



Course Title: Beyond the Bedside: Biomedical Ethics and Global Health Perspectives

Program and Date: England & Scotland 27 May-12 June, 2025

Academic Department: Philosophy

Instructor Name: Dr. Catherine Sherron

Instructor Email and Phone: sherroc@thomasmore.edu 859-344-3387

Get to Know Your Professor

Welcome! I discovered bioethics in college and it led me to study philosophy in graduate school. In the past 25 years, I have taught many bioethics and philosophy of science courses. My active research interests focus on reducing barriers to good end of life planning and teaching interfaith understanding. Hosting exchange students is another way to bring cultural difference into my life; my husband and I have sons from Turkey and Bahrain, and “nephews” from Ghana and Bosnia. I love to travel and have visited Italy, Switzerland, England, and South Africa as an adult. When I was young, I lived with my family in Tehran and San Francisco, among other places around the U.S. Teaching in London brings me full circle, because it is where I was born. I especially welcome first-time travelers and novice philosophers to global bioethics!

I have taught a biomedical ethics course four times in the past for CCSA: 3 in London, one in London-Dublin. This will be my first summer and first London/Edinburgh trip. I have also had other foreign travel experience (including South Africa in April 2017, Turkey in 2010 and 2019, northern Ireland January 2019, and several times to England – London and surrounding). I have plenty of CCSA experience with flexibility during travel, in-country teaching and excursions.

Course Description

Debates about patients’ rights, medical research standards, national responses to international pandemics, and doctor-patient relationships will be examined in this biomedical ethics course, designed for pre-health professional, health care administration, global health services, and similar students. Experience London and Edinburgh’s history and multiculturalism at St. Giles’ Cathedral, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Chinatown, and pubs, then visit the Science Museum, Old Operating Theatre with cholera walking tour, Florence Nightingale Museum, Highgate Cemetery, Dover War Tunnels, and modern health care facilities, in preparation for exciting ethical explorations of cloning, euthanasia, truth-telling, stem cell research, and more. Perfect Honors course, too.



Course Level

Undergraduate general education course; also available for Honors

Prerequisite(s)

None.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of all coursework with a passing grade and full participation in course activities, students shall be able to:

1. Identify the basic tenets of major ethical theories (papers, cases, final exam);
 - a. Accurately describe several ethical theories (discussion, papers, cases, country analysis);
 - b. Explain current global bioethical challenges in their historical contexts (discussion, papers, country analysis, final exam, journal);
 - c. Recognize good ethical arguments (discussion, papers, cases);
 - d. Critically evaluate texts and ideas presented in the course (discussion, papers, journal, final exam);
2. Develop an awareness of the ubiquity of global bioethics (blog, discussions, country analysis, journal, final exam);
3. Recognize the complexities of moral decision making in multicultural and global biomedical settings by:
 - a. Applying (via blog, papers, discussion, journal, final exam) critical thinking skills, focused on competently identifying:
 - i. where more information is desired and
 - ii. what courses of action are possible, in order to
 - iii. choose a course of action based on sound, relevant reasons which can be expressed to another person.
 - b. Employing cultural sensitivity in respectful responses, marked by dispositions of intellectual humility, intellectual courage, fair-mindedness, and confidence in reason (discussion, cases, country analysis);
 - c. Defending and critiquing multiple positions, not just one's own personal beliefs (cases, discussion, journal);
4. Combine the above and express one's thoughts in meaningful, reflective, and engaged dialogue with self and others in both written and oral forms (blog, discussion, papers, cases, journal, final exam)



Required Readings and Materials

- “Medical Ethics” *A Very Short Introduction*, Michael Dunn & Tony Hope, Oxford, 2nd ed. 2018.
- Paul Kalanithi. *When Breath Becomes Air*. Random House. New York. 2016.

Assignments and Grades

REQUIREMENTS	
Presentations 4 @ 5%	20% (“Health Care Elsewhere” prior to departure, 3 reading overviews in-country)
Thought paper	10% (on Kant, due prior to departure)
Participation	10%
Quizzes	10% (over ethical theory application)
Blog/Journal	20% (see specific instructions on handout)
Final exam: 3 essays	30% (due after return home)

Grading Scale

The following scale will be used to compute your grade.

