

**SW 705: Ethical Dilemmas in Health
for Social Work and Other Health Professions**
U-M Course number: 28772 (3 credits)

**Fall 2018, Wednesdays: 3pm - 6pm, SSWB Room 2752
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: From a beginning in efforts to protect human rights in biomedical research, the field of health-related ethics, sometimes called “bioethics” has grown rapidly. It now encompasses such major areas as equity of access to, and delivery of, health care services, and the impact of the rapid proliferation of technologies (e.g. genetic and advanced diagnostic testing, prenatal, mind-altering and life-prolonging treatments) on how human life is defined, and on health care decisions and quality of life. While many of these issues, and the dilemmas they create, focus on the rights and burdens of individuals and families, ethical dilemmas in health have increasingly far-reaching implications for communities and societies. These dilemmas pose challenges to social workers and other social service and health care practitioners, administrators, policy makers and social and health scientists. Issues that have traditionally been private concerns are increasingly played out in the public arena, with passionate constituencies and extensive, and often inflammatory, media attention. The key roles and importance of well-trained and practiced social workers and other health care providers, administrators, planners and policy makers, in assuring equitable treatment and protecting individuals, communities and societies, provide the central rationale for this course. Course participants will review and use ethics frameworks and codes from a variety of health-related disciplines for decision-making, both generally and as applied to specific dilemmas, using a case-study approach. Participants will discuss conflicts between professional ethics codes and federal, state and local laws, regulations and codes.

COURSE CONTENT: The scope of the intersection between health and ethics is huge. This course cannot cover all issues, topics and dilemmas in one semester. A partial list of potential topics includes: content and application of health professional ethics codes and frameworks to health-related decisions and policies; ethical issues in health care resource distribution and allocation; conflicts between autonomy and beneficence in public health interventions; the role of social and health professionals and ethics consultants in hospital ethics review committees; competence assessment and health/mental health care decisions; informed consent, confidentiality and human subjects protection in health care and health research; access to, and the impact of genetic, fertility and reproductive technologies; ethical dilemmas and aging; advanced care planning, advanced directives and end-of life decisions, including neonatal and intensive care later in life or in “futile” situations; maternal/fetal conflicts of interest such as drug treatment or child abuse prosecution, coerced or forced maternal and fetal drug and surgical treatment; cross-cultural issues in bioethical decisions; the role of the internet and the media in framing bioethics and health care policy decisions. Additional issues and topics will be explored by course participants during assignments and class discussions.

COURSE DESIGN: This course is conducted as a **seminar**. This design assumes that all participants are adult learners who are responsible for, and actively engaged in, the learning process. You are the primary actor in developing your knowledge, understanding and skills through class activities, presentations (instructor, guests and your own), reading, listening, discussion, and from your developing experiences and insights. My role, as class instructor, is facilitator and guide. My teaching is less about lecturing than about planning class activities and identifying and providing many, but not all, learning resources that you will use throughout the semester and beyond. You are responsible for your own learning and much of the quality of your class experience. By University/School policy, I evaluate your immediate classroom-related learning, and provide grades. This is a “hands-on” course. Beginning with an introduction of ethical principles and frameworks used to guide health-related practice and research, we will examine common dilemmas faced in practice from the perspective of policy-makers, health and social service agency directors and practitioners, communities, families and individuals. Course participants will learn about and practice methods for analyzing ethical dilemmas from a variety of perspectives, including the professional and personal; develop, present and participate in analyses of ethical issues; and participate in decision-making meetings. Participants will find, review and discuss news stories related to ethical dilemmas in health, including discussion of how media portrayals affect public perception of the issues. The course methods and resources include journal, book and media readings, presentations by the instructor, guests and class participants, small and whole class discussions, analyses of ethical issue case studies, short and more in-depth analysis papers and in “mock” case presentations and meetings. In keeping with its interprofessional approach, students from areas of study and practice will draw upon and share their learning and work experience in the context of the course content.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the key principles of social work and other health professional ethics codes that guide ethical decision-making and apply them in the context of social justice, human rights, autonomy, resource allocation and responsibility.
2. Identify how similarities and differences in principles and decision-making methods, across professional codes, may contradict and/or complement one another in health-related practice, and in relation to local, state, national and/or international law, codes and regulations.
3. Assess how your personal values may differ from, or are similar to the values of your profession in several health-related ethical dilemmas.
4. Demonstrate how individual, family and community resources, educational level, gender, ethnicity, religion or spirituality, age, sexual orientation, marital status and other characteristics (of decision-makers and those affected by their decisions) may affect ethical decision-making.
5. Analyze and discuss the role of media in framing discussions and decisions related to ethics and health, as it affects the general public and specific population groups.
6. Demonstrate their ability to apply ethics frameworks and critical thinking to selected ethical dilemmas that arise in health care settings, and in health policy development and implementation, through written analyses and through their assigned roles during case study/case conference meetings and public hearings.

