



DMS-502: SONOGRAPHY MEDICAL ETHICS (FORMERLY DMS-102)

Effective Term

Fall 2026

BOT Approval Date

01/15/2026

Discipline

DMS - Diagnostic Medical Sonography

Course Number

502

Course Title

Sonography Medical Ethics (formerly DMS-102)

Short Title

Sonography Medical Ethics

Credit Status (CB 04)

D - Credit - Degree applicable

Units**Lecture Units**

3.00

Total Units

3.00

Hours**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

Out of Class Hours Lecture

96-108

Total Contact Hours

48 - 54

Total Out of Class Hours

96 - 108

Total Student Learning Hours

144 - 162

Distance Education

No

Catalog Description

This course introduces the DMS student to the laws related to patient rights, intentional torts, negligence, and malpractice litigation. Ethical dilemmas will be discussed and how it applies to the healthcare decision making process. The course will alert the students of their rights, duties, patient rights, and legal responsibilities within the context of their function as a member of the allied health care team. (formerly DMS-102)



Requisites

Prerequisite(s)

Prerequisite(s) (must be taken before)

DMS-501 (with a grade of C or better)

Codes

TOP Code (CB 03)

1227.00* - *Diagnostic Medical Sonography

CIP Code

51.0910 - Diagnostic Medical Sonography/Sonographer and Ultrasound Technician.

Repeatability Code

No

Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Diagnostic Medical Technology	End

Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

Learning Objective
1. Analyze the moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethical decision-making in healthcare contexts.
2. Evaluate the ethical significance of personal honesty, integrity, accountability, competence, and compassion in professional health care practice.
3. Develop a structured approach to examining, clarifying, and resolving ethical dilemmas using a defined decision-making model.
4. Interpret key ethical principles related to patient rights, including informed consent and other relevant legal doctrines.
5. Differentiate and assess the legal implications of professional liability, malpractice, negligence, and institutional protections for allied health professionals.
6. Explain the legal and ethical importance of accurate, complete, and timely documentation in healthcare settings.
7. Compare and contrast laws and ethical principles designed to protect patient confidentiality and privacy.
8. Examine the dynamics of the physician-patient relationship, including mutual rights, responsibilities, and public health obligations.
9. Critically assess and debate contemporary ethical issues in healthcare, including infertility, abortion, end-of-life decisions, and patient autonomy.

Learning Outcome Information

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome
1. The student will evaluate the moral, social, and culturally diverse foundations of ethics, with an emphasis on their relevance and application in healthcare settings.
2. The student will analyze the ethical imperatives of personal honesty, integrity, accountability, competence, and compassion in professional healthcare practice.
3. The student will develop and apply a systematic approach to ethical decision-making, including the examination, clarification, and evaluation of alternative actions in resolving ethical dilemmas.
4. The student will explain key concepts related to patient rights, informed consent, and other ethical issues in healthcare, and assess their implications for clinical practice.

5. The student will differentiate among legal terms and doctrines such as malpractice, professional negligence, and professional liability, and evaluate institutional protections available to healthcare professionals.
6. The student will assess the legal and ethical significance of accurate, thorough documentation in healthcare, emphasizing its role in legal protection and ethical accountability.

Content

Course Lecture Content

- I. Ethics and Ethical Behavior
 - A. Moral reasoning
 - B. Integrity
 - C. Accountability
- II. Self-Assessment and Self-Governance
 - A. Professional standards
 - B. Code of professional ethics
- III. Legal Responsibilities
 - A. Professional and institutional liability
 - B. Intentional misconduct
 - C. Negligence/malpractice
 - D. Legal doctrines
 - E. Legal and professional standards
- IV. Methods of Documentation, Confidentiality, and the Medical Record
 - A. Use of the medical record in court
 - B. Scope of practice and responsibilities of the sonographer
- V. Consent
 - A. Patient consent
 - B. Informed consent
 - C. Patient rights
 - D. Conditions for valid consent
 - E. Documentation of consent
- VI. Confidentiality
 - A. Ethical concerns with information technology
 - B. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- VII. Physician and Patient Relationship
 - A. Physician's rights and responsibilities
 - B. Patient's rights and responsibilities
 - C. Rights of minors
- VIII. Ethical Issues Relating to Life
 - A. Fetal development
 - B. Artificial conception
 - C. Sterilization
 - D. Abortion
- IX. Death and Dying
 - A. The dying process
 - B. Advance directives
 - C. Choices in life and death (e.g., assisted suicide)
- X. Cultural Competence and Ethical Practice in Diverse Healthcare Settings
 - A. Respect for cultural, religious, and personal values in ethical decision-making
 - B. Awareness of implicit bias and its impact on patient care
 - C. Strategies for culturally sensitive communication and consent

- D. Legal and ethical considerations in cross-cultural patient interactions
- E. Integration of cultural competence into professional standards and self-governance

Methods of Instruction

Method

Critique

Integration

In the classroom, review and critique of case studies and/or court proceedings related to medical legal events will be chosen by the instructor and fellow students. The case studies may include: personal honesty, integrity, moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics, accountability, competence, compassion, confidentiality and autonomy, malpractice, professional negligence, and professional liability; topics can be found in the textbook, google search, and medical journals. The legal or illegal implications of the case will be discussed in class.

