

INSTRUCTOR:

Nancy S. Jecker, PHD

Professor, UW School of Medicine, Department of Bioethics & Humanities

Office: Health Sciences Bldg. A204P

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: nsjecker@uw.edu

Website: [UW Faculty Website](#)

GOALS:

- (1) Demonstrate basic knowledge of distributive justice theories
- (2) Identify connections between theories of justice and health care rights
- (3) Distinguish implicit and explicit forms of health care rationing
- (4) Critique ethical positions and understand their strengths and weaknesses
- (5) Understand future challenges facing the U.S. health care system
- (6) Appreciate the social and cultural assumptions underlying moral judgments

MEETINGS: In-class meetings are Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-2:20, in HSBI-132 (Thursday) and HSB RR-134 (Friday). This class combines in-person & online learning. Refer to the daily schedule (below) for more information.

DESCRIPTION: The course examines the ethical problem of allocating scarce health care resources. Our emphasis throughout is on fundamental principles of justice that support alternative health policies. The first part of the course introduces theories of justice, and considers the support they lend to a right to health care. The second section considers health care rationing, including rationing based on a patient's ability to pay; likelihood, length, or quality of medical benefit; social value; and age. We also consider criteria of random selection; first come, first served; and favored group status. The final part of the course explores future challenges facing the U.S. health care, including ensuring quality, containing costs, improving access, and meeting the needs of a rapidly aging society. Readings are primarily from Western philosophy and bioethics, with comparative East Asian approaches also considered. There are no prerequisites; however, prior course work in philosophy or ethics is strongly recommended.

REQUIREMENTS: Undergraduates are required to take 2 in-class examinations, participate in 3 in-class group assignments, and complete 10 online quizzes. Course grades for undergraduates are based on the following:

- Examinations: 100 points each, total 200 points or 50% of course grade
- Group Assignments: 33 or 34 points, total 100 points or 25% of course grade
- Quizzes: 10 points each, total 100 points or 25% of course grade

Graduate students are required to complete the same assignments, and to complete an 8-10-page research paper dealing in more depth with one of the topics discussed in class. Paper proposals must be approved by the instructor. Final papers are screened using the online plagiarism prevention and detection tool, VeriCite. Course grades for graduate students are based on the following:

- Examinations: 100 points each, total 200 points or 40% of course grade

- Group Assignments: 33 or 34 points, total 100 points or 20% of course grade
- Quizzes: 10 points each, total 100 points or 20% of course grade
- Paper: 100 points each or 20% of course grade

Consult the daily schedule (below) to find deadlines for submitting the paper proposal, the draft for peer review, and the final paper.

EXTRA CREDIT: Unannounced one-minute papers may be assigned during class. One extra credit point will be available per paper. Extra credit points earned will be posted to Canvas Grade Book and added to final class grades.

POLICY LINKS (double click to open):

UW, Student Academic Responsibility Policy

BH Department, Academic Conduct Policy (includes disability accommodation)

BH Department, Grading Policy

Instructor, Late Assignment Policy

Instructor, Vericite Policy

Instructor, Missed Class Policy

OPPORTUNITIES LINKS (double click to open):

BH Minor (Information & Application)

Bioethics Grand Rounds

Charles W. Bodemer Lecture

DAILY SCHEDULE:

I. Distributive Justice

A. Principles & Theories of Justice

1. Introduction

January 5 Jecker, "Justice," *Encyclopedia of Bioethics, 4th edition*
Recommended: Hardin, "Living on a Lifeboat"

2. Justice As Fairness

January 6 Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*
Fan, *Reconstructionist Confucianism*, 45-68
ONLINE QUIZ 1 DUE*

January 12 Online Lecture 1: Critique of Justice as Fairness (View prior to class)
Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron"
Recommended: Nussbaum, "The Enduring Significance of John Rawls"
GROUP ASSIGNMENT #1 (IN-CLASS)

3. Entitlement and Egalitarian Theories

January 13 Nozick, *Anarchy State and Utopia*
Gutmann, "For and Against Equal Access"
Tai and Lin, "Developing a Culturally Relevant Bioethics for Asian People"
Recommended:
Anderson, "What's the Point of Equality?"
Daniels, "Justice, Health, and Health Care"

ONLINE QUIZ 2 DUE* (Includes Online Lecture 1)

4. Act and Rule Utilitarianism

January 19 Dougherty, *American Health Care*, pp. 35-50

B. Health Care Rights

1. Rights to What? Health Versus Health Care

January 20 Guest: Aaron Katz, CPH
WHO, Commission on SDOH, "Closing the Gap in a Generation"
Recommended: Jecker, "A Broader View of Justice"
ONLINE QUIZ 3 DUE*

