

BIOETHICS & HUMANITIES NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME...

Welcome to the monthly Bioethics and Humanities Newsletter provided by the Program in Bioethics and Humanities at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine.

Program in Bioethics and Humanities: *Our Mission*

We are committed to helping healthcare professionals explore and understand the increasingly complex ethical questions that have been brought on by advances in medical technology and the health care system. We achieve this through education, research, and service within the Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa Health Care, University of Iowa, and the wider Iowa community.

[More Details About
The Program](#)

ETHICS IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

IOWACarver College
of Medicine

Friday, May 30, 2025 | 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Medical Education Research Facility (MERF)
Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa



SESSION ONE

*Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide (EAS) Policies Around the World:
Ethical, Legal, and Clinical Considerations*

Scott Kim, MD, PhD



SESSION TWO

Workplace Culture and the Ethics of Interpersonal Interactions

Erica Carlisle, MD



SESSION THREE

Ethics and Artificial Intelligence in Health Care: Our Choices and Our Selves

Matthew DeCamp, MD, PhD



SESSION FOUR

*Should We Sometimes Try to Change a Patient's Mind? Examining the
Ethics of Persuasion in Shared Decision Making in Healthcare*

Lauris Kaldjian, MD, PhD



Intended Audience:

Administrators, Advanced Practice Providers, Attorneys, Chaplains,
Nurses, Physicians, Social Workers, Students, Trainees, and Others

**Scan the QR code for full conference
details and a link to registration.**



Space is limited to 60 attendees, please register early.



HUMANITIES CORNER



This month's spotlight is on **Risley W. Mabile, a fourth year medical student**. His creative work is a haiku and reflection. He completed this creative work as part of the *Ethics and Humanities Sub-Internship Seminar*. During this Seminar students are asked to complete a written reflection or creative work that responds to a situation they encountered during their sub-internship that illustrated values in ethics, professionalism, or humanism.

***Unseen burdens weigh,
Kindness mends where words fall short,
Truth guides steady hands.***

The haiku is reflecting on the profound ethical and humanistic responsibility of caring for a patient at end of life. This haiku is a reflection about a patient I care for with metastatic cancer without further treatment options. "Unseen burdens weigh" aims to capture the emotional, physical, and psychological struggles experienced by both the patient and caregivers. As healthcare providers, we witness patients' pain and the medical complexity of their condition, even if the patients don't express it verbally. The "unseen" challenges, grief, fear, and loss of autonomy require us to recognize and honor the weight of their journey.

"Kindness mends where words fall short" speaks to the limits of medical interventions at this stage. When curative treatments are no longer possible, the role of the provider shifts from attempting to heal the body to easing the mind and spirit. Simple acts of kindness—whether through a gentle touch, a listening ear, or respectful communication—become the most valuable form of care. For the patient I wrote this about, it was acts of kindness like bringing her a bowl of homemade soup, sitting with her in silence for half an hour after we broke the news, and spending time with her parents and pet. Finally, "Truth guides steady hands" underscores the importance of honesty and professionalism. It is essential to offer the patient and family transparent information about their prognosis, while balancing this with compassion, as they prepare for the end of life with dignity.

EDITORIAL WRITING FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS HIGHLIGHT

Editorial Writing for Medical Students is an advanced elective that allows students to understand and practice the skill of writing Opinion Editorials aimed at improving the public's understanding of health and healthcare. Students learn how to effectively engage a broad, non-medical audience through their writing, with the goal of producing an Opinion Editorial piece that could be submitted for publication to a local or national newspaper.

Clara Wilhelm, a fourth year medical student published her editorial in the March 20th edition of the Des Moines Register. Her editorial is titled: "It Took Me 10 Years to Get the HPV Vaccine. Let's Talk About the Facts."

[Click here](#) to read her piece.



HUMANITES DISTINCTION TRACK HIGHLIGHT

The Humanities Distinction Track encourages, supports, and recognizes medical students who pursue scholarship in ethics, writing, or the humanities. This track promotes students' growth as professionals and furthers the promotion of humanism in medicine by allowing students to pursue an area of interest within a broad range of disciplines, including creative writing, literature, philosophy, religion, visual arts, music, and history, and also social sciences and public policy.

