

PIA3207: HEALTH CARE POLICY AND ETHICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Health Care Policy and Ethics

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

3207

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

SA 3207 Health Care Policy and Ethics / POL3207 Health Care Policy and Ethics

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to help students investigate the ethical basis of health care policy and guides them to draw on both the Western and Chinese moral resources to address ethical and policy issues involved in health care systems, clinical decision

making, and new biomedical technologies. Students will be stimulated to reflect critically on their own values and to formulate justifiable judgements of contemporary health care policy and bioethical issues. Specifically, the course will

- (a) Explore and evaluate the basic values underpinning the organization and financing of health care allocation;
- (b) Examine different models of clinical decision making and analyze their implications for upholding the values of professional accountability, patient interests and family integrity in doctor-patient-family encounters;
- (c) Investigate controversial ethical issues of new biotechnologies surrounding the beginning of life, sex selection, genetic engineering, stem cell research, and human cloning, and explore the moral justifications of different responses to these issues.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Discover new knowledge and create new ideas in the social, cultural and ethical context of health care policy.		x	x	x
2	Analyse and evaluate critically three major ethical discourses on health care as well as their underlying moral bearings: justice in health care system, clinical decision-making, and ethical and policy challenges by new bio-medical circumstances and technologies.		x	x	x
3	Apply key concepts and ideas in modern liberal and traditional Confucian ethical traditions to discuss health care policy issues; construct rational and persuasive arguments to justify their own point of views.		x	x	x
4	Judge independently on the concepts, theories and approaches covered in this course, and apply them to analyze other relevant ethical issues in health care; apply critical and communicative skills in ethical judgment and philosophical principles to guide policy formulation and decision making in health care.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Seminar	Include both lectures (which will identify key problems in the ethics of health care, introduce and evaluate relevant ideas and theories, illustrate their applications with policy analysis and cases studies) and feasible student discussions (which will enhance students' ability to critically evaluate different ethical positions on health care policy issues, and improve their ability to construct rational and persuasive arguments; discover new knowledge and create new ideas in health care; strengthen their teamwork and communication skills).	1, 2, 3, 4	3-hour
2	Presentation	Students will conduct individual or group presentation on relevant topics to improve their analytical ability and ethical comprehension as well as their communication skills.	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	Individual paper writing	Apply and test each student's ability to research, analyse and resolve contemporary health care issues, and communicate their conclusions or solutions in writing.	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	Reading	Three to four articles or book chapters per week.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?	
1	Individual paper	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	No
2	Quiz(zes)	1, 2, 3, 4	50	-	No

3	Individual/group presentation	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Individual paper

Criterion

Ability to research, analyse and resolve contemporary health care issues, and communicate their arguments, conclusions or solutions in writing.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Not even reaching minimal levels

Assessment Task

2. Quiz(zes)

Criterion

Capacity for actively learning and mastering different ethical theories and positions bearing on health care policy challenges and issues.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Not even reaching minimal levels

Assessment Task

3. Individual/group presentation

Criterion

Capacity for analysing issues and mastering ethical concepts and theories, capacity for communication skills

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)Not even reaching minimal levels

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Health care policy, ethics, bioethics, health care values, liberal ethical perspective, Confucian ethical perspective, health distribution, financing, rationing, managed care, elderly care, access to health care, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases, hospital ethics committee, informed consent, truth-telling, advance directives, surrogate decision-making, artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, human cloning, genetic ethics, stem-cell research, definition of death, euthanasia.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Brock, Dan W. (2001), "Cloning Human Beings: An Assessment of the Ethical Issues Pro and Con" in Lauritzen, P. (ed.) Cloning and the future of human embryo research, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, pp. 93-113.
2	Ho Mun Chan, "Justice is to be Financed before it is to be Done: A Confucian Approach to Hong Kong Public Health Care Reform", Bioethics: Asian Perspectives - A Quest for Moral Diversity, Ren-zong Qiu (ed.), Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 207-228, 2004.
3	Mark J. Cherry and H. Tristram Engelhardt, "Informed Consent in Texas: Theory and Practice," Journal of Medicine and Philosophy 29.2 (2004): 237-252.
4	Norman Daniels, "Justice and Health Care," in Tom Regan and Donald van Deveer (eds.), Health Care Ethics: An Introduction, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987.
5	H. T. Engelhardt, Jr., 'Rights to health care, social justice, and fairness in health care allocations: Frustrations in the face of finitude,' in The Foundations of Bioethics, 2nd edition, (Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 375-387.
6	H. T. Engelhardt, Jr., 'China, Beware: What American Health Care Has to Learn from Singapore,' in China: Bioethics, Trust, and the Challenge of the Market, J. Tao (ed.) (Springer, 2008), pp.55-71.
7	Ruiping Fan, 'A Reconstructionist Confucian Approach to Chinese Health Care: The Ethical Principles, the Market, and Policy Reforms,' in China: Bioethics, Trust, and the Challenge of the Market, J. Tao (ed.) (Springer, 2008), pp.117-133.

