

Bioethics (BIOE) CTY Course Syllabus

Required Items: *Bioethics: An Anthology*. Helga Khuse and Peter Singer eds. Blackwell Publishing. 2006.

A notebook for completing writing assignments

Course Description: This course is an introduction and survey course in Bioethics. This course is general in nature, but students will also be given the opportunity to focus their research on specific topics in bioethics. In this course, students will first be given the tools with which they can analyze ethical arguments. Next we will make a brief survey of the defining issues in the field of bioethics. Students will be introduced to the substantial and philosophically rigorous debates in the field and try their hand at participating in these debates. Students will read primary texts including philosophical essays, court decisions and opinion pieces. Real and hypothetical cases will be discussed.

The student will benefit from this course such that he or she will be more skilled in recognizing flawed arguments and how to improve these arguments. Additionally, the student will be challenged to provide adequate reasons for holding particular positions in a debate.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the fundamentals of argument construction and evaluation
- Understand and apply normative ethical theories to the problems of bioethics
- Gain familiarity with the defining issues of bioethics
- Apply the techniques of argument analysis to critique the arguments of bioethicists and philosophers
- Construct well-formed arguments in support of a position in a current debate in bioethics

Expectations: You will be expected to read and analyze material from the course text and handouts. You will also be expected to attend and participate in class. For my part, I will attempt to provide interesting and instructive material for you to read, give instructive lectures, provide assignments and activities that challenge and stimulate interest, be available to answer any questions you may have, and provide fair and timely evaluations of your achievement.

There will be occasional reading quizzes throughout the session. There will also be short papers assigned. These short papers will help you engage in the debate and consider the positions regarding complex issues in bioethics.

There will be a final paper in which students construct an argument that directly challenges an argument from the course readings. These will be presented by the student and discussed by the class.

Honor code:

I encourage you to discuss the material from this course with others. You must write the papers, and do homework on your own. Additionally, I expect students to be polite to each other, to me, and to the teaching assistant. A polite person might say, "I respect you and your intellect such that if I disagree with you, I will attempt to show you that my beliefs are right until you are convinced, or I am convinced that I am wrong." The subject matter of this course is often controversial, and involves beliefs forged by religion, emotional experiences, and personal trauma. We will never make fun, ridicule or berate people in this class for holding a particular belief, but we may question a position in order to better understand and, perhaps, come to appreciate it.

Also, please refrain from disrupting class (Turn cell phones, watch alarms etc. OFF; don't read the paper, do not chat).

Day 1-Introduction	Subject	Activities
<p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pretest -Break the ice/set class rules -Invite discussion -Introduce subject matter -Model productive and non-productive argumentation -Introduce consensus as a point of progress in bioethics 	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Objectives and Expectations</p> <p>Philosophy? Bioethics? The origin of the subject matter; The importance of the subject matter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evaluation: Pretest -Lecture- introduction -Class discussion- introduction -Lecture- What is bioethics? Why is it important? What could we possibly hope to accomplish? -An example of a bad debate
<p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduce necessary logical concepts -Apply logical concepts to ethical arguments 	<p>Arguments and Reasoning-</p> <p>Do we need two people to have an argument?</p> <p>Cheat Sheet for argument forms</p> <p>Ethical reasoning</p> <p>Kinds of Reasons</p>	<p>Lecture- brief introduction to some logical concepts-validity, soundness, induction vs. deduction</p> <p>Exercise- valid/ invalid, sound/unsound</p> <p>Class Discussion- Kinds of Reasons/Moral reasons</p>
<p>Evening</p> <p>Allow students to realize that ethical argument is a complex task involving definition, theory, and communication</p>	<p>Arguments in Bioethics are moral arguments</p> <p>Disagreements in bioethics can often be traced back to a fundamental semantic disagreement.</p>	<p>Rachels- What is morality?</p> <p>Informed consent document</p> <p>Argument construction exercises</p>

Day 2-Normative Ethics	Subject	Activities
<p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Discuss Religious Ethics -Introduce Normative ethics and the common objections to doing ethics -Explain Deontology and criticize it. 	<p>Roadblocks to Ethics</p> <p>Divine command Theory</p> <p>Deontological theories of ethics</p> <p>Kant</p> <p>Intuitionism</p>	<p>Reading- Selections from <i>Euthyphro</i></p> <p>Lecture and Discussion- Roadblocks to Ethics</p> <p>Lecture and Discussion-Deontology</p> <p>Reading and Writing Activity- Kant and “On Telling Patients the Truth”; When is it OK to lie?</p>
<p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue Deontology -Explain Consequentialism and criticize it. -Explain the appeal of a principled approach in Bioethics that draws on ethical traditions 	<p>Consequentialist theories of ethics</p> <p>A Critique of Utilitarianism</p>	<p>Lecture- Consequentialism to Utilitarianism</p> <p>Directed reading- Williams “A Critique of Utilitarianism”</p> <p>Small group activity- writing- Jim and the Natives, George and the weapons factory</p>
<p>Evening</p> <p>Students engage normative theories and exercise intuitions</p>	<p>Coming to terms with normative ethics</p>	<p>Reading and writing: “The Hippocratic Oath”</p> <p>Reading and Writing- trolley cases and organ transplants and big guys in caves</p>