The Caver College of Medicine recently published a story about the Humanities Distinction Track featuring alumnae **Annee Rempel (22MD)** and **Liana Meffert (22MD)**.

[Click here](#) to read the story.

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Aaron DG, Robertson CT, King LP, et al. A new legal standard for medical malpractice. [JAMA](#). 2025 Feb 26. [Epub ahead of print].

“The new standard of care from the ALI represents a shift away from strict reliance on medical custom and invites courts to incorporate evidence-based medicine into malpractice law.... Nonetheless, physicians should recognize that, at least for now, many courts will continue to rely significantly on prevailing practice in assessing medical liability.”

(Aaron et al.)

- ⇒ Arbaugh C, Kopecky KE. How should senior surgeons help junior colleagues and trainees experiencing regret? [AMA J Ethics](#). 2025; 27: E171-177.
- ⇒ Boghossian NS, Greenberg LT, Buzas JS, et al. Racial and ethnic inequalities in actual vs nearest delivery hospitals. [JAMA Netw Open](#). 2025; 8: e251404.
- ⇒ Cavalier JS, Goldstein BA, Ravitsky V, et al. Ethics in patient preferences for artificial intelligence-drafted responses to electronic messages. [JAMA Netw Open](#). 2025; 8: e250449.
- ⇒ Chandler JA. Inferring mental states from brain data: Ethico-legal questions about social uses of brain data. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025; 55: 22-32.
- ⇒ Crowe B, Shah S, Teng D, et al. Recommendations for clinicians, technologists, and healthcare organizations on the use of generative artificial intelligence in medicine: A position statement from the society of general internal medicine. [J Gen Intern Med](#). 2025; 40: 694-702.
- ⇒ Dyrbye LN. From tragedy to action-how to collectively move forward. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025; 185: 263-265.
- ⇒ Earnest M. The death of an unlikable man. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025; 392: 733-735.
- ⇒ Evans JH. Religion v. science? No and yes. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025; 55: 2.
- ⇒ Fletcher FE. My final respects. [JAMA](#). 2025; 333: 941-942.
- ⇒ Jameel SY. A critical interpretive literature review of phronesis in medicine. [J Med Philos](#). 2025; 50: 117-132.
- ⇒ Kravitz RL. Negotiating with patients about tests, referrals, and treatments. [JAMA](#). 2025 Mar 19. [Epub ahead of print].
- ⇒ Lizza J. A prescriptive metaphysics of DEATH. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025; 55: 33-46.
- ⇒ Morreim H. A deeper look at ethics consultation. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025; 36: 77-83.

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Narayan A, Kaplan RM, Adashi EY. To err is human: A quarter century of progress. [J Gen Intern Med.](#) 2025; 40: 690-693.
- ⇒ Piscitello GM, DeMartino ES, Parker WF. Addressing inadequate documentation of unilateral do-not-resuscitate orders. [JAMA.](#) 2025; 333: 755-756.

“Detailed UDNR [unilateral DNR] orders are critical to increase transparency about how the DNR decision was made and improve clinician awareness to revisit this order for patients who clinically improve.”

(Piscitello et al.)

- ⇒ Rosenberg AR. Resilience and the fallacy of "one size fits all." [N Engl J Med.](#) 2025; 392: 731-733.
- ⇒ Ruddell J, Ruddell J. A call for mental health reform in medical education-breaking the silence. [JAMA Intern Med.](#) 2025; 185: 262-263.
- ⇒ Sommovilla J. How might the use of shared decision-making with a patient mitigate surgeon regret in circumstances of a poor outcome not due to error? [AMA J Ethics.](#) 2025; 27: E201-206.
- ⇒ VanderWeele TJ, Wortham JS, Carey LB, et al. Moral trauma, moral distress, moral injury, and moral injury disorder: Definitions and assessments. [Front Psychol.](#) 2025; 16: 1422441.

“We propose new definitions for moral injury and moral distress, encompassing many prior definitions, but broadening moral injury to more general classes of victims, in addition to perpetrators and witnesses, and broadening moral distress to include settings not involving institutional constraints. We relate these notions of moral distress and moral injury to each other, and locate them on a “moral trauma spectrum” that includes considerations of both persistence and severity.”

(VanderWeele et al.)

