

PHIL 1722.01: Health Care Ethics
Stoner/Spring 2024

Mondays, 9 – 11:45, Room 4220A

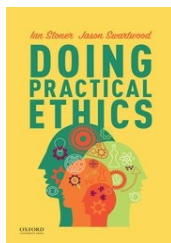
Instructor

Dr. Ian Stoner
Room 3405
ian.stoner@saintpaul.edu

Office hours (in person): Mondays, 12 – 1. No appointment necessary—just knock on the door to room 3405 and I'll answer.

Office hours (in zoom): Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:30 – 10:30. Appointment required. Book a time-slot here:
<https://ian-spc.youcanbook.me>

Required texts



Doing Practical Ethics: A Skills-Based Approach to Moral Reasoning by Ian Stoner and Jason Swartwood (Oxford University Press, 2021).
ISBN: 9780190078447

You are welcome to purchase the book in any format from any bookstore you like, but the easiest place to get it is from Saint Paul College's online bookstore:
www.saintpaulcollegebookstore.com/

I will post all other required and recommended course materials on D2L.

Course description and goals (copied from the course catalog)

This course introduces basic ethical theories, principles, and decision-making guidelines used in health care ethics. It examines moral issues confronting health care practitioners, patients, and others involved in medicine. The course includes philosophical analysis of cultural differences regarding medical practices, contemporary moral decision-making on topics such as disclosure, confidentiality, human cloning, medical research, abortion, transplantation and organ markets, allocation of limited resources, conscientious objection, research on human subjects, and euthanasia. The course is open to all students interested in health care ethics.

Successfully completing Health Care Ethics will require you to:

1. Evaluate arguments about a variety of moral issues in health care, such as assisted-suicide and euthanasia, disability and genetic screening, conscientious objection, justice in human research, abortion, truth-telling and confidentiality, and genetic manipulation and human enhancement.
2. Explain the value and limitations of professional ethics codes as guides to moral decision-making.
3. Explain the value of philosophical reflection on moral issues in healthcare.
4. Explain moral principles and moral theories commonly applied in bioethics, such as the principle of beneficence, the principle of autonomy, the principle of utility, prominent moral theories, and the social and medical models of disability.
5. Develop and defend a view about a moral issue in healthcare.
6. Engage in productive dialogue about controversial and complex moral issues.

Course Goals, Yours and Mine

My goals for you

In preparing this class, I've kept in mind two core life skills and three philosophical techniques. My hope is that, at the end of the semester, you will be different in these five ways:

1. Social skill: **critical discussion of ethical controversies**. You will be better at exploring difficult and controversial subjects with peers; better at articulating and arguing for your own positions; better at understanding and critically evaluating alternative positions.
2. Personal skill: **critical reflection on your own moral beliefs**. You will be better at discovering internal tensions within your own set of beliefs, and make some progress toward figuring out which beliefs need to be modified or rejected.
3. Philosophical technique: **examples**. You will be better at offering illustrative examples and counterexamples.
4. Philosophical technique: **argument from principle** and...
5. Philosophical technique: **argument from analogy**. Many arguments in health care ethics take one of these two forms. You will develop expertise in understanding, evaluating, and writing arguments in these forms.

Your goals for you

This course, like every course, presents an opportunity for you to practice and improve areas of your own choosing. As you read through the syllabus, note the course design, the topics we'll cover, and the kinds of assignments I'll ask you to complete. Then take a few minutes to think about how you might use this class as an opportunity to practice the skills and habits that you would like to develop during your time in college. In what ways would you like to be able, at the end of the semester, to look back and notice that you've changed?

There are two reasons why you should engage in this exercise in every class you take. First, it will make you a better student. The process of reflecting on your own performance and planning steps to improve it in the ways that matter to you guarantees that you will grow *much* faster than students who see their classes as a series of hoops they must jump through.

Second, if you develop the skill of articulating your own course goals, you will find bad classes less frustrating. Some bad classes are the fault of instructors who have done a poor job of designing or executing their lesson plans. Some bad classes are the result of an unlucky mix of students who can't figure out a way to work together. Whatever the reason, you *will* experience some bad classes. Every student does. But even in a bad class, you will have opportunities to pursue the learning goals you've identified for yourself. That means you can get something that matters to you out of *any* class, even if that class fails to meet its instructor's goals.

