

## Group Presentation Assignment

### PHIL 213: Health Care Ethics

For this project you will divide into groups and develop a presentation on one of the topics below. Each of the topics will ask you to apply the ethical theories that we have learned in class to a real world health care ethics issue. These presentations count for **15% of your final grade** in the course.

Remember that the goal of presentations is not primarily to provide a *descriptive* factual report about the health care ethics issue you are discussing. Rather your goal is to use *normative* theories and principles from the class to provide an ethical analysis of some dimension of the issue. As a result, you should provide *just* enough of a factual overview about your topic for the audience to understand the basic aspects of the issue, and for you to set up your ethical argument. Then turn as soon as possible to the ethical stakes, where our focus should stay..

#### Guidelines for presentation:

- You will be assigned to a group of 3-4 students.
- Once in your group, **identify the ethical question** that your presentation will address. There are a variety of questions that can be raised about each topic area.
- You must **utilize the article provided** for your topic listed below. Alternative resources may also be approved by me, but they must be scholarly, philosophical resources.
- Together you will **develop a 20-minute presentation** on the topic, using resources that you find from course readings, lectures, discussions, outside scholarly sources, news sources and other media.
- Your group must **run your plan for the presentation (and argument) by me** at least two days before your presentation.
- You must provide me with a **one-page outline** of your argument on the day of your presentation. The outline should clearly state your main question, your thesis, and provide the structure of your argument.
- After your presentation, there will be **15 minutes for questions**. Everyone in your group must participate during the presentation or during the Q&A.
- Each group member will fill out a **Self Evaluation Form**. Your score on this evaluation may affect your individual grade.

#### Guidelines for Q&A:

- Everyone is required to attend all of the presentations. An unexcused absence for another group's presentation will result in a 10-point deduction of your individual grade. Each group in the audience must show effort in the Q&A. I will keep track of audience questions, and your group's participation will affect your own grade.

### **TOPIC 1: Justice and Access to Health Care**

The question of whether access to health care is a basic human right continues to be raised year after year. For this presentation, dive deeper into contemporary analysis of a right to a basic minimum of health care in the United States. As we know, other countries have created universal health care systems. What moral intuitions inform those on each side of the argument? Even if it would be morally ideal to have universal access to affordable health care in the United States, would it be feasible?

- Veatch, Robert M. "Justice, the Basic Social Contract, and Health Care." In *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Edited by Tom Beauchamp, LeRoy Walters, Jeffrey P. Kahn, and Anna Mastroianni. Boston: Wadsworth, 2014

### **TOPIC 2: The Ethical Implications of Genome Mapping**

With companies like 23andMe and AncestryDNA promising their customers intimate knowledge of their genetic make up, serious ethical questions have begun to emerge. Can one have too much information about their health? Could these tests be causing more anxiety than good? Or does such testing promise a healthier future for human society? What are the responsibilities of those who administer these tests? For this presentation, take a careful look at the ethics of genome mapping and offer an ethical analysis of the use of this emerging technology.

- Robertson, John A. "The \$1000 Genome: Ethical and Legal Issues in Whole Genome Sequencing of Individuals." In *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Edited by Tom Beauchamp, LeRoy Walters, Jeffrey P. Kahn, and Anna Mastroianni. Boston: Wadsworth, 2014

### **TOPIC 3: Vaccines and Personal Choice**

This year has marked one of the most significant Flu outbreaks in recent memory. As the death toll increases, health care professionals continue to urge people to get a vaccine. Many people choose to forgo vaccines for the flu and other diseases (measles, mumps, polio, etc.) for personal reasons, or because of a belief that vaccines are ineffective, or because they believe that vaccines cause other harmful conditions. Should it be up to individual prerogative as to whether one gets vaccinated for a communicable and deadly disease? Should parents be able to forgo vaccinating their children against doctor's orders? For this topic, consider the autonomy and public health concerns surrounding the ethics of vaccination.

- Lantos, John D. Mary Anne Jackson, and Christopher J. Harrison. "Why We Should Eliminate Personal Belief Exemptions to Vaccine Mandates." In *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*. Edited by Tom Beauchamp, LeRoy Walters, Jeffrey P. Kahn, and Anna Mastroianni. Boston: Wadsworth, 2014

### **TOPIC 4: The Costs of Getting Well**

Martin Shkreli made headlines when, as CEO of Turing Pharmaceuticals, he raised the cost of Daraprim (a 62-year-old drug used for the treatment of HIV and AIDS) from \$13.50 a tablet to \$750 a tablet. Controlling the rising cost of pharmaceutical treatments has become an ethical and political issue as many Americans find that, even with health insurance, they are unable to

afford the medications that they need. For this presentation, consider the ethical implications of rising pharmaceutical costs. Do manufacturers have any moral responsibilities to make sure that consumers can afford their treatments? Does society as a whole have a responsibility to make sure that the ill get affordable treatment? Or would increased regulation of the pharmaceutical industry amount to an unjust infringement on the liberty of these businesses?

- Sonderholm, J. "Paying a high price for low costs: Why There Should Be No Legal Constraints on the Profits that Can Be Made on Drugs for Tropical Diseases." *Journal of Medical Ethics*. (2009). Available Online At: <http://jme.bmj.com/content/35/5/315>

### **TOPIC 5: The Ethics of Commercial Surrogacy**

While new reproductive technologies are now making it possible for people to overcome issues with infertility, the use of commercial surrogates raises serious ethical concerns. In 2008, a child born to a commercial surrogate in India was almost left stateless, due to family issues and legal red tape. For this topic, consider the ethical issues raised by the use of commercial surrogates to reproduce. What are the moral implications of selling one's reproductive capacities? What responsibilities do the child's parents or the surrogacy businesses have to surrogates? Are there moral concerns with exploitation of potential surrogates in a global context, especially with women who don't have other options for employment?

- Wilkinson, Stephen. "The Exploitation Argument Against Commercial Surrogacy." *Bioethics*. 17, 2 (2003)

### **TOPIC 6: The Enduring Ethical Debate on Abortion**

For this topic, analyze the ethical issues present in the maternal/fetal conflict. Go beyond class discussion and consider the contemporary ethical issues concerning the practice of abortion. While you can discuss core ethical debates concerning personhood and the right to control one's body, expand your discussion to consider contemporary issues. For example, you might choose to analyze the ethical/political issues surrounding Planned Parenthood funding. You might focus on ethical issues that emerge surrounding technological advancement, such as the termination of fetuses with developmental disabilities or the use of sex-selective abortion in other cultures.

- Rogers, Wendy, Angela Ballentyne and Heather Drayper. "Is Sex-Selective Abortion Morally Justified and Should It Be Prohibited?" *Bioethics*. 21, 9 (2007)
- Vehmas, Simo. "Parental Responsibility and the Morality of Selective Abortion." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. 5, 4 (2002)