Day 3- Euthanasia	Subject	Activities
<p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Define terms in this debate: Active/Passive, Voluntary/Involuntary/non-v Natural/unnatural -Probe the moral distinction between killing and letting die 	<p>Euthanasia- What are we talking about?</p> <p>The rule of double effect</p> <p>Clinical Practice</p>	<p>Discuss trolley problems</p> <p>Directed reading “Killing or Letting Die” James Rachels</p> <p>Lecture and Discussion- Clarification of key terms in the debate</p> <p>Exercise- Goodbye Debbie- The rule of double effect</p>

Day 3- Euthanasia	Subject	Activities
<p>Afternoon</p> <p>-Examine Controversial cases and apply distinctions.</p> <p>-Help students integrate real cases and reasons into theoretical arguments</p>	<p>Assisted Suicide</p> <p>Quinlan, Cruzan, Schiavo, Baby K</p> <p>Apply normative ethical theories to Euthanasia debate</p>	<p>Lecture and Discussion</p> <p>Reading- "The Case of Baby K"</p> <p>Discussion of problem cases</p> <p>Group Writing Assignment- Workbook cases</p>
<p>Evening</p> <p>-Students engage their considered reasons in light of the positions they hold.</p>	<p>Living Wills</p> <p>Preparation for Abortion discussion</p>	<p>Activity- Fill out a living will. Write a short paragraph or two regarding the hardest decision(s) you had to make</p> <p>Reading J.J. Thomson- "A Defense of Abortion"</p>

Day 4- Abortion- clarifying terms	Subject	Activities
<p>Morning</p> <p>Expose student to honest difficulty of demarcating the beginning of life</p> <p>Examine current U.S. policy on abortion</p>	<p>A timeline of development</p> <p>What is abortion?</p> <p>Roe vs. Wade and Planned Parenthood vs. Casey</p> <p>How to debate a matter like this</p>	<p>Discuss living wills</p> <p>Short Lecture on facts in abortion debate</p> <p>Group Exercise-When does life begin? Exercise in straw manning.</p> <p>Reading and Discussion of court cases Roe v. Wade and Planned Parenthood v. Casey</p>
<p>Afternoon</p> <p>Allow students to realize the pressure that consistency places on the positions in this debate.</p>	<p>Problems of consistency in the debate</p> <p>Fetal Homicide laws</p> <p>The rights of mothers</p> <p>Peter Singer's position</p>	<p>Lecture</p> <p>Discussion of three different arguments that confuse our intuitions</p> <p>Activities from workbook</p>
<p>Evening</p> <p>Students must independently make a moral argument</p> <p>Allow students to independently assess an argument</p>	<p>The moral status of the fetus</p> <p>Preparation for Abortion arguments discussion</p>	<p>Writing Assignment: "When a Pregnant Woman Endangers her Fetus"</p> <p>Reading- Don Marquis- An Argument that Abortion is Immoral"</p>

Day 5- Abortion II- Arguments	Subject	Activities
<p>Morning</p> <p>Assess students' ability to independently examine arguments.</p> <p>Introduce power of analogical reasoning</p> <p>Assess tendency toward consistency in students</p>	<p>Assessment of independent reading</p> <p>Can abortion be moral sometimes?</p>	<p>Quiz on Abortion readings</p> <p>Discussion of Arguments</p> <p>Straw Poll on Specific cases</p> <p>Discussion of results</p>
<p>Afternoon</p> <p>Allow students to compare strengths of arguments & assess compromises</p>	<p>A nuanced view</p>	<p>Parfit: "Rights Interests and Possible People"</p> <p>Transition from abortion to ART and cloning</p> <p>Discussion of clinical practice, doctor patient relationship</p>
<p>Evening</p> <p>Practical experience and Ethics</p>	<p>Bioethics experience</p>	<p>Movie- <i>A Lion in the House</i></p>

Day 6- Genetics and Reproduction	Subject	Activity
<p>Morning</p> <p>Determine ethical issues in cloning</p> <p>Examine and construct pro/anti-arguments</p>	<p>Transition to Cloning</p> <p>Leon Kass "The Wisdom of Repugnance"</p> <p>NBAC executive summary (if time)</p>	<p>Reading- the yuck factor</p> <p>Discussion- Cloning</p> <p>Activities- Cloning with improvements</p> <p>Directed reading and discussion NBAC</p>
<p>Afternoon</p> <p>Determine ethical issues in gene therapy</p>	<p>Gene therapy</p> <p>Jon W. Gordon "Genetic Enhancement in Humans"</p>	<p>Excerpted Reading "Genetic Enhancement in Humans"</p> <p>Discussion- What is Normal?</p>