After our first meeting, take some time to reflect and identify three goals for yourself:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Overview of the Course Design

This course places the activity of philosophy at its center. In the first half of the course, we will focus on practicing several philosophical skills that support productive reflection, discussion, and debate, and we will use those skills to understand and evaluate historically important philosophical arguments. In the second half of the course students will take on a larger role in guiding our discussions. We will use the philosophical skills we developed in the first half of the semester to conduct a series of in-class debates about ethical controversies in health care.

Graded assignments

Homework exercises:	360 points total (12 best of 14 total assignments. 30 points each).
Ethics bowl debriefs:	175 points total (5 best of 7 total assignments. 35 points each).
In-class quizzes:	210 points total (7 best of 9 total quizzes. 30 points each).
Final position paper:	255 points.

Homework exercises. Each week you will complete a homework assignment from the *Doing Practical Ethics* textbook. Homework assignments must be turned in on D2L by 1 hour before the start of class. We will begin every class meeting with group discussion of homework answers. Each week, I will select 2 homework problems to grade. You will receive 15/30 points for one correct answer and 30/30 points for two correct answers. You may use re-try tokens for homework assignments. Homework assignments cannot be made up or turned in late. Your homework score for the semester will be the sum of your 12 best scores out of 14 total assignments. (That is, your two lowest homework scores will be dropped in your final grade calculation.)

In-class quizzes. For the first half of the semester, each class meeting will include a quiz on the same material you've been practicing in homework. Quizzes cannot be made up or taken late. Each quiz will have two questions. You will receive 10 points for no correct answers, 20 points for one correct answer, and 30 points for two correct answers. Your quiz score for the semester will be the sum of your 7 best scores out of 9 total quizzes. (That is, your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped in your final grade calculation.)

Ethics bowl debriefs. After each of our 7 ethics bowls, you will submit a "debrief" assignment on D2L. Debrief assignments ask you to reflect on and record specific features of your experience with that week's bowl. Since ethics bowl debriefs ask you to reflect on your experiences in the classroom, you cannot submit a debrief for a class session that you have missed. Ethics bowl debriefs will be posted and turned in on D2L. I will grade them credit/no credit. Your semester score for the category of bowl debriefs will be your 5 best of 7 total assignments. (That is, your two lowest debrief scores will be dropped in your final grade calculation.)

Final position paper. This capstone assignment for the course is a 6-page paper defending a position on a specific health care controversy. A good position paper will demonstrate mastery of the argument analysis skills you have practiced over the course of the semester. You will turn in your position paper at the beginning of our last class meeting. Position papers may be turned in late at a penalty of 25 points per day late.

Homework re-try tokens. You begin the semester with five retry tokens. If you earn a score you are unhappy with on a homework assignment you may cash in a re-try token in exchange for the chance to try again. Find more details in the "Course Policies" section, below.

Grade Table

At the end of the semester, I will assign letter grades based on this table. These thresholds indicate firm cut-off points. For example, a total score of 799 is a C, while a total score of 800 is a B.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point threshold</u>
A	900
B	800
C	700
D	600
F	–

Course Calendar

Introduction and orientation

- 1/8: Topic: Introductions to Philosophy, This Course, & Each Other
 Read before class: *Doing Practical Ethics* Introduction and Chapter 1
 Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 1A (all); 1B (all) (on pages 14 – 16).
 Quiz topic: Recognizing moral arguments
- 1/15: No class (MLK Day)
- 1/22: Topic: Two Key Concepts: Disability & Informed Consent
 Read before class: Two short videos posted to D2L
 Doing Practical Ethics Chapters 2 and 3
 Homework due before class: Exercises 2B #2, 4, 7, 17, and 19; 3B #2, 3, 13, 14, and 17.
 Quiz topic: Illustrative examples and counterexamples
- 1/29: Topic: Two Key Tools: Empathy and Arguments
 Read before class: Excerpt from *High Fidelity*
 Dax Cowart case study
 Doing Practical Ethics Chapter 4
 Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 4A #1, 3, 7, and 8; 4B #2, 3, and 4.
 Quiz topic: Representing arguments in standard form

Physician-assisted death

Historically, there has been broad consensus in the USA that it is never morally permissible for caregivers to help their patients die. Over the last two decades, that consensus has weakened, and in 2016, California became the fourth state to allow physician-assisted death. When, if ever, is it morally permissible for a doctor to help a patient die? And what public policies best respect our moral judgments concerning individual cases of euthanasia?