7. Use an interdisciplinary case study/case conference approach to practice decision-making applied to several contemporary health policy and health care issues including genetics, maternal/fetal conflict, fertility and reproduction, beginning and end-of-life decisions (care, quality and length of life) and allocation of health-related resources.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

1. *Multiculturalism and Diversity:* Attention to multiculturalism and diversity, and understanding the impact of these, is imperative to the ethical conduct of practice and research in social work and other health-related professions, and in the context of families, communities and society. Course participants will identify ways in which ability, age, sex, class, resource availability, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality) influence the distribution of health-related resources, how they influence, and are influenced by, ethical frameworks in various related fields and circumstances.

2. *Social Justice and Social Change:* Social justice is one guiding framework of ethical decision-making. Conversely, achieving social justice in health requires ethical decision-making processes. This course will address how ethical frameworks for decision making contribute to creating a system where the benefits of health promoting environments and resources, including health care, are distributed equally across populations. Course participants will analyze and discuss how ethical decision-making processes influence, and are influenced by scientific, socio-cultural, and social justice issues.

3. *Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation:* Course participants will review and analyze a variety of case studies that illustrate how ethical issues and dilemmas affect individual, family, organizational, community and societal well-being across the spectrum from promotion to rehabilitation, in a variety of settings and populations.

4. *Social and Behavioral Science Research:* While the course is practice-based, successful practice must be based on ethically conducted research. Course participants will review and apply research from social work and other health professional, behavioral and social science fields in group discussion, case studies presentations and papers. The evolving place of bioethics in biomedical, social and behavioral science research initiatives of the federal government and foundations will be discussed. The evolution, function and impact of human subjects review boards will be studied.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES: The Social Work Code of Ethics underlies the framing and implementation of the course. For example, in exploring the history and application of ethical frameworks, this course begins with an explicit overview of NASW'S Code of Ethics and compares and contrasts it to ethics codes in other disciplines. Students will explore social work ethics and values in a variety of contexts and practice settings that affect health and well-being through their readings, class discussions and assignments. Every effort will be made to encourage students from a variety of social and health professions to take the course in order to make it correspond to the "real world" of interdisciplinary decision-making during case conferences, legislative processes, and other formal and informal means of interdisciplinary communication.

INTENSIVE FOCUS ON PODS: Biomedicine has been guilty of some of the greatest violations of human rights in history including forced sterilizations of developmentally disabled and ethnic minority group members, selective abortion of female fetuses, Nazi and Tuskegee human experimentation, and withholding medical treatment of prisoners and other oppressed groups. Historically, presently and, likely in the future, many of the greatest health-related dilemmas arise from inequitable access to, or discriminatory application or withholding of health-related research and treatment based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, access

to resources, and other individual and population-based characteristics. This course addresses these in readings, case examples and student papers and presentations. The key roles and importance of well-trained and practiced social workers and other health providers, administrators, planners and policy makers in assuring equitable treatment and protecting individuals, communities and societies, provide the central rationale for this course.

LEARNING RESOURCES: READINGS/CANVAS WEBSITE AND MORE

We do not have a textbook for this class. You will use a variety of materials, including chapters from several books, journal articles, newspaper and magazine articles (professional journals and popular print media, along with shows broadcast by PBS, NPR and other media). I will make many of these available through our Canvas website, all in the Files folder. You will find, use and share others through your research, individually and with other members of the class.

The Canvas Files folder is organized with general materials first, e.g. the Course Syllabus, Reading Lists and Assignments Folder, and a General Resources and Links folder that contains ethics codes, decision making frameworks, bioethics-focused databases, organizations, and journals. This General Resources and Links folder could grow as the semester proceeds. It will provide you with material for your work in this course, and into the future, but do not limit yourself to what you find here.

You may also access University of Michigan ethics resources through this folder. The University houses several centers for ethics research centers which provide a wealth of resources, experts and seminars. This folder also contains links to the UM Health System's general ethics committee link and specific links to the adult and pediatric ethics committees.

