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## Syllabus:: L30 233F 02 Biomedical Ethics; SPR 2008

### TU, TH 11:30-1::Rebstock 215

All of us are, or will be, consumers of health care, and some of us will also be providers. The practice of medicine is directed at prolonging life and improving health, but people have become increasingly aware that promoting these values can conflict with other values: to take an obvious example, resources spent on health care cannot be spent on other expensive goods like education. In this course we will focus on one value that is everywhere at issue in medicine -- *autonomy* (from the Greek *autonomos*, or self rule), the capacity of persons to regulate their own lives. If doctors and patients disagree about a course of treatment, who should have the final say? In testing the efficacy of a new procedure, is it permissible to withhold information from patients? When, if ever, is it permissible for doctors to lie to or mislead patients? We will (necessarily) pay close attention to philosophical issues surrounding autonomy, but we will be most concerned to focus our discussion "at the bedside," and carefully consider concrete cases in health care: euthanasia and the "right to die," informed consent, abortion, and the termination of impaired infants. Hopefully, we will learn something about what is required for a humane practice of medicine, and also something about what it means to be a person.

### I. Theory of Autonomy

Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (selections)

### II. Informed Consent (Human and Otherwise)

Munson, 2-41

*Although we will often spend more class time on the anthologized articles than on Munson's introductory material, the introductions provide helpful background, and should be read.*

Articles by Jonas, Goldby et al. , Singer, Cohen (Chapter 1)

### III. Lying and Paternalism

Munson 100-26

Articles by Dworkin, Lipkin, Cullen & Klein (Chapter 2)

#### IV. Termination of Impaired Infants and Euthanasia

Munson 631-46

Articles by Robertson, Englehardt, and Weir (Chapter 10)

Munson 688-707

Articles by Gay-Williams, Callahan, Rachels, Brock, Decision by Supreme Court of New Jersey (Chapter 11)

#### V. Abortion

Munson 561-82

Articles by Noonan, Thomson, Warren, Marquis, and Sherwin (Chapter 9)

#### Requirements

2 in class exams	30% ea.
1 paper, approx. 8 pp.	30 % ea.
Participation, etc.	10%

#### Texts

Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy*, Eres.

Munson, *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, at bookstore

#### Etc.

It is essential that you carefully complete the reading before the class for which it is assigned.

Late papers may be penalized in evaluation.

Always credit the source for any idea you use in a paper that is not originally your own. The university regards *plagiarism* as a serious offense, and penalties are accordingly harsh.

For your own protection, be sure to retain a hard copy of any paper you hand in.

Participation. Much philosophical work takes to form of discussion, and class discussion will be a major part of our work. Accordingly, your participation and attendance may have some impact on your grade.

Philosophy is best done in the spirit of cooperation. **Behavior disrespectful of other participants -- including and especially talking while others have the floor -- will not be tolerated. I couldn't be more serious about this.**

To receive a passing mark, all coursework must be completed during the term.

**Be on time to class.** Late arrivals disrupt discussion, and waste our time.

If you have any questions on these policies, please contact an instructor as soon as possible.