

Event from Philosophy Department:

- **Members of the student Philosophy Club would debate the Philosophy faculty on the merits of a “Death with Dignity” law for Massachusetts, similar to the law in Oregon.**

Oregon’s Death with Dignity law is the first and only of its kind in the world – a physician-assisted dying law with critical safeguards that allows individuals to make the most important of life's decisions.

What the Law *Does* Do

The Death with Dignity law allows Oregon residents to obtain medication from their physicians after two explicit oral requests and a written request have been made.

Key Facts

- At least two doctors must concur on diagnosis, prognosis and the patient's capability;
- The patient must provide a written request to their physician witnessed by two individuals who are not family members or primary caregivers;
- The patient must ultimately administer the prescription him/herself.

What the Law *Doesn’t* Do

- Allow non-Oregonians to use the law;
- Allow anyone other than the patient to make the request;
- Allow euthanasia. The law **explicitly prohibits** euthanasia, which is typically defined as having someone other than the patient administer a life-ending medication.

Event from Science Department:

- **Put on a “Hypothetical”**

Geoffrey Robertson is probably best known for his role as 'Hypothetical' moderator, the man who asks the hard questions of his panel of experts and celebrities. He is an Australian QC whose legal practice is now based in London and he has appeared frequently in the European Court of Human Rights.

This was a TV show in Australia and Britain in the 1980’s. Geoffrey Robertson, a barrister of some renown, would guide a panel of experts and senior officials through a discussion about a hypothetical situation, often based on a recent event, by asking each person what would he or she do given that situation and on what factors would their actions depend. The goal was to show how actions and decisions were interrelated and how they were processed along a chain of responsibility. He guided the discussion by having a good idea of what path the experts would follow and used specific questions and additional information to prompt the experts along a given path. The TV show was a huge success; in those days, every speaker was not “scripted” as they are today, so you ended up with some really interesting conversations and spontaneous dilemmas.

Like the ABC Hypothetical series from the 80's, a moderator would introduce knotty ethical dilemmas such as those found in End-of-Life issues. A panel composed of professors from Science, Philosophy, and Liberal Arts would form the members of the panel, with perhaps a few administrators and students thrown in as well.

Events from Gerontology Institute

Brown Bag Series - through LETS (Life Enrichment Through Study)

Sept. 20 Advanced Directives

Nov. 9 Funeral Arrangements & Costs

Dec. 5 Living Wills

Mar. 21 Long Term Care

Because Medicaid was designed as a program for the poor, its eligibility criteria are quite restrictive. Many individuals must deplete their life savings before they can qualify for Medicaid to pay for the services they need. Finally, some policymakers believe that individuals attempt to shelter or give away their assets to qualify for Medicaid. Federal law requires a three-year "look-back" period to document that assets were not transferred for less than fair market value or for the purpose of qualifying for Medicaid. Some policy-makers advocate a longer "look-back." Individuals who are unaware of these Medicaid rules may inadvertently disqualify themselves for a period of time by failing to anticipate the protracted recordkeeping requirements.

Speaker Series - sponsored by Gerontology Institute & College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Oct. 20 Speaker from Brown University to talk about the "End of Life in Nursing Homes: Experiences and Policy Recommendations" study
Renée Shield Ph.D., Brown University , Joan Teno M.D., M.S., Brown University,
Terry Wetle Ph.D., Brown University , November 2004.
http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/health/2004_14_eol.pdf

Feb. 7 Speaker Constance Dahlin, Advanced Practice Nurse, Palliative Care Service Massachusetts General Hospital Faculty, Harvard Medical School Center for Palliative Care
The Art and Science of Palliative Nursing focuses on concepts essential to end of life nursing including suffering, communication, ethics, pain and symptom management, spirituality, cultural diversity, and self care. This year there will again be a focus on both adults and children. The goal is to deepen clinical knowledge as well as professional skill in responding to the needs of patients, families, and colleagues.
<http://www.hms.harvard.edu/cdi/pallcare/nursing.htm>

Apr. 26 Speaker Susan Block, M.D. on Project on Death in America
<http://www.soros.org/initiatives/pdia>

The PDIA Faculty Scholars Program identifies outstanding role model clinician-researchers committed to improving end-of-life care, and provides support to enable them to create new care models, and develop effective approaches to end-of life education for health professionals. To date, the program has funded 78 scholars in 50 medical schools in the U.S. and Canada. As a result of this program, faculty with an interest in end-of-life care are receiving long overdue recognition and support.