

HECC 4308: Ethics
Section: 001 (MW 9:05-10:00am), Fall 2025

Instructor: David S. Criswell, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: MW, 10:00-11:30am, or by appointment. E-mails will generally be answered within one business day.

Course Structure and Delivery

Canvas will be used to deliver supplemental course content and assignments in this class. You can access Canvas through the *UT Tyler Logins* link at the top of the UT Tyler main website (you will need your ID and password). Important class resources, including the syllabus, course schedule, announcements, and external links, as well as the weekly modules, will be accessed here.

Technical requirements: There are minimum technological requirements that must be met in order to complete this course. If you have technical problems, please review the [UT Tyler Technical Support](#) page.

Required text:

Vaughn, Lewis. Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases. 4th Edition (or latest edition), Oxford University Press, 2020. (ISBN# 9780190903268)

Note: the ISBN# above is the print edition, the book is also available in electronic format, which is also acceptable for this class.

Course Objectives: Students who complete this course should be able to—

1. Define, ethics, and describe the major ethical systems in Western society.
2. Interpret assigned texts and other materials by accurately and fully describing theories, principles, basic concepts, and the various arguments related to various moral dilemmas.
3. Reason about moral issues and ideas (a) by evaluating the content, structure, and strategies involved in addressing ethical problems and (b) applying concepts and arguments to contemporary issues.
4. Apply clearly defined ethical systems to analyze arguments related to prominent ethical issues in health, healthcare, medical research, and other aspects of human wellness.

Examinations: There will be four multiple-choice exams, including the cumulative final exam.

Reading/Writing Assignments: Most chapters will include one or more reading assignments or case studies. Students will be required to analyze moral arguments presented in reading assignments or formulate and defend a moral position related to a case study, using a clearly-identified ethical system. These assignments will be discussed in class.

<i>Grading:</i>	3 Exams	15% each	<i>Grading Scale:</i>	A -- 90% and up
	Final Exam	20%		B -- 80% to 89%
	Writing Assignments	25%		C -- 70% to 79%
	In-class activities	10%		D -- 60% to 69%
				F -- below 60%

Quality of work: All written assignments and correspondence should incorporate correct grammar, spelling, and a logical flow of ideas. Bad grammar, incorrect or lack of punctuation, incorrect spelling, etc. will result in loss or deduction of points. (Yes, that means using incorrect grammar and/or spelling in an e-mail message could hurt your grade in the course! Please proof-read everything you send to me.)

Policy regarding late submission of an assignment: No assignments will be accepted past their deadlines.

Make-up work: Make-up exams and assignments will be given only according to University policy. On rare occasions (and for a valid reason), make-up exams can be scheduled by pre-arrangement with the instructor *before* the date of the exam. If any exam is missed due to illness, injury, or family emergency, the instructor should be notified prior to or within 24 hours of the missed exam.

Feedback on exams/assignments: I will strive to give timely feedback on all assignments. You should expect feedback on assignments, papers, and exams within 1 week (I will notify you if I expect feedback to take a little longer for a particular assessment).

Getting help: If you find yourself struggling in the class (especially if you fail an exam), you should contact me as soon as possible so that we can determine what steps you need to take to succeed in the class. I'm available for personal meetings by appointment, or correspondence by e-mail.

If you have trouble with writing assignments, please contact the Writing Center on campus at 903- 565-5995. They have tutors and other resources available to assist you with your written assignments.

Course Communication:

Announcements

I will post Announcements frequently during the semester. You will be able to see these announcements on your course portal page. Please check these frequently so you do not miss any important information.

E-mail communication/feedback from me to you

E-mail communications will be sent through the Canvas course web site. You are responsible for knowing course information sent via announcements and emails sent through the Canvas site, so check it frequently. Due to teaching and research loads and the size of this class, it may take me 1 to 2 business days to respond to e-mail; however, I'll make every effort to respond to e-mail on the same day.

E-mail communication from you to me

If you email me without going through the Canvas site, please include the course number in the subject line. E-mail messages should be written in letter format using proper English grammar, punctuation, and spelling. If you do not include your name at the end of the message, the message will be discarded without reply.

Academic Dishonesty

At the University of Texas at Tyler students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students and faculty members are required to report an

observed or suspected case of academic dishonesty immediately to the faculty member in charge of an examination, classroom or laboratory research project, or other academic exercise.

Since the value of an academic degree depends on the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for the degree, it is imperative that students maintain a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

"Cheating" includes:

1. Copying from the paper of another student, engaging in written, oral or any other means of communication with another student, or giving aid to or seeking aid from another student when not permitted by the instructor;
2. Using material during an examination or when completing an assignment that is not authorized by the person giving the examination or making the work assignment;
3. Taking or attempting to take an examination for another student, or allowing another student to take an examination for oneself;
4. Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means, the whole or any part of, an unadministered examination or work assignment.

"Collusion" includes the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work that a student offers for credit.

"Plagiarism" includes the unacknowledged incorporation of the work of another person in work that a student offers for credit.

If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult [Chapter 8 of the Student Affairs Manual of Policy and Procedures](#).

This class will be conducted in full compliance with the UT Tyler "no tolerance" policies concerning documented cases of plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty. Any act of cheating or plagiarized work submitted will result in a grade of zero for that assignment and further disciplinary action may be taken. Please make use of the UT Tyler Writing Center if you have concerns about plagiarism.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE RESOURCES

All work submitted for this course must be your own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

<https://www.uttyler.edu/academicaffairs/files/syllabuspolicy.pdf>

UT Tyler fall 2024 academic calendar, including census date, holidays, and other important dates: <https://www.uttyler.edu/schedule/files/2024-2025/academic-calendar-2024-2025-main-20240724.pdf>

HECC 4308 – Schedule

Date	Topics	Bioethics Chapter
Mon., Aug 25	Introduction to ethics	1
Wed., Aug 27	Ethical relativism, ethics and religion	1
Mon., Sept 1	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i>	
Wed., Sept 3	Moral principles in bioethics, critical thinking, moral arguments	1
Mon., Sept 8	Moral theories, utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, natural law theory	2
Wed., Sept 10	Rawls' theory, virtue ethics, the ethics of care, feminist ethics	2
Mon., Sept 15	Paternalism	3
Wed., Sept 17	Patient autonomy	3
Mon., Sept 22	Exam #1	
Wed., Sept 24	Truth-telling and confidentiality	4
Mon., Sept 29	Informed consent	5
Wed., Oct 1	Barriers to informed consent	5
Mon., Oct 6	Human research	6
Wed., Oct 8	Research ethics/Animal Use	6
Mon., Oct 13	Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide	10
Wed., Oct 15	Abortion	7
Mon., Oct 20	What is "personhood"?	7
Wed., Oct 22	Exam #2	
Mon., Oct 27	Reproductive technology	8
Wed., Oct 29	Surrogacy	8
Mon., Nov 3	Genetic choice/Genetic testing	9
Wed., Nov 5	Gene Therapy	9
Mon., Nov 10	Stem Cells	9
Wed., Nov 12	Ethical allocation of resources	11
Mon., Nov 17	Justice in healthcare; the right to healthcare	11
Wed., Nov 19	Exam #3	
Mon., Nov 24	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>	
Wed., Nov 26	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>	
Mon., Dec 1	Sport Ethics – Gender issues in sport	notes
Wed., Dec 3	Class discussion and review	
TBD (week of Dec 9-12)	Final Exam	