

7AAN2058 Philosophy of Medicine Syllabus – Academic year 2016-17

Basic information

Credits: 20

Module Tutor: Professor Sherrilyn Roush

Office: 610 Philosophy Building

Consultation Times: Wednesday 12-1, Friday 1-2

Semester: One

Lecture time and venue: Friday 11-1, Strand 405

Module description (plus aims and objectives)

This module aims to provide an understanding of the central problems of contemporary Philosophy of Medicine. The specific problems under consideration include: concepts of health and disease; health and well-being; mental health and mental illness; genetic disease; genetic enhancement; medical decision making; placebos, and Evidence Based Medicine.

Students completing this module should gain:

- A textually-referenced knowledge of the main problems of contemporary Philosophy of Medicine
- The ability to deploy the philosophical techniques and argumentative strategies that can be used to discuss those problems
- The transferable skill of formulating and evaluating arguments both for and against various other kinds of philosophical positions
- An understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of some problems that arise in the practice of medicine

Assessment methods and deadlines

● *Formative assessment*: two x 1,500-2,000-word essays, due dates 4 November and 9 December 2016, 4pm.

● *Summative assessment*: one x two-hour end of year examination

NB Please note that for semester I-only Study Abroad students, assessment requirements may vary.

In particular, May exams will be replaced by summative essays to be submitted by the end of term.

Outline of lecture topics (plus suggested readings) – see next page

1. Introduction to concepts of Health and Disease: Naturalism and Normativism
 - Boorse (1977) Health as a theoretical concept; *Philosophy of Science*.
 - Kingma (2007) What is it to be Healthy?; *Analysis*.
 - Ereshefsky (2009) Defining 'Health' and 'Disease'; *Studies in the history and philosophy of biological and biomedical sciences*.

2. Functionalist accounts of disease
 - Wright (1973) Functions; *Philosophical Review*.
 - Boorse (1976) Wright on Functions; *Philosophical Review*.
 - Neander (1991) Functions as selected effects: the conceptual analyst's defence; *Philosophy of Science*

3. Normativism
 - Nordenfelt (1995) *On the Nature of Health*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. Chapters 3 & 4
 - Nordenfelt (2007) Establishing a Middle-Range Position in the Theory of Health: a reply to my critics; *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*.
 - Cooper (2010) Aristotelian Accounts of Disease; what are they good for?; *Philosophical Papers*.

4. Phenomenology and Theories of Wellbeing
 - Carel (2007) Can I be Ill and Happy?; *Philosophia*
 - Carel (2008) *Illness*. Acumen Publishing. Chapter 1 Kirkengen (2008 MCPH)]
 - Parfit, D., 1984, *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford: Clarendon Press. Appendix I 'What Makes Someone's Live Go Best?'
 - Crisp, Roger, "Well-Being", *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/well-being/>

5. Mental health and Mental Illness
 - Szasz, T. S. (1960) The Myth of Mental Illness. *American Psychologist*, 15, 113-118.
 - Megone (2000) Mental Illness, Human Function and Values; *Philosophy, Psychiatry & Psychology*.
 - Wakefield (1992) The Concept of Mental Disorder; on the boundary between biological facts and social values; *American Psychologist*.

6. Genetic disease
 - Magnus, David. "The concept of genetic disease." *Health, disease, and illness: Concepts in medicine* (2004): 233-42.
 - Smith, K (2001) "A disease by any other name: Musings on the concept of a genetic disease" *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 4
 - Juengst, E (2002) "Concepts of Disease After the Human Genome Project" Ethical Issues in Health Care on the Frontiers of the Twenty-First Century *Philosophy and Medicine*

7. Enhancement and Eugenics
 - Whitehouse, Peter J., et al. "Enhancing cognition in the intellectually intact." *Hastings Center Report* 27.3 (1997): 14-22.
 - Juengst, Eric T. "Can enhancement be distinguished from prevention in genetic medicine?." *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 22.2 (1997): 125-142.
 - Nordenfelt, Lennart. "On medicine and health enhancement-Towards a conceptual framework." *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 1.1 (1998): 5-12.

8. Medical decision making

- Schwartz 1973. Decision analysis and clinical judgment. *American Journal of Medicine* 55:459-472.
- Feinstein. 1994. Clinical judgment revisited: the distraction of quantitative models. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 120:799-805.
- Whitney "A new model of medical decisions: exploring the limits of shared decision making." *Medical Decision Making* 23.4 (2003): 275-280.

9. Placebo

- Stewart-Williams, S. et al., 2004. The Placebo Effect: Dissolving the Expectancy Versus Conditioning Debate. *Psychological Bulletin* 130, No. 2, 324–340.
- Moerman, D.E. & Jonas, W.B., 2002. Deconstructing the Placebo Effect and Finding the Meaning Response. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 136(6), pp.471-476.

10. Evidence-based Medicine

- Straus SE, Jones G. What has evidence based medicine done for us? *BMJ* 2004 Oct 30;329(7473):987-8.
- Guyatt G, Cook D, Haynes B. Evidence based medicine has come a long way. *BMJ* 2004 Oct 30;329(7473):990-1.
- Reilly BM. The essence of EBM. *BMJ* 2004 Oct 30;329(7473):991-2.
- Atkins D, Best D, Briss PA, Eccles M, Falck-Ytter Y, Flottorp S, et al. Grading quality of evidence and strength of recommendations. *BMJ* 2004 Jun;19;328(7454):1490.
- Worrall (2002) *What Evidence in Evidence Based Medicine?* *Philosophy of Science*

Formative Essay Questions - 1

1. Compare one of the biological function theories of health (Boorse, Wakefield, etc.) with one of the other theories of health as to how well they capture what is unhealthy in mental disorders.
2. Explain and evaluate Szasz's thesis and argument that there is no such thing as mental illness.
3. Explain Carel's phenomenological view of health and her argument for it. What are the advantages and weaknesses of this view?
4. Explain how an Aristotelian definition of function differs from one of the etiological natural-selection views and evaluate their advantages and disadvantages for defining health.
5. Can the distinction between health and disease be defined naturalistically, that is, without reference to norms or values? Why or why not?

Formative Essay Questions - 2

1. What is a placebo, and how does it work?
2. Can a principled distinction be drawn between the use of drugs for medical treatment and for enhancement? If so, why? If not, why not? (Is it important to draw such a distinction?)
3. Explain and evaluate the usefulness of Randomized Controlled Trials in decisions about treatment. (Why is it thought to be the gold standard of evidence? Why could that be misleading or inadequate in clinical practice?)