- ⇒ Vest M. The limits and possibilities of language: Attending to our 'ways with words' in medicine and bioethics. [Theor Med Bioeth.](#) 2025; 46: 5-11.
- ⇒ Walker JM, de Melo-Martín I. Leaving against medical advice: What's a nurse to do? [Am J Nurs.](#) 2025; 125: 56-59.

BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ Medical benchmarks and the myth of the universal patient. [The New Yorker](#), March 24, 2025.
- ⇒ 'Dangerous' lawsuit could imperil disability rights, advocates say. [STAT News](#), March 21, 2025.
- ⇒ 'We're living in the Twilight Zone': Researchers decry Trump administration assault on science. [STAT News](#), March 21, 2025.
- ⇒ Man files complaint after ChatGPT said he killed his children. [BBC](#), March 21, 2025.
- ⇒ Doctors told him he was going to die. Then A.I. saved his life. [The New York Times](#), March 20, 2025.
- ⇒ Scientific misconduct is on the rise. But what exactly is it? [The Conversation](#), March 17, 2025.
- ⇒ Judge finds frozen embryos are no divisible property in cancer survivor's case against ex-husband. [WTOP News](#), March 17, 2025.
- ⇒ Her cancer diagnosis made motherhood both harder and more sweet. [NPR](#), March 17, 2025.
- ⇒ The women most affected by abortion bans. [The New York Times](#), March 17, 2025.
- ⇒ Leading a movement away from psychiatric medication. [The New York Times](#), March 17, 2025.
- ⇒ As AI nurses reshape hospital care, human nurses are pushing back. [Associated Press](#), March 16, 2025.
- ⇒ His death was interrupted, just as he had planned. [The New York Times](#), March 16, 2025.
- ⇒ Michigan boy's death raises concerns about unregulated hyperbaric oxygen therapy outside of health care facilities. [NBC News](#), March 16, 2025.
- ⇒ An artificial heart may save your life. But it can also change you in surprising ways. [The Conversation](#), March 14, 2025.
- ⇒ Why religious leaders are divided on transgender rights. [NPR](#), March 12, 2025.
- ⇒ The agonizing familiarity of the Pope's condition. [The New York Times](#), March 7, 2025.
- ⇒ Nuffield Council on Bioethics publishes final report from in-depth exploration of public views on assisted dying in England. [Nuffield Council on Bioethics](#), March 6, 2025.
- ⇒ US woman sentenced to a year in prison for shooting terminally ill husband, [The Guardian](#), March 3, 2025.
- ⇒ Psychedelic drug studies face a potent source of bias: the 'trip.' [Science](#), March 3, 2025.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING

- ⇒ [Midwest Physician Writers Retreat](#) (April 25-27, 2025): A new weekend conference for healthcare professionals on the shores of Lake Mendota In Wisconsin. A few scholarships available to sponsor registration for medical students. CME available.

ONGOING

- ⇒ American Journal of Bioethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous webinars
- ⇒ Children's Mercy Kansas City: [Pediatric Ethics Podcast series](#)
- ⇒ Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences: [Events](#)
- ⇒ The Hastings Center: [Webinars](#) and [Events](#)
- ⇒ [Health Ethics](#) podcast with host Bryan Pilkington, PhD (Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine): Find on Google Podcasts, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Audible.
- ⇒ The MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous lectures
- ⇒ Michigan State University Center for Bioethics and Social Justice: [Recorded Webinars](#)
- ⇒ Office for Human Research Protections [Luminaries Lecture Series](#)
- ⇒ University of Minnesota Center for Bioethics: [Events](#)

BIOETHICS SERVICES AT THE UIHC

ETHICS CONSULT SERVICE

This service is a clinical resource for UI Health Care personnel who would like help addressing an ethical question or problem related to a patient's care. Consults can be ordered through EPIC or by paging the ethics consultant on call. For more information, [click here](#).



CLINICAL RESEARCH ETHICS SERVICE

We provide free consultation on ethical issues related to research design, tissue banking, genetic research results, informed consent, and working with vulnerable patient populations. In particular, we assist clinical investigators in identifying and addressing the ethical challenges that frequently arise when designing or conducting research with human subjects. These include ethical challenges in sampling design; randomized and placebo-controlled studies; participant recruitment and informed consent; return of individual-level research results; community engagement processes; and more. For more information, [click here](#).