Day 6- Genetics and Reproduction	Subject	Activity
Examine and construct pro/anti-arguments	Eric Parens “The Goodness of Fragility”	Activity- The limits of normal Directed Reading and Discussion “The Goodness of Fragility” if time
Evening Think about Cloning and Enhancement in terms of arguments Prepare for Eugenics section	Constructing arguments	Writing- Provide Arguments for the permissibility and impermissibility of Cloning Reading- “Eugenics: Some lessons from the Nazi Experience”

Day 7- Eugenics	Subject	Activity
Morning Expose students to the popular and insidious draw of eugenics. Explain concept of slippery slope	Eugenics- Negative vs. Positive Eugenics- The American Movement	Reading Buck vs. Bell, 9 th and 14 th Amendment Stephen Jay Gould- Carrie Buck’s Daughter Lecture- Brief History of Eugenics in America Discussion- What is normal?
Afternoon Continue discussion Examine current example	Eugenics and Human Rights What’s wrong with Eugenics? Sign up for argument presentations	Directed Reading- “Eugenics and Human Rights” Kevles Discussion- What’s wrong with Eugenics? Activity- Design your world Argument presentations sign up
Evening	Clinical practice	Movie- <i>A Lion in the House</i>

Day 8 Mistakes of the Past	Subject	Activity
Morning Expose students to historical cases of human rights abuses committed in the name of science and medicine	Tuskegee, U.S. Radiation Studies, Japanese BW testing during WWII, Nazi medical experiments	Class project- case studies in human subject research Group writing- Proposals on what we do with the data from studies involving human rights abuses?
Afternoon Try to find factors that might lead to human rights abuses	Africa and Research Exportations Research and coercion by circumstance	Past atrocities Lecture and Discussion- Exporting Research and Standard of Care How do we prevent human rights abuses in the name of medicine or science?
Evening	Eugenics in America	Movie: <i>The Lynchburg Story</i>

Day 9 Research on Humans	Subject	Activity
Morning -Introduce students to the difficulty of explaining and maintaining a standard of informed consent	Informed consent- What is it?	-Reread with discussion- “The concept of informed consent” -Group project- informed consent for a new trial
Afternoon -Define vulnerable populations -Examine the cost benefit analysis of research on vulnerable populations -Elicit solutions from students to problem of informed consent.	Vulnerable populations- Children, Mentally Ill Does Research benefit or exploit vulnerable populations?	Directed Reading of Olechnowicz et al. “Assent Observed” in <i>Pediatrics</i> Discussion of benefits and harms Group writing exercise- Is informed consent necessary?
Evening	Prepare for Research on Animals with Writing	Patent # 4,666,425 –Can we keep a severed head alive? Writing Assignment- Would the research necessary to perfect this process be permissible on the terminally ill? Animals?

Day 10- Research on Animals	Subject	Activity
Morning	Discussion of severed head research When is Animal research necessary if ever? Reading in class: Different views on the subject	Sharing essays on patent #4,666,425 Reading- "Formulation of Ethical standards for Use of Animals in Medical Research"
Afternoon	Figuring out important moral markers Group writing and debate	Activity: Changing the Subject In class reading: "All Animals are Equal"
Evening	Reading on rationing and exercise in making choices	Activity: Picking the winners: rationing fairly Reading "Rationing Fairly: Programmatic Considerations" Norman Daniels Activity: Read experience of Being on the dialysis rationing board and pretend you were on it

Day 11- Justice and Healthcare Rationing	Subject	Activity
Morning	Rationing Health Care- What's the standard? Justice in Health Care- What's the standard?	Discussion of Rationing and writing assignment Directed reading- "Rationing Fairly: programmatic considerations"
Afternoon	World Health Care problems Consequentialism and Rationing An example of rationing health care	Organ transplant cases
Evening	Movie- <i>Gataca</i>	

Day 12- Doctors and Patients	Subject-	Activity
Morning	Organ transplant and world health care justice	Thandi's case, organ transplant committee
Afternoon	A complex problem of rationality and autonomy	Reading: Carl Elliot- "Amputees by Choice" Deaf rights Discussion of the case
Evening	Work on paper presentations	Work on paper presentations

Day 13- Paper presentations	Subject-	Activity
Morning	Presentations	Paper Presentations
Afternoon	Presentations	Paper Presentations
Evening	Prepare for Debate	Work on debate presentations, posters of arguments

Day 14- Presentations	Subject-	Activity
Morning	Paper presentations cont. Prepare for debates	
Afternoon	Debate with logic class- GMO's, overpopulation, bio-weapons, healthcare	
Evening	Post-test	

Day 15- Finish Presentations/Evals.	Subject	Activities
Morning	SPE's and wrap up	