Increasing understanding of the meaning and applications of the concepts and terms discussed in the week 1 and week 2 readings will be assumed for all in-class discussions, group and individual assignments. Materials for each class session are organized on your reading lists and in Canvas in *required materials* and *supplemental materials* categories. Required materials are those that are expected to provide the background you need to fully participate in class activities, both inside and outside of the classroom. Required materials listed on the reading list and in its corresponding Canvas folder should be the same. Supplemental materials provide further resources. Some, but not all of the supplemental materials on the reading list will be found in the corresponding Canvas folder. Conversely, I will add materials to the Canvas supplemental readings folder during the semester based on things that I, you and your colleagues find. Be advised that there may be some changes in the class schedule or reading lists if opportunities present themselves or by necessity. Assignment due dates and most if not all of the assigned readings will not change, unless otherwise discussed and agreed upon.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Preparation: The University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School guidelines expect graduate students to spend approximately 2-3 hours in independent preparation for each hour of class time. <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/faculty-staff/information-for-programs/directors/guidelines-for-graduate-course-approval/assignment-of-credit-hours>. This would translate to 6-9 hours a week for this class, on average. Assignments and required readings and other resource materials have been developed for this class to enable students to successfully achieve the goals and objectives of the course, and to develop and strengthen broader knowledge, values and skills important to success as a social worker.

Attendance and Participation: Because this is a participatory seminar, class attendance is required. Please notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester if religious observances, or other unavoidable obligations will conflict with class or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements. Class will begin promptly at 3:00 pm. Be cognizant of the

disruptive nature of coming to class late. Unless you have received prior authorization, coming to class more than 10 minutes late more than once, or leaving early, will be considered an absence. If you arrive after the class has begun, please enter the classroom as quietly as possible and wait until break to catch up with what is going on. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to be in class. All class members are expected to be attentive to speakers and discussants and extend courtesy and respect to others, even if their values, opinions and attitudes differ from yours.

Making up an Absence: With approval, up to two absences may be “made up” by 1) completing a summary of the key points of each of the required readings, and 2) any additional activity assigned related to the topic/activities of the day. You must contact me within 24 hours of the missed class to arrange for this option. *Any assignment due on a missed class day must be emailed to me before 3:00 pm on the day of the class.* Students with 2 absences that are not “made up” will receive a one level (e.g. A to A-) reduction in your final grade. Each additional absence will reduce your final grade an additional level.

Discussions/Group Activities: Discussions and group activities are a critical aspect of active learning at the graduate level. Well-prepared and active participation is required. The following expectations will be taken into account when considering your participation grade. As an adult learner, you are expected to prepare for class by reading and thinking about the topic of the day, preparing analytical materials, class discussion notes and other written work, and actively contributing to small and large group discussions. Your contributions must show evidence of reflection on the content and meaning of readings/class materials, and participation in classroom presentations, activities and discussion.

Professional Behavior: As a professional/professional-in-training, you are expected to conduct yourself as a professional in the classroom. Therefore, well-prepared and active participation is required. Class members are expected to be attentive to speakers and discussants and extend courtesy, attention to, and respect for the instructor, guests and fellow students, even if their values, opinions and attitudes differ from yours. Respect to the class itself is expected, demonstrated in verbal, non-verbal and written communication and other behaviors. Failure to behave professionally will result in a participation grade reduction.

Special Considerations: Please notify me immediately if you require special classroom or other considerations for instruction. SSW policy is to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. When you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the [Office of Services for Students with Disabilities](#) (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD ([734-763-3000](tel:734-763-3000)).

Use of electronic devices: All electronic devices, including but not limited to cellular/smart phones, pagers, tablets and laptop computers will be turned off at all times during class, unless instructors have asked you to use them for a class activity or you have made prior arrangements. Use without prior permission will affect your participation score.

ASSIGNMENTS

Detailed assignment guidelines are located above the reading lists and posted in the Canvas Assignments tab where all assignments must also be submitted. The guidelines include the number of points/percentage of 100 points that can potentially be earned for each assignment. Participation (25%) is graded separately and will not be reflected in the totals available in Canvas.

