**Health, Happiness, and Human Well-being (4cr)**

**Instructor:** Ashley Dressel **E-mail:** [adressel1@css.edu](mailto:adressel1@css.edu)

**Zoom Office Hours:** Wednesday 1:00 – 3:00pm **Website**: www.ashleydressel.com

**Required Texts:** None. All readings will be available on my website. Students are still expected to read the posted readings for each class and to bring assigned texts to class each day, either physically or electronically. Please do **not** bring your readings to class on your phone.

**Equal Access Statement:**

Students with disabilities, students who sustained injury in active military service, and students with chronic medical conditions are entitled to appropriate and reasonable auxiliary aids and accommodations through the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information or to request academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center in Tower Hall 2126; by phone at (218)723-6747 or (218)625-4891; or via email at [disabilityresourcecenter@css.edu](mailto:disabilityresourcecenter@css.edu).

**Course Description:**

In this class, we will examine concepts like health, illness, ability, disability, happiness and well-being and ask philosophical questions about these concepts like, “are health and illness biologically ‘real’, or socially constructed?”, “how should we think about mental health and illness?”, “is there a relationship between health and happiness?”, and “should we prioritize health or happiness if the two seem to conflict?”. In addition, we will examine concrete ethical questions, like “do people have a basic human right to health care?”.

**By the end of this course, I hope you will be able to…**

* Develop your own informed view on the nature of health and the purpose of health care
* Identify philosophical questions (vs. scientific or religious questions) about health, happiness, and human well-being.
* Identify and work through difficult ethical dilemmas related to health care.

**Overview of the Schedule (Pandemic Edition!)**

**Week 10 (Mar. 23 - 27) Midterm/Mental Health/Refusing or Denying Health**

**Care?**

**Monday at 10:30am Midterm up Online (due Friday by noon)**

Wednesday Read: “Responsibility Without Blame: Philosophical

Reflections on Clinical Practice” (Hanna Pickard)

Friday Read: “Transgender Children and the Right to

Transition” (Maura Priest)

**Final Paper Prompt Given**

**Week 11 (Mar. 30 – Apr. 3) Refusing/Denying Healthcare?/**

**Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)**

Monday: Read: “Faith-based Decisions: Parents Who Refuse

Appropriate Care for Their Children” (Orr, Novotny,

and Perkin)

Wednesday Read: “Conscientious Objection in Nursing:

Definition and Criteria for Acceptance” by VD

Lachman **and** “Conscientious Objection in

Medicine” by Julian Savulescu

**Final Paper Topic Due**

Friday: Read: Oregon’s Physician Assisted Death laws;

**Journal Due**

**Week 12 (Apr. 6 - 10) PAS**

Monday: Read: “Assisted Suicide: Pro Choice or Anti-Life” by

Richard Doerflinger

Wednesday: Read: “Would We Rather Lose Our Life Than Lose Our

Self? Lessons From the Dutch Debate on Euthanasia

for Patients With Dementia” (Cess M.P.M. Hertogh

et. al.); **Quiz Due**

**Final Paper Thesis Due**

Friday: **No Class (Easter Break)**

**Week 13 (Apr. 13 - 17) Pandemic Ethics**

Monday: **No Class (Easter Break)**

Wednesday: Read: Articles on Doctors Deciding Who Lives or Dies

**Final Paper Draft Due**

Friday: Read: Articles on Who Gets Tested for Covid-19;

**Journal Due**

**Week 14 (Apr. 20 - 24) Pandemic Ethics**

Monday: Read: Articles on Cancellation of Elective Surgeries and

Appointments due to Covid-19

Wednesday: **Mandatory Zoom Meetings About Drafts**

Friday: Read: Articles on our Options for Moving

Forward in Light of Covid-19; **Quiz Due**

**Week 15 (Apr. 27 – May 1) Do We Have a Right to Health Care?**

Monday: Read: “Healthcare as a Human Right” (Gersich) and

“Healthcare is Not a Human Right” (Peikoff)

Wednesday: Read: “Is Healthcare a Human Right?” (Gawande)

Friday: Wrap-up; **Journal Due**

**Finals Week**

**No Final Exam – Final Draft of Paper is Due Tuesday, 8am**

**Class Policies**

**Intellectual Respect:**  In our class, we will be discussing a wide range of topics. You may find you disagree deeply and passionately with another member of our class and so our class discussions may become heated. That is fine! This is a philosophy class, and philosophical discussions can get heated.  However, when you disagree with another student in our class, always assume that the student you disagree with is at least as good and smart a person as you are. Take the time to really listen to what he or she has to say. This class is about respectfully exchanging ideas with one another. We will certainly argue, but your primary goal in the arguments we engage in should not be to attack and/or defeat your colleagues We are all involved in a collective effort to reach the truth. Therefore, both your views *and* those of your colleagues deserve careful thought and consideration.