Method

Lecture

Integration

Instructors will deliver lectures on key concepts such as moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics in healthcare, and the significance of accurate documentation. These lectures will be complemented by guided discussions on how these concepts are applied in real-world healthcare settings.

Method

Online Activity/Discussion

Integration

Perspective paragraphs will be assigned during two of the class sessions. In the CMS discussion, the instructor will post an ethical prompt with supporting articles or medical journals. Students will be instructed to type a response paragraph into the CMS discussion board. Instructions will be added for the student to include their opinion and demonstrate knowledge of the ethical issues involved; the moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics, focusing on how these elements shape healthcare decisions in diverse societies. Diverse societies may include race, age, socioeconomic, culture, disabilities, gender, and/or religion. The response paragraph should be no less than one paragraph and requires a reply to a classmates post.

Method

Lecture

Integration

Instructors will deliver lectures on key concepts such as cultural ethics, healthcare integrity, informed consent, legal doctrines in healthcare, and the significance of accurate documentation. These lectures will be complemented by guided discussions on how these concepts are applied in real-world healthcare settings. The instructor will make a list on the classroom whiteboard of student ideas on accurate documentation, including its role in ensuring compliance with legal standards and ethical responsibilities.

Method

Group Projects

Integration

The instructor will choose pairs of students or small groups to research an ethical dilemma. Students will create an oral presentation consisting of a medical-legal or medical-ethical issue which may emerge in a hospital setting or while practicing sonography. Students will present a "pro" or "con" for the dilemma regardless of their personal beliefs or opinion. Instructors will reinforce that it is important to engage in open conversation and tolerance for others beliefs and opinions. Instructions and grading requirements for the presentation will be posted on the CMS in the syllabus or module.



Method

Lecture

Integration

The instructor will present slide show lectures with supporting videos on teaching students how to document patient information accurately, ensuring that the documentation adheres to legal and ethical standards. This will include textbook case study scenarios where students assess the effectiveness of documentation in protecting healthcare professionals from legal and ethical challenges.

Methods of Evaluation**Method**

Class Participation

Integration

Evaluate each student's discussion answers of moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics based on participation and the clarity of arguments, depth of thought, ability to connect cultural and social foundations to healthcare ethics, and the integration of real-world examples.

Method

Class Participation

Integration

Assess each student's case study analysis based on verbal participation, the ability to identify ethical issues, apply ethical imperatives (honesty, integrity, compassion), and propose viable solutions that align with professional healthcare standards.

Method

Group Projects

Integration

Evaluation of each student in the group presentations will be based on the clarity of explanation of patient rights and informed consent, use of real-world examples, depth of analysis, and ability to assess implications for clinical practice.

Method

Class Participation

Integration

Evaluate student's by participation and the clarity of their arguments, depth of thought, and ability to connect discussion answers on the legal vs. ethical principles. These principles will be based on the accuracy of distinctions made between legal and ethical terms, depth of analysis, understanding of healthcare law, and the inclusion of institutional protections for healthcare professionals.

Method

Class Participation

Integration

Analyze the classroom whiteboard list on documentation practice. The list should be based on the accuracy, clarity, and adherence to legal and ethical documentation standards. Assess how well the student demonstrates the importance of documentation in protecting both the healthcare professional and patient.



Method

Homework

Integration

Evaluation of the online discussion perspective paragraph, instructors will look for a response that should include the student's own opinion and knowledge of the ethical issue; evaluate the moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics, focusing on how these elements shape healthcare decisions in diverse societies. There should be mention of specific diverse groups such as race, culture, age, gender, socioeconomic, and/or religious groups. The response paragraph should be no less than one paragraph and requires a reply to a classmates post. Assignment points will be awarded according to participation and a post that has a complete response to the prompt.

Method

Presentations

Integration

Students and the instructor will do peer evaluations of each group presentation. Evaluations will be based on presentation content, persuasive arguments for each side of the ethical issue and methods of promoting classroom discussions.

Assignments**Assignment Type**

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

In the classroom, participate in a group discussion, take turns answering case study questions that include moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics, focusing on how these elements shape healthcare decisions in diverse societies. Include specific examples of diverse societies that reference race, age, socioeconomic, culture, gender, and/or religion.

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

From the textbook, analyze true healthcare scenarios that highlight the ethical challenges related to personal honesty, integrity, accountability, competence, and compassion. Participate in the classroom discussion and proposing solutions for how a healthcare professional should respond to the situation.

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class



Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Participate in a group classroom discussion that explains key concepts related to patient rights, informed consent, and other ethical issues such as confidentiality and autonomy. Contribute to the classroom discussion and create a list that identifies real-world examples from the textbook case studies and analyze the implications of these concepts in clinical practice.

