

# Structure for White Paper Sustainability Infusion Project

## Title of Module/Activity

*Studio Case Study Course Design*

## Course Name and Course Number

*PHIL 213: Medical Ethics*

## Length of Module/Activity

The Studio Case Study is a general course design template or strategy. All elements in the course (e.g., each assignment, each learning activity, etc.) are part of a scaffolding scheme that aims to put students in a position to complete a case study. Completion of the smaller assignment, Unpacking Justification, requires students to unpack Environmental Sustainability as a justification for doing/not doing some action. Completion of the Individual Case Study requires students to justify their suggested course of action or critique of an author's argument for a particular course of action in terms of various thick moral concepts one of which is Environmental Sustainability.

## Primary Learning Outcomes

Relevant General Learning Objective:

A2: Develop ability to recognize and respond appropriately to moral considerations.

Relevant Specific Learning Outcomes:

A2(ES1): Recognize Environmental Sustainability as a moral consideration.

A2(ES2): Respond appropriately to Environmental Sustainability as a moral consideration.

## Resilience and/or Sustainability Connections

The environment impacts individual and community health. Likewise, as is true of most human interventions, our medical practice impacts environmental health. The goal, then, of environmental sustainability in the health care arena is to achieve a balance between human health and environmental health. To achieve that balance, students will be asked (a) to consider scientific fact as it pertains to healthy environments and the way the environment impacts individual health and (b) to choose acts/policies/etc. partially on the basis of which is most permissible in light of the moral considerations at play—one of which is Environmental Sustainability. In this context, we indirectly encourage building Resilience in patients and health care practitioners as well as in the environment.

## Identify One or More of the Key Sustainability Competencies Addressed

The Studio Case Study approach in this course encompasses Futures Thinking, Values Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Collaboration, and Systems Thinking.

- Futures Thinking is addressed insofar as students are encountering considerations that they will encounter as their lives progress in all aspects of their lives and learning how to respond to those considerations. In this way, they are being put in a position to anticipate the morally relevant considerations that they are likely to face in practical contexts of all sorts.
- Values Thinking is centrally addressed in the course. The primary goal of the course is to develop students' ability to maturely reason about complex moral issues.
- Strategic Thinking is addressed insofar as students are developing their understanding of key moral considerations that arise in any practical context so that they can choose the best course of action to take in those sorts of contexts.
- Collaboration is addressed insofar as (a) students will very often be working together during in-class learning activities and (b) students who wish to earn an A for their work in the course must complete a Group Case Study, which requires them to work with at least 2 others to complete a study of a major issue in medical ethics or ethics more generally.
- Systems Thinking is addressed insofar as this course focuses on students developing their ability to balance the many moral considerations and principles that shape our practical realities. Here we focus on the health care arena. Interestingly, the health care arena is composed of a crossroads of scientific fact, social interplay, economics, and the moral universe. As such, balancing moral considerations and principles here means contending with the other contouring aspects of the health care arena.

### Instructional Strategies and Assessment Strategy

ASSIGNMENTS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Case Study	<p><i>Individual:</i> Argue for a solution to a morally complex medical situation by Locating Considerations, Making Connections, Purposefully Quoting, and Unpacking Justification.</p> <p><i>Group:</i> Come to a consensus about best solution to a morally complex medical situation. <b>(ACE 8)</b></p>
Exam	A cumulative evaluation. <b>(ACE 8)</b>

ASSIGNMENTS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Making Connections (MC)	Connect author's thoughts to your Individual/Group Case Study or etc.
Unpacking Justification (UJ)	Make sense of the justification given for a course of action.
Locating Considerations (LC)	(a) Locate moral considerations that arise in specified, morally complex situation in a healthcare context and (b) Explain the ways in which they are directly relevant/impact justificatory moral concept.
Purposeful Quoting (PQ)	Identify quotes in a specified text that directly suggest specified claims in an outline of the argument given in that text.
In/Out Classwork	Learning activities done in or out of class.

## Examples of In Classwork Learning Activities:

### Tower of Futility

To help students get a sense of the way a futility judgment (i.e., a judgment that a course of treatment would be futile) can feel like an infringement on autonomy while also seeing the benefit of ending a treatment cycle. In addition, offers an opportunity for me to speak with students about their grasp of autonomy and beneficence as a thick moral concept.

Students compete in groups to design a tower that is tallest and best reflects either autonomy or beneficence using materials that they happen to have brought for class that day. I travel to each group assessing their work. Good assessments allow groups to obtain helpful building materials. Unbeknownst to them, I'm using futility judgment language as I assess and have already determined which groups will and which will not get helpful new supplies. At the end, we discuss things like their frustration with trying to do enough to get help, trying to say the right things to get new materials, etc. and how this frustration is similar in kind to the frustration and struggle many feel as they ask their healthcare practitioners to do something that they're less than willing to do.

### Strategic Reading

I read from a text that the students have to read. One-by-one I engage students in ways meant to help them Locate Considerations, Make Connections, Unpack Justification, and/or Purposefully Quote authors. Students have the option of passing, asking a further question, answering the question, etc. Here there also getting instruction on how to strategically read a philosophy text.

## Examples of Out Classwork Learning Activities

### Justificatory Moral Concepts, Life, and Death

#### Texts

Mary Anne Warren, 'On the Moral Permissibility of Abortion'

## Definitions

Justificatory Moral Concept =def. A moral concept that plays/can play a justificatory role in an explanation.

## Tasks

- 1: Which, if any, of the following is Mary Anne Warren's definition of personhood similar to:
  - a. Lower Brain Death
  - b. Higher Brain Death
  - c. Whole Brain Death?
- 2: Does Warren's definition of personhood too permissive (i.e., does it allow too many things to count as full-rights holders)?
- 3: Is Warren's definition of personhood too restrictive (i.e., does it allow too few things to count as full-rights holders)?
- 4: Briefly, how would you characterize personhood.

## Examples of Out Classwork Learning Activities (continued)

## Unpacking Justification 6 (MC and LC)

## Definitions

Connection =def. A link, conceptual or otherwise, between one thing and another thing.

Consideration =def. An idea/thought/concept/fact/etc. relevant to a thoughtful activity (i.e., an activity that involves deep, mature thinking).

Justificatory Moral Concept =def. A moral concept that plays/can play a justificatory role in an explanation.

## Tasks

- 1: Create a rubric or measure for determining the extent to which a local environment positively/negatively impacts health based on Jessica Pierce and Andrew Jameton's, 'Environmental Aspects of Health Care'.
- 2: Briefly assess the following with your rubric/measuring device that you created in Task 1 above:
  - a. Your Residence (dorm building, apartment building, house, etc.);
  - b. A building on campus that you spend quite a bit of time in; and
  - c. Your favorite place to be in Lincoln.
- 3: How can you get better at developing connections between justificatory moral concepts? (1 to 3 sentences)
- 4: How have you improved your ability to locate moral considerations? (1 to 3 sentences)