as Contested Knowledge, Manchester, Manchester University Press, pp. 94-123

Eighth week: profit, consumer rights and medical choice, 1976 to 2000

MONDAY 11/17: Ownership of life

WEDNESDAY 11/19: The pursuit of perfection

FRIDAY 11/21: Biology of human difference
Ninth week: the politics of personhood, 1990-2008

MONDAY 11/24: A Culture of Life
    In the circuit court for Pinellas County, Florida, Probate Division; Re: the Guardianship of Teresa Marie Schiavo, incapacitated.

WEDNESDAY 11/26: Neuroethics
    The Committee on Science and Law of the Bar Association of The City of New York, (2005) Are Your Thoughts Your Own?: “Neuro-privacy” and the Legal Implications of Brain Imaging, 60 CBA Record 407, 408

FRIDAY 11/28: Thanksgiving, no class

Tenth week: health disparities 1978 to 2008

Mar 10th Access the world

Mar 12th Access US
    Discussion of the government’s plans for health reform, no reading

Mar 14th Quiz and conclusion