**Commonsense Respect:** Be sensitive to how your behavior affects your classmates. For example, please do not talk during class. If you receive a phone call or feel the need to have a conversation that does not pertain to the class, please take it outside. Relatedly, please refrain from texting or messing around online during class. These actions can be very distracting to those around you. If your behavior becomes problematic or disruptive, I will ask you to leave.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is any attempt to pass off

someone else's work or ideas as your own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, using portions of works written by others without citing them and turning in essays written, or partially written, by another person without crediting that person. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail this course and the incident will be reported to the chair of Philosophy, the dean of the School of Arts and Letters, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs for St. Scholastica. Please review the college's policies about plagiarism before you write your papers for this class, so that you can be sure to avoid this situation: <http://www.css.edu/Academics/Office-of-Academic-Affairs/Academic-Honesty-Policy.html> .

**\*\*Late Work\*\* :** Under nearly all circumstances, late work will **not** be accepted. If you believe you have some sort of genuinely extenuating circumstance, let me know.   Do not simply assume that I will allow you to turn an assignment in late.

**Grading**

**Scale**

A+ = 97 – 100% B+ = 87-89% C+ = 77-79% D+ = 67-69% F= below 60%

A = 94 – 96% B = 84 – 86% C = 74 – 76% D = 64 – 66%

A- = 90 – 93% B- = 80 – 83% C- = 70 – 73% D- = 60-63%

Your course grade will be determined in the following way:

**Class Attendance: 5%**

Having a substantial number of students in a given philosophy class generally enhances class discussion for all involved.  For that reason, your attendance in class is required. You can have three entirely free absences. After that, I will need a doctor's note or something comparable if you would like to miss a class without penalty. Athletic absences count as unexcused absences unless the athletic event was not one the team anticipated at the beginning of the term. Each **unexcused** absence after the free absences will cost you 2% of your final grade, up to a possible total of 5% of your final grade. Never assume I will accept a particular anticipated reason for absence.  Be sure to clear it.

**Short Writing Assignment (1-2 pages):  5%**

The main point of this assignment will be to give me some sense of your writing abilities (particularly as they pertain to philosophical writing) and to give you some sense of my standards in grading.

**Quizzes, Journals, and Minor Assignments: 15%**

For the remainder of the term, you will complete quizzes and journal entries (alternating from week to week).

**Participation: 15%**

The best way to earn this credit is to participate weekly in class discussion and activities. However, you can also earn this credit by participating on our class Discussion Board (you can find the Discussion Board on Blackboard), so long as you *also* either participate in class discussion at least several times over the course of the semester, or visit me in office hours periodically.

**Slightly Longer Writing Assignment (2-3 pages): 15%**

This will be a writing assignment completed on the basis of a prompt.

**Midterm Exam: 20%***.*

This will be an in-class exam on the material covered during the first half of the quarter.

**Final Writing Assignment (4-5 pages): 25%**

This paper will be self-directed. You will, with guidance, choose an ethical issue related to health care that interests you and take a position on that issue. This longer paper will provide an opportunity to construct a more detailed, carefully reasoned argument for a position. Your final writing assignment will stand in place of a final exam. **You will turn in a complete draft of this paper for a grade and you will present your final argument to our class. The draft will be worth 20% of the final paper grade (5% of your final grade in the course).** I will discuss the draft and the way it will be graded as the term progresses.

**General Education**

This course fulfills the Philosophy general education requirement, counts toward both the Philosophy major and the Philosophy minor, and connects to a number of the College of St. Scholastica’s student learning outcomes including the following **Intellectual and Foundational Skills**:

**Critical Thinking –** this class will not teach you *what* to think about complex philosophical issues; it will teach you *how* to think about complex philosophical issues. Through our readings, in-class discussions, and your paper-writing, you will learn how to question your own assumptions, take on different perspectives, formulate effective, careful, positions on complex topics, and draw appropriate conclusions from your arguments and evidence.

**Oral Communication –** over the course of the term, you will practice your oral communication in in-class participation. At the end of the term, you will have the opportunity to showcase those skills as you present the argument you make in your final paper to our class.

**Written Communication –** over the course of the term, you will have the opportunity to write three persuasive, philosophical, papers. Your final paper will go through a drafting process. These papers will help you to not only develop your academic writing skills in general, but to learn writing conventions common to philosophy as a specific discipline.

**Reading and Interpretation –** over the course of the term, you will learn to carefully read and interpret a variety of challenging philosophical and scientific texts and assess their relevance. You will showcase your skills in reading and interpretation in your papers and your midterm exam.

And the following **Personal and Social Responsibility Value:**

**Ethical Reasoning** – over the course of the term, and especially toward the end of the term, we will ask and attempt to answer a variety of ethical questions related to health care and human well-being (for instance, ‘should physicians always respect their patients’ religious decisions?’, ‘is physician assisted suicide ever permissible?’, and ‘do people have a right to health care?’).