Deadline expectations: All reading, written and other assignments must be completed and ready for use by the start of class or the specified due date (see schedule). Please note that some assignments may be completed in-class. Assignments submitted late will be graded down one full grade. Canvas will track assignment submission. Assignments submitted more than two days late will not be accepted. Exceptions require permission of the instructor. Incomplete grades are assigned only through discussion with me before the due date.

Format of written assignments: All papers must be typewritten in Arial, 11-point font and one inch margins. Each assignment will indicate whether single or double spacing is required. Clear topic headings are required. Properly formatted citations must be included, using either APA or AMA format (see published article examples). Style guide resources are:

* APA citation style: American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

* AMA citation style: Here is the free searchable guide to AMA Manual of Style (references section). <http://www.amamualofstyle.com/> Examples at: <http://www.lib.jmu.edu/citation/amaguide.pdf>

* Additional Resources: [A Guide to Citation Management](#); [SSW librarian guide](#)

See also: General Expectations for Written Work, Academic Standards and Academic Conduct and Integrity, below.

EVALUATION AND GRADES Your class grade will be based on my evaluation of the following:

- Class participation (25%; includes homework preparation)
- News story analysis (article/show) (15%: 10% written summary; 5% discussion facilitation)
- Brief issue analyses: 2 analyses (30%):
 - Genetic technologies (15%); maternal-fetal conflict or parent-child conflict (15%);
- NICU meeting preparation is ungraded homework, but preparation is essential and participation is graded.
- Final paper – Analysis of ethical dilemma of your choice (30%)

TOTAL 100 points

Final grades will be assigned using the following point scale:

A+ = 99 - 100	B+ = 86 - 89	C+ = 74 - 77
A = 95 - 98	B = 82 - 85	C = 70 - 73
A- = 90 - 94	B- = 78 - 81	C- = 66 - 69

Both content and format will be considered in assigning grades. **Lower grades will result from late submission of assignments, failure to follow assignment and formatting guidelines, sloppiness, inappropriate grammar and misspellings.**

The criteria for letter grades are:

A+, A or A- Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. A+ will be a very rare grade. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.

B+ Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

B Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

B- Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

C or C- Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas need improvement in order to meet course requirements.

E Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR WRITTEN WORK

Strong writing is an essential professional and academic skill. The following expectations will be taken into consideration when evaluating your writing:

- You must use scholarly literature to support your presentation of material. You need to use multiple sources and synthesize them. Do not rely on direct quotations from your sources; instead summarize them in your own words. Quotations, if used at all, should be very minimal, used for special emphasis only and clearly identifiable and referenced.
- Written work should incorporate the standards of critical thinking, analysis and writing (described below). In evaluating your written work, I will apply these standards.
- You may find it useful to have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you turn it in. An outside reader can tell you if your writing is not clear, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful tools, but not as reliable as a human reader. Nonetheless, they provide a warning that something should be corrected!

Writing and Research Resources: The School of Social Work and the greater University offer several resources to assist in strengthening your writing and research skills. Please consider accessing these resources to complete your assignments.

Writing: ssw.umich.edu/writing-help Betsy Williams (betsywil@umich.edu) is the School of Social Work Writing/Study Skills Coordinator. You can contact her directly or through the School of Social Work Office of Career Services (room 1696; request appointments via ssw-cso@umich.edu or 734-763-6259). This assistance can include improving your writing skills, and reviewing paper drafts at any stage, along with the text of the assignment. Be sure to allow enough time for this service to be most effective. The website above also provides writing tips and other resources recommended by Betsy for graduate social work students.

You can also work with other U-M Writing Resources available to all students;

- Sweetland Writing Center, 734-764-0429; <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/>
- English Language Institute, <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli>

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND CODES OF CONDUCT

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness. (Michael Scriven & Richard Paul, presented at the 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform, Summer 1987).

See also: Richard Paul and Linda Elder, *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools*, Foundation for Critical Thinking Press, 2008) and <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>

All written work will be evaluated in accordance with the standards of critical analysis and thinking and should strive to meet the following intellectual standards:

- **CLARITY:** Could you elaborate further on that point? Could you express that point in another way? Could you give an illustration? Could you give an example?
- **ACCURACY:** Is that really true? How could we check that? How could we find out if that is true?
- **PRECISION:** Could you give more details? Could you be more specific?
- **RELEVANCE:** How is that connected to the question? How does that bear on the issue?
- **DEPTH:** How does your answer address the complexities in the question? How are you taking into account the problems in the question? Is that dealing with the most significant factors?
- **BREADTH:** Do we need to consider another point of view? Is there another way to look at this question? What would this look like from a variety of points of view?
- **LOGIC:** Does this really make sense? Does that follow from what you said? How does that follow? Before you implied this and now you are saying that; how can both be true?