- 2/5: Topic: Physician-assisted death I
 Read before class: Bennett, “Dead at Noon”
 DPE Chapter 5 (Analyzing Arguments from Principle)
 Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 5A (all); 5B #1 – 5.
 Quiz topic: Analyzing arguments from principle
- 2/12: Topic: Physician-assisted death II
 Read before class: Rosengren, “A Son’s Decision to Help His Father Die”
 Review *DPE* Chapter 5
 Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 5B #10, 11, 24, 25, and 27.

Quiz topic: Analyzing arguments from principle

2/19: No class (Presidents Day)

Abortion

Few topics in health care ethics are as prominent in public debates as the question of the moral permissibility of abortion. Using our tools of philosophical argumentation, we can make more progress in frank and open discussion than you might expect, based on the evidence of public political debates.

2/26: Topic: Abortion I
Read before class: Guttmacher Institute, "Facts about abortion in the USA"
DPE Chapter 8 (Analyzing Arguments from Analogy)
Homework due: Practice Exercises 8A (all); 8B #1, 2, 5, and 6.
Quiz topic: Analyzing arguments from analogy

3/4: Topic: Abortion II
Read before class: Kitchener, "Pregnant and desperate in post-Roe America"
Review *DPE* Chapter 8
Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 8B #13, 21, 25, 30, and 31.
Quiz topic: Analyzing arguments from analogy

3/11: No class (Spring Break, woo!)

Supported Ethics Bowls

The second half of the semester will be devoted to ethics bowls. Each week, you will read up on a specific controversial topic before class, develop arguments about it, and in class we will use a debate format to search for, and evaluate, the best arguments on both sides of the controversy. In these first two ethics bowls, I will supply the teams with arguments to choose from.

3/18: Topic: Allowing Conscience Refusals
Textbook: Chapter 9 (Evaluating Arguments from Analogy)
Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 9A #1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 10; 9B #6 and 21.
Quiz topic: Evaluating Arguments from Analogy
Ethics Bowl Debrief #1 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

3/25: Topic: Respecting Parental Refusals: The Case of Kal's Chemotherapy
Textbook: Chapter 6 (Evaluating Arguments from Principle)
Homework due before class: Practice Exercises 6B #3, 24, 25, and 27; 6C #2 and 3.
Quiz topic: Evaluating Arguments from Principle
Ethics Bowl Debrief #2 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

Limited Ethics Bowls

For these ethics bowls, you will write your own arguments before class, and teams will select which student-written arguments they would like to develop for debate. In the first limited ethics bowl we will focus on Argument from Principle. In the second limited bowl we will focus on Argument from Analogy.

4/1: Topic: A New Method of Organ Harvesting

Textbook: Chapter 7 (Developing Arguments from Principle)
Homework due before class: TWO arguments, one Argument from Principle on each side
Ethics Bowl Debrief #3 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

4/8: Topic: Sex and Dementia: The Case of Henry and Donna Rayhons
Textbook: Chapter 10 (Developing Arguments from Analogy)
Homework due before class: TWO arguments, one Argument from Analogy on each side
Ethics Bowl Debrief #4 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

Full-Blown Ethics Bowls

For our final set of ethics bowls, every student will bring four arguments to class with them: one Argument from Principle and one Argument from Analogy on each side of the debate.

4/15: Topic: Confidentiality vs. Truth: The Case of the Robitussin Teen
Homework due before class: FOUR arguments, one AfP and one AfA on each side
Ethics Bowl Debrief #5 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

4/22: Topic: Selecting Deaf Embryos
Homework due before class: FOUR arguments, one AfP and one AfA on each side
Ethics Bowl Debrief #6 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

4/29: Topic: Accommodating Racist Patients
Homework due before class: FOUR arguments, one AfP and one AfA on each side
Ethics Bowl Debrief #7 due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday.

Course Retrospective & Farewells

In our last class session we will focus on a tragedy that unfolded at Fairview Medical Center on the campus of the University of Minnesota. We will use that case to help us reflect on how our work this semester in Health Care Ethics could have helped prevent this and similar tragedies.

5/6: Topic: The Dan Markingson Case
Your final position paper is due on D2L by 11:59p on Wednesday May 8

Course Policies

Accessibility. I want this course (in both content and assessment) to be accessible to all students regardless of impairments and disabilities. If you have a disability that I can better accommodate, please consider meeting with me to talk about it. Improvements to accessibility are improvements to the course, and students in future semesters will owe you a debt of gratitude for taking the time to give me your feedback on accessibility.

The Office of Access & Disability Resources can fill you in on the institutional support SPC provides students. Email accessresources@saintpaul.edu or call 651.350.3008 to set up a meeting.