Grading will be on a 100 point scale		
A+	98-100%	Distinguished work demonstrating superior analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills. Completeness and complexity of thought is evident and communicated in a clear, organized, professional manner.
A	93-97.9%	
A-	90.0-92.9 %	
B+	88.0%-89.9%	Strong work demonstrating commendable analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills. Completeness and complexity of thought is evident though work includes significant but non-critical gaps. Ideas are communicated in a clear, organized, professional manner.
B	83-87.9%	
B-	80.0-82.9%	
C+	78.0%-79.9%	Adequate work demonstrating fair analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills. Some complexity of thought is present but the work is flawed by critical gaps. Findings are presented in a clear, organized, professional manner.
C	73-77.9%	
C-	70.0-72.9%	
D+	68.0%-69.9%	Poor quality work that fails to adequately demonstrate understanding and application of course content. Presentation of work may be flawed or inconsistent.
D	63-67.9%	
D-	60-62.9%	Very poor quality work that fails to adequately demonstrate understanding and application of course content with flawed or inconsistent presentation.
F	Below	Work of unsatisfactory nature not worthy of college credit.

Onsite Learning Experiences and Activities

Onsite learning experiences in this class will likely include the following site visits. This is a tentative list which will be replaced with a detailed daily itinerary of class meetings and field trips prior to the departure date.

London

- Ethical theory (Utilitarianism specifically) – Bentham walk (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bentham-project/about/benthamiana/bentham-walk>)
- Public Health – Cholera walk
- History of Medicine – Old Operating Theatre; Dover War Tunnels;
- History of Nursing – Florence Nightingale Museum
- eugenics and research ethics - Holocaust Exhibition at Imperial War Museum
- Modern science, including genetics - Wellcome Collection and London Science Museum

Edinburgh

- Philosophical thinking – David Hume’s statue <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/david-humes-statue>
- History of Medicine - <https://museum.rcsed.ac.uk/about>
- Genetics, cloning, genetic engineering - <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/stories/natural-sciences/dolly-the-sheep/>

Theater in one or the other place depending on what is available and relevant to the course.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled activities and class meetings as well as field trip excursions. This includes any virtual meetings before and after the onsite experience. Repeated absences, including for ill health, will require documentation to be excused.

Each unexcused absence at required outings will lower final grade one half-letter (A → B+, B → C+, etc.).

Academic Integrity Policy

Cheating: *DO NOT DO IT.* If you do not know what counts as plagiarism (improper citation as well as copying count), **come talk to me.** Turning in papers that are not your own will result in a grade of zero for the assignment at best, and if the offense is egregious, you could fail the course.

Physical Expectations

Program requires walking 3-5 miles per day on uneven pavement in all kinds of weather and long periods of standing. Students must be able to carry their own bags/belongings.



This class includes many field trips and other activities which may involve a lot more walking and standing than you might be used to, so here is your fair warning of estimated 5 miles of daily walking, even in the rain or heat (we can't reschedule tours). I recommend bringing along at least two pairs of comfortable, water-proof, broken-in walking shoes (no high heels!), and clothes to keep you sufficiently dry and comfortable.

Disability Accommodation

CCSA is committed to providing access to education abroad to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. The earlier CCSA and the faculty know the needs, the more likely we can accommodate them. At a minimum, students seeking accommodations are to contact both the CCSA office and the faculty one month in advance of the program's beginning. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

Title IX Policy

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sexual discrimination violate CCSA policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain support from the Onsite Program Director or the CCSA Executive Director. To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact either of these two officers. Disclosure to faculty instructors or CCSA officers of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on the program or involving a visitor, student or employee is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and other CCSA employees are required to forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the CCSA Executive Director.

Statement about Final Syllabus

Please note that all CCSA syllabi are subject to change, but every effort will be made to ensure participants receive notice of such changes in a timely manner.