Academic Conduct and Integrity: The conduct of a student enrolled in courses offered by the School of Social Work must be consistent with that of a professional person. Courtesy, honesty, and respect should be shown by students toward faculty members, guest lecturers, administrative support staff, and fellow students. Similarly, students should expect faculty to treat them fairly, show respect for their ideas and opinions and strive to help them achieve maximum benefits from their experience.

Written and oral materials prepared for this course must adhere to NASW Editorial Policy, the NASW Code of Ethics, the University of Michigan and the University of Michigan School of Social Work:

NASW Code of Ethics

The NASW Code of Ethics is available at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>. The following excerpts apply to academic integrity:

4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud and Deception: Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

4.08 Acknowledging Credit: (a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed. (b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

NASW Editorial policy: “In the interest of accurate and unbiased communication, the NASW publications program subscribe to a belief in the importance of avoiding language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. NASW is committed to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and groups.

Academic Integrity in Social Work: <http://guides.lib.umich.edu/swintegrity>

This guide provides outstanding resources, guidance and examples related to a variety of topics, including understanding and avoiding plagiarism, understanding acceptable and

unacceptable collaboration and group work, use of data, citations using APA style and a variety of related subjects.

School of Social Work Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct: Section 12 covers the [Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct](#). You are responsible for reviewing and understanding its requirements. Briefly, student academic misconduct refers to behavior that may include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, falsification of records or official documents, intentional misuse of equipment or materials (including library materials), and aiding and abetting the perpetration of such acts. The preparation of reports, papers, and examinations that are assigned on an individual basis, must represent each student's own effort. For group assignments, you have an equal share of responsibility for work necessary to complete the assignment completely and ethically, and for the final product. All reference sources must be indicated clearly and completely in both individual and group assignments. The use of assistance from other students or aids of any kind during a written examination, except when the use of aids such as electronic devices, books or notes has been approved by an instructor, is a violation of the student code of conduct.

Section 12.02 covers **plagiarism** (representing someone else's ideas, words, statements or works as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation). Plagiarism also includes self-plagiarism. <http://ssw.umich.edu/studentguide/2012/page.html?section=12.02&volume=1>

Plagiarism is stealing, a violation of academic integrity and community, and one of the most serious forms of academic and professional misconduct. Section 12.02 states: "Plagiarism, like other forms of cheating and misconduct, is taken very seriously at the University of Michigan and is grounds for expulsion from the University. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the information presented in Section 12. Further resources are available at <http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students>."

If you engage in plagiarism in this course, including self-plagiarism, you will fail both the assignment and the course. There will be no exceptions. We will also refer the details of the situation and related materials to the SSW administration for further action. Plagiarism is grounds for expulsion from the University of Michigan. In addition, papers that are completed for another course are not acceptable and will be assigned 0 points.

SW 705 SYLLABUS AGREEMENT: Fall 2018

Student Agreement

I have read this SW 705 (Fall 2018) syllabus and understand its contents. I agree to adhere to the University of Michigan School of Social Work Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct and NASW Code of Ethics.

Name (*Print*): _____

Name (*Signature*): _____

Date: _____

SW 705 SCHEDULE FALL 2018

September

- 05 Introduction to health ethics – concepts and influences; ethics codes
- 12 Decision-making frameworks – analysis of Perkins Case
- 19 Public health ethics principles and frameworks
- 26 Genetics
Issue analysis paper DUE 3pm

October

- 03 Health resource allocation and access; CHAT exercise
- 10 Aging: caregiving, quality of life, treatment decisions, care management
- 17 Chronic Disease and Organ transplantation
- 24 Hospital ethics processes; Maternal-fetal and parent-child dilemmas
Issue analysis paper DUE 3 pm
- 31 Ethical dilemmas in mental and behavioral health
Final Dilemma Paper - One-page introduction with refs, DUE 3 pm

November

- 07 Fertility and Reproduction; and Disability
- 14 Neonatal Intensive Care
Homework assignment - preparation for team meeting (ungraded paper), DUE 3 pm
- 21 STUDY BREAK, No class
- 28 Palliative and End-of-Life Care

December

- 05 Research ethics
Final paper, DUE 3 pm