

PHIL*2030, Philosophy of Medicine
Fall 2012

Prof. K. Wendling

This course considers some philosophical problems that arise in the practice of medicine. We begin with a brief look at the history and nature of medicine. During this section we discuss what counts as medical knowledge, as well as the role of medicine in promoting health and prolonging life spans. Next, we discuss the science, art and culture of medicine. Here we examine the extent to which medicine is a science and an art, and the effects of culture on medical practice. We then discuss the principles guiding health care provision in Canada, and some proposals for reforming Canada's health care system. After that, we turn to issues in clinical ethics. We examine the ground and scope of three principles that underlie ethical decision-making in medicine – autonomy, beneficence and justice. Then we turn to cases in medical ethics, using the principles to help us evaluate different courses of action in those situations. We also consider some issues in veterinary ethics, discussing the similarities and differences between ethics involving humans and ethics involving animals. At the end of the course, you should be better equipped to evaluate philosophical arguments, to develop your own reasoned positions on some philosophical issues in human and veterinary medicine, and to express your views clearly, both orally and in writing.

Required Texts

- Hébert, *Doing Right*, 2nd edition
- some readings on Courselink and on reserve at the Library

Course Requirements (tentative)

1. Best 2 of 3 tests, 60% total
2. Participation, 15%
3. A final exam, 25%