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Participate in a group classroom discussion that explains key concepts related to a healthcare case where proper documentation either protected or jeopardized a healthcare professional's legal and ethical standing. In class, write down a list to contribute the discussion of the importance of accurate documentation, including its role in ensuring compliance with legal standards and ethical responsibilities.

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

In a small group, write a presentation consisting of a medical-legal or medical-ethical issue which may emerge in a hospital setting or while practicing sonography. Then, participate in, and present as an oral presentation. The presentation must present both sides of an ethical dilemma, include visual aids such as a power point or video, and conclude with an opportunity for open classroom discussion after the presentation. Students should include a group discussion on how a technologist would make a decision such as: participation in a diagnostic exam that is controversial regarding the care of the patient; performing the exam; respecting the patient's rights, choices, and confidentiality; identifying ethical dilemmas; and determining alternative courses of action.

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Complete weekly, multiple choice quizzes online through the CMS. Quizzes should show the instructor your retained knowledge of the case studies and chapter power point information.



Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

View the video in class: Defining “Defensive Medicine” and why it’s a violation of the doctor/patient relationship. In a group classroom discussion, contribute your opinion on how defensive medicine harms patients and the healthcare system.

Assignment Type

Other

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

View the video in the classroom: Putting a Price Tag on Life -HARVARD's Michael Sandel's JUSTICE. In a group classroom discussion, reflect on medical malpractice cases discussed and contribute your opinion on the monetary value of a persons organs, limbs, mental health, and life.

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Perspective paragraph #2: Obstetric ultrasound and the many faces of malpractice lawsuits. Read and ponder the article. The response paragraphs will be typed into the CMS discussion board. The response should include your own opinion and knowledge of the ethical issue; evaluate the moral, social, and cultural foundations of ethics, focusing on how these elements shape healthcare decisions in diverse societies. Diverse societies may include race, age, socioeconomic, culture, disabilities, gender, and/or religion. The response paragraph should be no less than one paragraph and requires a reply to a classmates post.

Course Materials**Textbooks**

Fremgen, Bonnie (11-1-2024). Medical law & Ethics 7th Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 978-0138322243

Other Resources

Blumenthal-Barby (August 3, 2021), Jennifer. Good Ethics and Bad Choices
The Relevance of Behavioral Economics for Medical Ethics. MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262542487

Class Size Information

Class Size

20

Class Size Category

D - Individualized instruction/group learning/student presentations 30

Diversity and Inclusion

Course Design and Materials: Course will incorporate diverse perspectives, authors, and examples that reflect a variety of cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Instructional materials will be reviewed regularly to ensure representation, inclusivity, and alignment with equity-minded practices across disciplines.

Inclusive Learning Environment: Instructors will establish classroom norms and policies that promote respect, civil discourse, and belonging in both online and face-to-face classes. Clear expectations for communication and engagement will support a learning space where all students feel valued and heard.

Accessible Instruction: Course content will be delivered using accessible design. Materials will follow accessibility guidelines within the CMS, including captioned media, readable document formats, and multiple means of engagement to support diverse learning.

Equitable Teaching Practices: Instructors will use transparent and grading criteria, varied assessment methods, and timely feedback to promote fairness and student success. Opportunities for revision, reflection, and multiple demonstrations of learning may be incorporated when appropriate to the discipline.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogies: Instructional strategies will encourage critical thinking about diverse perspectives and systems of power relevant to the course content. Faculty will foster opportunities for students to connect course material to real-world contexts.

Ongoing Reflection and Improvement: Faculty will engage in continuous professional development related to IDEAA principles and reflect on course practices using metacognition to identify opportunities for increased equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Explain how diversity and inclusion(e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.

This course teaches diverse content that includes patient scenarios describing situations where age, gender, culture, race, religion, and disabilities have an impact on patient care. Course objectives and learning outcomes are supported through classroom discussions and simulation of patient care scenarios or case studies which are presented to foster knowledge, empathy, and patient advocacy in developing future healthcare professionals.

Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.

The course resources are offered in multiple forms to offer diverse learning methods to students. Audio learners can utilize face to face lectures and are allowed to audio record the lecture; Visual learners can utilize slide show presentation diagrams, textbook, lab demonstrations, and videos; Hands-on learners can utilize power point construction with diagrams, facts and tables or grafts. All videos are close captioned.

Interactions

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.

This course has weekly classroom discussions. Students interact through group discussions on ethical topics.

Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.

This course provides opportunities for instructors to interact through face to face lectures and group case study discussions, where students may comment or ask questions. The CMS houses announcements, syllabi, voice-over lectures, and course schedule through modules. Instructor uses real-life experience stories during lectures to enhance student learning. Instructor encourages use of office hours or meeting after class if student needs assistance or guidance.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.

This course has a textbook with weekly case studies at the beginning of the chapter. The Textbook also contains true medical ethic law cases throughout each chapter. Students study text content, slide show presentations, and applicable content videos.



Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).

This course provides opportunities for students to consider how they will provide the best patient care and the ability to assess implications for clinical practice from beginning to end of their interaction with each patient they care for. Students are encouraged to reflect on real-life clinical experiences in this process and how these concepts are applied to their future career in real-world healthcare settings.

Key: 1217