Almost there...

Dear BHS students,

For better or worse, we are getting ready to wrap up the Fall semester. In three week's time, many of us will be taking a well deserved break, and then a deep breath before we take on the final sprint. In this newsletter, we feature some important end-of-semester reminders and tips, including our new section "Ask the advisor", in which we share answers to recent questions from our students.

To our Fall graduates, congratulations, you made it! We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors, and encourage you to keep in touch with the BHS program. Whether you are working, traveling, or starting a graduate or professional program, we would love to hear about your post-graduation experiences.

Also, we encourage you to submit your contributions to our newsletter; if you would like to advertise a relevant event, or share some of your bioethical musings with the BHS community, please contact Monica List at bhs@msu.edu.
This month at the Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences

The Brownbag Speaker Series

Our second November Brownbag has unfortunately been canceled; however, we will have one more Brownbag this semester. In December, we will feature a talk by Dr. Alexander Smith, Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). Dr. Smith's talk, “How long do I have, Doc?” Ethical Issues in Prognostication for Older Adults, will focus on the importance of prognosis in palliative care and geriatrics. If you are interested in these topics, you should definitely join us for this talk, but also consider following Dr. Smith's blog GeriPal, on geriatric and palliative care. In addition to the blog, Dr. Smith created ePrognosis, a website and app for estimating prognoses for older adults.

Dr. Smith's talk will take place on Thursday, December 11, 12-1 pm in E4 Fee Hall (next to the Medical Bookstore).

Bioethics in the News: Hepatitis C drugs raise ethical challenges

If you were infected with Hepatitis C, how much would you expect to pay for treatment? $1000? $10,000? It may be a little more expensive than that. The two drugs currently available for Hep C treatment, Sovaldi and Harvoni, cost $1000 and $1125 per pill, respectively. The required 12 week course of treatment adds up to $84,000 for Sovaldi, and $96,000 for Harvoni. The exorbitant cost is only part of the problem. While close to 3.2 million Americans are infected with Hep C, close to 60% will never experience any adverse effects; in fact, about half of the infected population does not even know they are infected. The social context of Hep C infection further complicates the matter; Hepatitis C is commonly transmitted through practices like unprotected sex and needle-sharing by intravenous drug users. So, deciding who has access to these drugs and who pays the bill is not easy, to say the least. Dr. Len Fleck addresses this complex problem in our November Bioethics in the News post. Join the conversation!
BHS updates

Ask the advisor: answers to your questions about the BHS program

Q: I am graduating, and I have heard that BHS is becoming a minor....can I have this program listed as a minor rather than a specialization?

A: As many of you already know, as of Fall 2015, MSU will no longer have undergraduate specializations as part of their academic programs. In most cases, this does not mean that the programs are disappearing, rather, programs are being asked to adjust their requirements so that they can become minors. In our case, the BHS program already meets all of the requirements for a minor, so all we had to do was change our name. But, even a simple thing like a name change can take a long time in the context of University administration! So, even though we currently appear in the Academic Programs Catalog under "Undergraduate Minors", we will not officially become a minor until Fall of 2015. So, if you are a BHS student graduating in Fall 2014, Spring 2015, or Summer 2015, you will still have this program transcripted as a Specialization; there is no way to change this. But, remember that even if the name "Specialization" appears on your transcript, you can refer to the program as "Interdisciplinary Minor in Bioethics, Humanities, and Society". For more information on the specialization-to-minor transition, please visit the FAQ section of our website.

Course updates: recently approved substitutions

If you took, or are currently taking any of these courses and would like to have them counted as a "B" category requirement for BHS, please contact the advisor. The substitution is approved only for these specific sections.

PSY 209, section 003H. "Brain and Behavior". Fall 2014.

Bioethics Community

The Undergraduate Bioethics Society hosts Libby Bogdan-Lovis, Assistant Director, Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences

On November 4th, the Undergraduate Bioethics Society meeting featured a talk by Libby Bogdan-Lovis on the topic of US childbirth options and manufactured choice. Childbirth is one of the domains in which the shared decision-making approach is used. This approach integrates clinical expertise, evidence based medicine, and patient values in decision-making regarding medical care. Although physicians' values are not mentioned, it is assumed that they are also embedded in the process, ultimately influencing the decisions of patients and their families; this is what is referred to as manufactured choice. The question of manufactured choice is also salient in other controversial medical discussions, such as the relevancy and efficacy of early detection of prostate cancer through Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) testing.
Last UBS meeting of the semester: Tuesday, November 18
6:30 pm, 307 Bessey

Undergraduate Bioethics Society President Jordan Krieger will talk about the ethical implications of Ebola treatment research in relation to past outbreak studies. Food and refreshments will be provided.

Meetings are open to all. Future times and locations are advertised on the UBS webpage. Want to learn more about UBS? send an email to ubs@msu.edu.

Around Campus

Find the world at your feet at the MSU Global Festival 2014

The MSU Global Festival is returning to the MSU Union on Sunday, November 23rd from noon to 5p.m.

Country-specific exhibits, cultural demonstrations and live performances by international students will bring the community together to celebrate cultures around the world. Pick up souvenirs at the World Gift Shop, where all proceeds go to international student scholarships, or take home some new dance moves, as for the first time students will be teaching traditional steps in an open dance studio following their performances.

For more information, visit http://cvip.isp.msu.edu/globalfestival.

Spartans Break Down the Walls

Monday, November 10, 2014 - 9:00am to Thursday, November 13, 2014 - 7:00pm
Upper Main Lounge, MSU Union

Join UAB and your fellow Spartans in promoting acceptance and diversity through the campaign #OneLoveMSU. Throughout the week students are invited to write down stereotypes that they have been called on the banner located in the upper main lounge. On Thursday, November 13, at 6:30pm, students will meet in the upper main lounge to tear apart the banner and represent braking down the walls of stereotypes. Don't miss this opportunity to have your part in this campus-wide movement.
Do you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter? Please share this link with them!