Speaking of impairments... I am face-blind, which means I can't tell people apart by their faces. This won't make much difference in the classroom. (I may be a little bit slower than some instructors to learn your names, but I'll do okay.) However, it will be harder for me to recognize you in the halls, and if I see you off campus I probably won't recognize you. If you see me in the hall or off campus and I act like I don't know you, please don't think I'm being rude. Say 'hi,' tell me who you are, and I'll be delighted to see you.

On-time attendance. It is characteristic of good students that they come to class and that they arrive on time. The active practice of critical thinking skills, the development of which is the primary goal of the course, cannot be replicated alone in your room. The serious consideration of a variety of perspectives only happens when you are present to hear other perspectives in the first place. If you make a habit of staying home, you will not succeed in this course. (Note that during the Ethics Bowl weeks, your on-time attendance is effectively mandatory. If you miss a class during those weeks, you cannot turn in the debrief assignment for that week.)

If you arrive late, you will miss important information and opportunities for practice. If you arrive late, you will also disrupt the progress of the groups who have already begun working. Please arrive on time!

Emotionally intense content. A course in medical ethics is, by its very nature, a course covering emotionally intense subjects. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss religion, racial discrimination, suicide, alcoholism, abortion, and a morally ambiguous case of sex that might actually be a case of rape. There are undoubtedly other moments I cannot predict that will be intense for some students.

You may at some point notice a classmate have an intense response to a topic, reading, or discussion. As your peer works through their own emotions, be patient and kind with them, even if you don't understand the reasons for their intense reaction.

If you have personal experience with one or more of the topics we discuss, you will have a special perspective of experience that you may choose to share with others. Or you may choose not to. Those of us who do *not* have personal experience with a particular topic should keep in mind that we don't know who in the class does have that experience. We should all, always, conduct ourselves in discussion in a way we can be proud of even if we found out other participants in the discussion have the kind of direct personal experience that we lack.

Friendly and respectful disagreement. The heart of this course is the debate of controversial, often emotionally loaded topics. Disagreement is an inevitable and desirable consequence of any serious philosophical discussion. Disagreement can be fruitful, it can be fun, and it can also be frustrating. I expect you to be—always and without fail—respectful, thoughtful, and kind in discussion, even in the face of frustrating disagreements. This is not hard to do. If at any point you feel the temptation to sneer, or get angry or hurt, or raise your voice, take a moment to calm down. Then offer, as clearly and generously as you can, the reasons for your response.

The textbook & its royalties. Dr. Swartwood and I wrote and refined the textbook for this course over a five-year period, and since the beginning we've been thrilled by the progress our students can make using its practice-based approach. We chose to pursue publication in order to share this approach with students and instructors at other schools, and we are honored that Oxford University Press wanted to publish our book.

For us, the only downside of publishing is that we no longer own the book's copyright, and therefore can no longer give it away to our students. This puts us in the awkward position of requiring our students buy a book that we wrote—and for each new copy of the book that sells, we get paid a bit more than \$2 in royalties.

It was never our intent to profit from our students. To make sure that doesn't happen, we have settled on the following solution. For each student that enrolls in our courses requiring *Doing Practical Ethics*, we donate \$2.50 to the Friends of Saint Paul College Scholarship Fund. That way, the royalties we receive from sales to students at SPC go to support the SPC community, not to our pockets.

Office hours. Office hours are times each week that I have reserved to meet with students. This semester I will split my office hours between in-person meetings on campus and online appointments in zoom. In-person meetings are usually more effective and productive. Feel free to knock on my door any time during in-person office hours.

If you prefer to meet in zoom, I ask that you book an appointment at least two hours ahead of time here: <https://ian-spc.youcanbook.me> . After you book an appointment, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions about how to join the zoom call.

I hope you'll visit me in office hours. The opportunity to talk philosophy with students individually is one of my favorite parts of my job.

Peer tutoring. The Tutoring Center (Room 3125) can help you improve your writing. Given that all of the assignments in this class are writing assignments, that's great! Learn more about the tutoring center here: <https://www.saintpaul.edu/studentservices/Tutoring> . If you have questions, email them at tutoring@saintpaul.edu or call them at 651.403.4466. The tutoring center is one of Saint Paul College's strengths—the people who work there are good at their jobs and excited to work with you.

