

Bioethics
Fall 2020
26457 – 7397 – Koch
Professor(s): Valerie Gutmann Koch
Credits: 3
Course Areas: Health Law
Time: 1:00-2:30 MW, Room: to be determined
SYLLABUS & COURSE POLICIES

Faculty Information

Professor Valerie Gutmann Koch

E-mail: vgkoch@central.uh.edu

Office Hours: to be determined after classes begin. You also may contact me by e-mail at any time to set up a time to meet.

Course Materials

Please note that all references to “Dolgin and Shepherd” are to selected pages from *Bioethics and the Law* (Dolgin and Shepherd) (Fourth edition 2018). All additional assigned materials will be posted on Blackboard. You are responsible for staying up to date with the course website.

Course Description and Objectives

This course will offer an overview of basic concepts and principles in medical ethics and law. After completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Develop your ability to recognize, analyze, and critically evaluate bioethical issues
- Recognize and distinguish legal questions and resolutions from ethical ones
- Apply the most common legal arguments in favor of and against use of controversial technologies and interventions
- Evaluate the ethical and legal arguments related to some of the most contentious issues in bioethics, including end-of-life decision making, human subjects research, and use of assisted reproductive technologies

Course Topics

- I. **Introduction to Bioethics**
- II. **Autonomy and Bodily Integrity**
 - The Doctor-Patient Relationship
 - Informed Consent
 - Research Ethics

III. **Personhood**

- Fetuses and Embryos
- Cloning & Stem Cell Research

IV. **Privacy and Confidentiality**

- Privacy & Confidentiality
- Privacy, Essentialism, & Enhancement

V. **Assisting Reproduction**

VI. **Death and Dying**

- Withholding or Terminating Life-Sustaining Treatment
- Competent Patients Who Wish to Refuse Treatment
- Physician Aid in Hastening Death

VII. **Anatomical Gifts/Organ Donation**

VIII. **Public Health**

Method of Evaluation

Quizzes: Throughout the course, you will take a series of quizzes that cover the weekly assignments. These quizzes will account for 15% of your grade.

Response Papers: You will also be required to submit 3 response papers of 3-5 pages in length (each). You may choose which 3 modules you would like to reply to; please try to distribute them throughout the course (in other words, please do not submit your response papers the last 3 weeks of the course). These papers should incorporate thoughts, responses, and thoughtful analysis of that given week's readings. They should include appropriate references and citations. Papers are due **via email to me** (vgkoch@central.uh.edu) **by Friday at 5 pm the week before Monday's class**. You will not receive credit for an assignment turned in after that time. Please be cognizant of this deadline and plan your schedule accordingly, leaving yourself enough time to complete the assignment and email it to me. **You should be prepared to discuss your papers in class that week.** These papers will account for 15% of your grade.

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
No submission.	Submission only minimally addresses the material. Assignment appears hasty with little	Submission demonstrates familiarity with the reading but only partially incorporates individual response to the material, or	Submission fully addresses the materials or problem presented; acknowledges current law and applies it appropriately.

	thought. Does not provide adequate detail or support.	misunderstands existing law or policy.	Engages effectively with potential counterarguments.
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Seminar Paper and Presentation: Your seminar paper counts for 60% of your grade.

The paper should be of about 20 pages in length. The paper's footnotes must follow Bluebook form. Each student will also prepare an oral presentation, describing the major findings of the research. These presentations will be given in the seminar, in the last weeks of the semester. The oral presentation will count for 10% of your grade.

A topic statement is due, via email to me, on Wednesday, September 9. A first draft or detailed outline is due by 5 pm on Monday, October 19. Each student must meet with me about his or her paper during November. The final draft of the paper is due by 5 pm on Monday, December 14.

Course Requirements

Attendance: You are expected to attend class sessions and to arrive on time. You must comply with the Law Center's overall attendance policy, which allows no more than five absences in a 14-week, twice-a-week course. Your compliance with that policy is a requirement that professors have no discretion to alter or waive. However, I will work with you to help ensure continuity of your learning if you should be forced to miss a class or two for a *bona fide* work-related, health, or other pressing necessity.

You are not required to contact me to explain your first two absences from class, but I am always glad to hear from you because I am concerned to know if you are busy or swamped at work and I will save you copies of any class handouts if you are away.

Class participation: I encourage active participation in this course, for your own benefit and the benefit of your fellow students. At my discretion, a student's final grade may be adjusted upward or downward by one "notch" (e.g., from B+ to A-, or from B- to C+) in recognition of classroom contributions or lack thereof. And remember: A big part of participation is listening and thinking about others' points of view.

Use of computers, phones, etc.: I support the use of computers in the classroom. Unless otherwise announced in class, you may use your computers to take notes and look up statutes, regulations, and administrative materials that we are discussing. During class, I would like to see your computers being used only for course-related purposes. Please set all electronic devices to silent mode.

Recording class: Please do not record class without my express permission. I like for class to be a safe environment where students feel free to speak their minds and

explore speculative ideas without having to worry that their remarks are being memorialized.

CAPS Statement: Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.

Sexual Misconduct: The University is committed to maintaining and strengthening an educational, working and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced an incident of discrimination or sexual misconduct, there is a confidential reporting process available to you. For more information, please refer to the University System’s Anti-Discrimination Policy SAM 01.D.07 and Sexual Misconduct Policy SAM 01.D.08. Please be aware that under the sexual misconduct policy, faculty are required to report to the University any information received regarding sexual misconduct as defined in the policy. Please note that the reporting obligations under the sexual misconduct policy reach to employees and students. Also, as a required reporting party, Law Center employees and faculty members are not a confidential resource.

Class Accommodations: If you have a disability and require an accommodation, I encourage you to contact the Center for Students with Disabilities and to forward the Center all required documentation if you’ve not done so already. I encourage you to speak to me as well. All students should let me know what I can do to maximize your learning potential, participation, and general access during this course. I want to make the course material accessible, and I want you to succeed as a student. If any aspects of the course or the assignments pose accessibility problems, we can discuss alternatives.