8	Michael B. Gill and Robert M. Sade "Paying for Kidneys: The Case Against Prohibition", in Coral Levine (ed.) Taking Sides Clashing Views on Controversial Bioethical Issues, 10th edition, Guilford, Conn.: McGraw Hill/Dushkin Pub. Group, 2004, pp. 306-322.
9	Gordon Graham "Health Care Provision," Contemporary Social Philosophy, Basil Blackwell. 1988.
10	Immanuel Kant, "On a Supposed Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives," in Helga Kuhse & Peter Singer (eds.), Bioethics: An Anthology, Blackwell, Oxford, 1999, pp. 499-500.
11	Penelope M. Mullen, "Is it Necessary to Ration Health Care?" Public Money and Management, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1998.
12	N. Knoepffler (2004), "Stem cell research: an ethical evaluation of policy options", Kennedy Institute of Ethical Journal 14.1, pp. 55-74.
13	Don Marquis, "An Argument that Abortion is Wrong", in Hugh LaFollette (ed.) Ethics in Practice: An Anthology, 2nd edition, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, pp. 83-93.
14	Peter A. Ubel, Pricing Life, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000, Chs 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, (Chs. 1, 5, 10 are required).
15	Robert M. Veatch, "Ethical Dimensions of Advance Directives and Surrogate Decision Making in the United States," in H-M. Sass, R. M. Veatch and R. Kimura (eds.), Advance Directives and Surrogate Decision Making in Health Care, Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, pp. 66-91.
16	Robert F. Weir and Charles Peters, "Affirming the Decisions Adolescents Make About Life and Death," in Carol Levine (ed.), Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Bioethical Issues, 8th edition, 1999, pp. 162-168.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Ruiping Fan, 'Health Care Allocation and the Confucian Tradition,' in The Examined Life - Chinese Perspectives, Xinyan Jiang (ed.) (Global Publications, New York, 2002), pp. 211-233.
2	Allen Buchanan, "The Right to a Decent Minimum of Health Care," Philosophy & Public Affairs, Vol.13, no.1, 1984.
3	Norman Daniels, "Rationing Medical Care - A Philosopher's Perspective on Outcomes and Process," Economics and Philosophy, Vol., 14, No. 1, 1998.
4	Ho Mun Chan, "Informed Consent Hong Kong Style: An Instance of Moderate Familism," Journal of Medicine and Philosophy 29.2 (2004): 195-206.
5	Seijo Bito, Shinji Matsumura, Marjorie Kagawa Singer, Lisa S. Meredith, Shunichi Fukuhara and Neil S. Wenger, "Acculturation and End-of-life Decision Making: Comparison of Japanese and Japanese-American Focus Groups", Bioethics, Vol. 21, No. 5, 2007, pp. 251-262.
6	Edmund D. Pellegrino & Myron Genel, "Should Federal Funds Be Used in Research on Discarded Embryos?" in Physician's Weekly XVI (No.37), October 4, 1999.
7	Jonathan Chan (2001), "Liberal and Confucian Moral Perspectives on Human Cloning" (in Chinese), in Chinese & International Philosophy of Medicine III (4): 83-100.