



*The Bernard P. McDonough Center
for Leadership and Business
at Marietta College*

The Fitzgerald Executive-in-Residence Program

The 2017-2018 EIR Project:

“Ethical Issues in Healthcare”

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Background:

Though medicine is often characterized by clinical process and scientific facts, physicians have posed humanistic questions about medicine since the writings of Ancient scholars. Plato considered questions of informed consent, and whether it might be moral for physicians to deceive their patients in order to convince them to undergo treatment. He wrote about supporting families who were caring for seriously ill patients at home, and the humane treatment of the mentally ill. In Ancient Rome, Galen talked about health in terms of a balance between four bodily substances, which corresponded to temperaments: sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic. The Roman concept of temperament was actually a moral concept; in other words, health and morality were inseparable.

Contemporary healthcare providers are still faced with many of the same ethical questions that troubled the ancient world: How do we make sense of disagreement in medicine? How can we safeguard our most vulnerable patients? What do we do about patients who make poor healthcare decisions? When can patients be said to be fully-informed? What moral obligations do we have to the patients that we treat?

Is it right for healthcare to be commodified? How do we balance the needs of employees, employers, health insurance companies, and the government in developing and implementing healthcare plans? How can we be effective care providers in the midst of moral distress?

These questions are increasingly important as healthcare businesses continue to grow, and as debates over healthcare finance occupy the forefront of political debates. Healthcare companies should consider ethical questions not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because dealing with ethical questions can actually provide hospital with a cost-savings by avoiding conflict and the provision of inappropriate care.

The 2017-2018 EIR project will introduce students to the timeless questions addressed in medical ethics. We will explore the role of professional ethicists in healthcare settings and look at the nature of ethical leadership in medicine. The EIR project will culminate in the organization of a one-day forum on medical ethics that will include the development of original ethics projects.

The 2017-2018 Fitzgerald EIR's Bio Information:

Dr. Alexandra Perry is a Clinical Ethicist at INTEGRIS Health in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. INTEGRIS is Oklahoma's largest hospital system with nine hospitals, dedicated inpatient mental health and cancer centers, and a large network of primary care and specialty clinics, and a partnership with the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Perry is one of two clinical ethicists system-wide, and helps to run the 24/7 Clinical Ethics Consultation Service in addition to maintaining ethics policies, conducting research, and providing education to medical staff. She is also an instructor in philosophy at the University of Oklahoma. Before joining INTEGRIS, Dr. Perry worked as a research coordinator in Pediatric Palliative Care, Pediatric Hospital Medicine, and Adolescent Medicine at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She also spent two years as an Assistant Professor of Leadership at the McDonough Center for Leadership and Business at Marietta College, teaching courses in leadership and ethics. She graduated with a Masters in Education and Doctorate in Philosophy and Pedagogy from Montclair State University and trained in Clinical Ethics at Mount Sinai University. Dr. Perry's research focuses on leadership in healthcare as well as medical ethics (particularly end-of-life issues and medical complexity in pediatrics, mental health, ethical issues in transplant, and Japanese ethics). She has published academic articles on leadership and medical ethics, and is the editor or author of four books relating to leadership and ethics: *Ethics and Neurodiversity*, *The Moral Philosophy of Bernard Williams*, *Contemporary Japanese Bioethics*, and *Paper Cranes and Mushroom Clouds*. Currently, Dr. Perry is co-editing a book on Ethical Leadership with Dr. Rob McManus (Marietta College) and Dr. Stan Ward (Claremont-Lincoln University), and is writing a series of articles on advance care planning for terminally-ill children in State Custody with Rachna May, M.D. (University of Oklahoma).

Project Description:

The 2017-2018 EIR project will focus on ethical issues in healthcare. Students will be introduced to and asked to explore this topic with an emphasis on three themes: 1) Leading and communicating in the midst of moral distress; 2) Making sense and use of conflict; and 3) Fragility, vulnerability, and resilience. Project participants will meet and become acquainted with healthcare providers and ancillary services to understand some of the more complex ethical challenges in medicine and will develop projects with an aim toward addressing these challenges. Some of the topics covered will include: the ethical issues raised for healthcare by homeless or unrepresented populations; challenges in pediatrics; end-of-life moral issues; communicating about critical information; disagreement and values conflict in medicine, and more. As a culminating activity students will work in groups to identify and develop papers on a particular ethical issue in healthcare and will then develop presentations on practical ways that these issues might be addressed.

Project Outcome:

Each team will be asked to identify an ethical issue in medicine that relates to one of the three EIR themes: 1) Leading and communicating in the midst of moral distress; 2) Making sense and use of conflict; and 3) Fragility, vulnerability, and resilience. The teams will develop a presentation on the topic that introduces the ethical issue in case study format, and considers ways that the issue might be addressed in a healthcare setting. Presentations will be given as part of a one-day forum for local healthcare professionals.

Project Plan:

This yearlong project is divided into two parts. In the fall semester, the teams will work with the Fitzgerald Executive-in-Residence to gain an understanding of medical ethics using a case study approach. Students will also have the opportunity to meet with healthcare providers and leaders working with local organizations with a healthcare focus in order to learn about the ethical issues commonly faced by the communities that they care for. The learning experiences will be organized around the three EIR themes, and students will also learn about the tools and resources that ethicists use in the healthcare setting. In the spring, the students will form groups and work to develop presentations on ethical issues in medicine, and will organize a one-day forum for local healthcare professionals where they will deliver their presentations.

PLANS FOR FALL 2017:

- Students will learn about medical ethics using a case study approach.
- Learning experiences with local healthcare providers and health-oriented organizations and businesses.

PLANS FOR SPRING 2018:

- Based on the background work done in the fall, the students will develop and organize a one-day forum on medical ethics for local healthcare professionals, and develop presentations related to their specific ethical issues to deliver at the forum.
- CULMINATING EXPERIENCE – One-day forum for local healthcare professionals.

Credit Hour Opportunity (Optional):

Participants may elect to enroll in LEAD 340 (Leadership Practicum III – 1 credit hour) during the fall (2017) and spring (201) in order to receive up to 2 credit hours for the EIR Project. Participants do not have to be enrolled in LEAD 340 in order to participate in this project. This project also fulfills the experiential requirements for the Organizational Social Responsibility (OSR) minor/certificate.

Application Process:

Please send your resume to Dr. Gama Perruci (perrucig@marietta.edu) by **Friday, April 28, 2017**. All resumes will be reviewed by Dr. Perry, and the EIR project participants will be announced in May. **All Marietta College students, including incoming freshmen, are eligible to apply.**