Philosophy of Medicine
Philosophy 321, Spring 2025

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Instructional material:
- Text: R. Paul Thompson, Ross Upshur; *Philosophy of Medicine: An Introduction* (available online through the library)
- Material on Brightspace and available on-line

The course itself

This course deals with the philosophical issues that arise in the field of medicine considered both as a domain and as a professional undertaking. Since medicine in both of these aspects is situated in a social context, the considerations that are considered relevant in this course extend beyond purely ethical matters and include some practical and legal issues. Moreover, since the subject matter of medicine—namely, health and disease—is not an undisputed matter (for instance mental issues and substance abuse are sometimes included under the rubric of healthcare [ICD-10, F10-F19]), part of the course is devoted to a discussion of the various conceptions of health and disease and their philosophical as well as practical implications. Furthermore, since the social contexts in which the practice of medicine is involved frequently differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, the examples that are used to illustrate certain points are occasionally drawn from these distinct jurisdictions and sometimes are even global in perspective. As well, since the recipients of healthcare are not the agents that provide that care— that is to say, since the focus of the domain of medicine in actual practice is patients, whether that be at the societal or at the individual level—the ethical implications of this will also be examined and such issues as resource allocation and medical tourism will be considered. Another set of issues that will be explored is the nature and use of medical records and the ethical implications of the development of artificial intelligence in healthcare.

This is not a course in pure philosophy, and students who take it are not expected to be familiar with pure philosophical theories. It is a course in applied philosophy, and the lectures (as well as the reading materials) will provide the relevant philosophical frameworks.

Logistics

1. Two examinations. There will be a 1-hour in-class mid-term examination (worth 25% of the course grade) as well as a 2-hour final examination (worth 50% of the course grade) that is scheduled by the University. Students who have taken the mid-term examination and have received a grade for it may elect to make the final examination count for 75% of the course grade. If they choose this option, they should write "75%" on the front page of the final

examination booklet. The examinations are cumulative in their subject matter. Students are encouraged to discuss their examinations with the instructor.

2. One short term paper (worth 25% of the course grade) on a subject decided by the student upon consultation with the instructor. The term papers are due on the last day of classes, and should be handed in electronically to the instructor's email address (ekluge@uvic.ca). They should be maximally 7 pages in length, in MS-Word.

Significant dates:
- Mid-term examination: Approximately February 14, 2025
- Final examination: scheduled by the university
-term paper: April 4, 2025

The mid-term examinations will be returned as soon as they are graded. Final examinations are the property of the University and will not be returned. They will be available for viewing at the Records Office at a time designated by the University.

Grading

Grades will be assigned on a percentile basis with letter grade equivalents as follows: F=0-49; D=50-59; C=60-64; C+=65-69; B-=70-72; B=73-76; B+=77-79; A-=80-84; A=85-89; A+=90-100. The criteria for assigning grades may be found in the University Calendar.

Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct

Chat GPT and similar tools are not permitted in the conduct of this course. It is each student's responsibility to know the University's regulations in this regard. Inappropriate behaviour and violations of standards of academic integrity as defined in the University Calendar will be dealt with in accordance with University Regulations. The Policy on Academic Integrity is published in the University Calendar. Students can also consult the Libraries' plagiarism guide or the Tri-Faculty Standards for Professional Behavior for Students, which draws together a number of existing UVic policies in one place for ease of reference. Professionalism is expected from all students enrolled in courses in the Faculty of Humanities. As part of professionalism, students, faculty and staff are expected to be familiar with University policies, including the Tri-Faculty Standards.

> The instructor and the University acknowledge and respect the First Nations Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF LECTURES by Subject Area

I. Introduction
- Administrative details
- Scope and subject matter of the course
Reading: The Philosophy of Medicine, chapter 1

II. Ethics and related matters
Reading: material on Brightspace, *The Philosophy of Medicine* chapter 3
- Ethical theories
- Codes of ethics
- Juridical provisions and their relevance

III. Health and Disease
Reading: *The Philosophy of Medicine* chapters 2 and 11; material on Brightspace

IV. The evolution and nature of medicine as a domain and as a profession
Readings:
- Conrad, Lawrence 1 (2009). *The Western medical tradition*. [1]: 800 BC to AD 1800. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. pp. 33–58. (available in UVic Library
- Scot WA, The Practice of Medicine in Ancient Rome, https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/BF03016172.pdf
- Lo, Vivienne; Stanley-Baker, Michael, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Medicine* (available in UVic Library)
- Ayurveda: "Ayurvedic Medicine: An Introduction" https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-HE20-PURL-gpo29672/pdf/GOVPUB-HE20-PURL-gpo29672.pdf

V. The conduct of medicine at the hands-on level
Reading: *The Philosophy of Medicine* chapters 8 and 9
- Professionals and non-professionals
- Their roles in diagnosis, therapy, prognosis, palliation and rehabilitation
- Informed Consent

VI. Medicine/healthcare in the social setting
Reading: material on Brightspace; *The Philosophy of Medicine*, chapters 3 and 4
- Allocation
- Medical tourism

VII. Research and experimentation
Reading: *The Philosophy of Medicine*, chapters 6 and 7
- Causation models
- Design models and their justification

VIII. The future: AIs in medicine
Reading: Kluge: *The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare* chapter 6, available on Brightspace
- Types of AIs
- Implications: from hands-on to policy making

IX. Summation and Review