This semester the Tutoring Center has hired Natalia Stariha as a peer tutor. Natalia is an SPC student who did an excellent job with the argument skills in an earlier semester and is now specially qualified to help you practice the argument skills this course teaches. This is an excellent resource and we are lucky to have her available. If you are looking for help with the argument skills taught from the textbook, be sure to seek a session specifically with Natalia. If you are looking for help more generally with reading and writing skills, the other tutors in the center are available to help you.

Late work. All of the recurring assignments in this class—homework assignments from the textbook, in-class quizzes, and debriefs—are what instructors call *formative* assignments. They are relatively easy to complete assignments intended to give you low-stakes opportunities for feedback on our area of focus at that moment. If formative assignments are not completed on time, they cannot serve their teaching and learning purpose. For this reason, *I will not accept late homework, quizzes, or debriefs for any reason.*

I understand that life sometimes intervenes and makes it impossible for you to complete assigned work before it is due. That is why I have designed the course to drop your lowest two scores in each formative assignment category. That policy means that you can effectively miss 15% of the course due to unavoidable life disruptions without that affecting your course grade at all.

The final position paper is a *summative* assignment, in which you will demonstrate the skills you have developed in the course. It should represent the best work you are capable of producing. The position paper may be turned in late at a penalty of 25 points per day late.

Note that every due date for the entire semester is listed on the course calendar included in this syllabus and also posted in D2L. Put those dates in your planner right away, so you will be at no risk of being caught by surprise by a due date.

Homework re-try tokens. When you cash in a re-try token, I will send you two new problems of a similar difficulty as the problems I chose to grade from the original homework assignment. I will update your score for that assignment based on your answers to the new problems. Re-try tokens can only be used for homework assignments you have submitted on time—they cannot be used for assignments you missed. You must request to use a re-try token within one week of the original assignment deadline. You must return your answers within one week of cashing in a re-try token.

Contacting me. The best way to contact me is to come see me in office hours. A short conversation can often accomplish more than a long exchange of emails. If you cannot visit me in office hours, email me. I make every effort to respond to all emails by the end of the following school day. (Eg. if you email me on Monday, expect a response by the end of the day on Tuesday. If you email me on Friday, expect a response by the end of the day on Monday.)

If you email me, please be sure to do it from your SPC email address. The school's junk-mail filter is excessively aggressive and if you email from an off-campus email address I may never see it.

Please do not use D2L instant messages or my college-assigned phone number; I do not monitor them.

Contacting you. For class-wide announcements, I will use D2L's "Announcement" feature. If I need to reach you individually, I will email your Saint Paul College email address. Most of your other instructors will do the same. Please make sure that you check your SPC email address regularly.

Extra credit. There will be no extra credit. Keep up with the course as it happens. (Note that your lowest two grades in each assignment category are automatically dropped. That means your SIX lowest scores are dropped. And, also, you have FIVE re-try tokens that allow you to retry homeworks if you do not get full credit on a first

attempt. There is more than enough slack built into this course.)

Important dates. A full refund is available until January 12. The last day to withdraw is April 16.

If, for any reason, you decide not to complete the course, please officially withdraw as soon as you have made your decision. If you do not withdraw officially (and I cannot do it for you), you will receive a failing (F) grade for the course.

As per school policy, if it is before the withdraw deadline and you miss two consecutive weeks of class, I will assign you a grade of FW (Failure to Withdraw). You can still withdraw (before the withdraw deadline) even after I've filed an FW.

If you have a medical, family, or other situation causing trouble for you in this class, please contact me immediately so we can arrange a way to avoid running afoul of these college rules.

Academic integrity. Never copy another author's words, or paraphrase another author's ideas without citing your sources. Citations should be thorough enough to allow your readers to locate the passage you are quoting or paraphrasing. There is no shame in understanding, appreciating, and incorporating another writer's views, so long as you give credit where it's due. There is much shame in passing off someone else's hard work as your own. If I discover you've plagiarized any part of any assignment, you'll get a zero for that assignment and I'll file a report of academic dishonesty with Saint Paul College.

I encourage you to work with friends and peers at coffee shops, in the tutoring center, during my office hours, and in online hangouts. But the work you submit on homework assignments, quizzes, and the final paper must be 100% your own work no one else's. If I have good reason to suspect that you have turned in an assignment that does not reflect your own understanding of the material, I will file a score of zero for that assignment and file a report of academic dishonesty with the school.

For a longer statement of school policies regarding academic integrity, see:

<https://www.saintpaul.edu/student-services/academic-integrity-policy>

If you do not know what I mean by "plagiarism," watch this short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q0NIWcTq1Y>

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me BEFORE you turn in the assignment.