2. Political & Legal Rights

January 26 Guest: Beth Rivin, M.D.
Arras & Fenton, "Bioethics & Human Rights: Access to Health-Related Goods"
Recommended:
UN General Assembly, *Declaration of Human Rights*
Arras & Fenton, "Bioethics & Human Rights: Curb Your Enthusiasm"

January 27 3. Moral Rights

Dougherty, *American Health Care*, pp. 51-68 and 69-132
Fan, *Reconstructionist Confucianism*, 72-74
ONLINE QUIZ 4 DUE*
PAPER PROPOSALS DUE (Graduate Students Only)
EXAMINATION 1 REVIEW SHEET AVAILABLE (Online)

II. Health Care Rationing

A. Introduction

February 2 Online Lecture 2: Health Care Rationing (View prior to class)
Singer, "Why We Must Ration Health Care"
Recommended: Jecker & Pearlman, "An Ethical Framework for Rationing..."
GROUP ASSIGNMENT #2 (IN-CLASS)

B. Patient Selection

February 3 Guest: Robert Carithers, M.D.
Murray and Carithers, "AASLD Practice Guidelines: Evaluation of the Patient for Liver Transplantation"
Moylan, et al., "Disparities in Liver Transplantation Before and After Introduction of the MELD Score"
Recommended: Perkins, "Should Liver Transplantation in Patients with Model for End Stage Liver Disease Scores < Fourteen Be Avoided?"
ONLINE QUIZ 5 DUE*

February 9 EXAMINATION 1 REVIEW

February 10 EXAMINATION 1**

Required Equipment: laptop computer

B. Rationing Criteria

1. Social Criteria

February 16 Streaming Media: “Who Shall Live?” (50 minutes)

Alexander, They Decide Who Lives Who Dies

Jecker, “Caring for ‘Socially Undesirable’ Patients”

Recommended: Volk, Biggins, Huang, “Decision making in Liver Transplant”; Schneiderman, Jecker, “Should A Criminal Receive A Heart Transplant?”

ONLINE QUIZ 6 DUE*

February 17 Kilner, *Who Lives? Who Dies?* pp. 27-74

Recommended: Jecker, “Justice Between Age Groups”

ONLINE QUIZ 7 DUE*

2. Socio-Medical and Medical Criteria

February 23 Kilner, *Who Lives? Who Dies?* pp. 77-160

Recommended: Jecker, “The Problem with Rescue Medicine”

ROUGH DRAFTS DUE FOR PEER REVIEW (Graduate Students Only)

3. Personal Criteria

February 24 Kilner, *Who Lives? Who Dies?* pp. 163-207 and 221-237

Day, “Distributive Justice & Responsibility for Personal Choices about Health”

III. Future Challenges

A. Global Justice

CLASS ENDS EARLY AT 1:30

Guest: Seema Shah, JD (12:30-1:30 pm)

Recommended: Nayak & Shaw, “Should Social Value Obligations Be Local or Global?”

ONLINE QUIZ 8 DUE*

B. Supply and Demand

March 2 Guest: Bianca Frogner, M.D.

Online Lecture 3: Societal Aging & Health Care

WHO, “Global Health & Aging”

Recommended: Jecker, “Justice Between Age Groups”

EXAMINATION 2 REVIEW SHEET AVAILABLE (Online)

C. Cost, Quality & Access

March 3 Guest: Karen Merrikin, JD,

Online Lecture 4: Health Care Reform

Senate Republicans, “Obamacare Repeal & Replace: Policy Brief”

Park, “How Republicans Propose Changing Obamacare”

Kaiser Family Foundation, "Summary of New Health Reform Law (rev. 2011)"

Gable, "PPACA, Public Health & the Elusive Target of Human Rights"

Recommended: Fan, Reconstructionist Confucianism, 105-117

ONLINE QUIZ 9 DUE*

March 9 EXAM 2 REVIEW (Online)
GROUP ASSIGNMENT #3 (IN-CLASS)

March 10 EXAMINATION 2**
Required Equipment: laptop computer
GRADUATE STUDENT PAPERS DUE
ONLINE QUIZ 10 DUE* (Includes online lectures 2, 3, 4)

NOTE:

**Quizzes are online & do not require an access code. Use of notes, books, & websites is allowed, and working with classmates is encouraged. Begin the quiz only after completing required readings and/or online lectures. You are allowed 30 minutes to answer 10 multiple-choice questions. Submit by the deadline indicated on the daily schedule (above). The recommended browsers are Firefox or Chrome, not Internet Explorer.*

***Exams are online & require an access code, which will be provided in class on exam dates. Use of notes, books, & non-exam websites is strictly prohibited, and working with classmates is not allowed. **On exam days, a laptop is mandatory.** Laptops are available free of charge from the UW Student Technology Fee (STF) Loan Program, which has offices at various campus locations, including HSB I-146 (M-F 8-5, phone 543-3465). Reserve laptops at least one week prior to the exam. More information at: <http://www.cte.uw.edu/STFEquipment>*