

BIO-MEDICAL ETHICS

PHI/STS 325-601 (DE course, 3 credit hours)

Spring 2016: Jan 6 – Apr 25

North Carolina State University

Prerequisites/co-requisites: *none*. Other restrictions: *junior/senior status*.

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During my office hours I will be available to respond quickly to emails or discussion board comments; all other times, it is still best to contact me by email. Outside of office hours, I intend to respond to all emails within 24 hours, probably sooner during the weekdays, perhaps longer during weekends. If you'd like to set up a time to talk on the phone, email me. [Campus office: 434A Withers Hall. Office phone: 919-515-6330]

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1. COURSE OVERVIEW, EXPECTATIONS, AND DETAILED SUMMARY

Course Catalog Description

"Interdisciplinary examination and appraisal of emerging ethical and social issues resulting from recent advances in the biological and medical sciences. Abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, compromised infants, aids, reproductive technologies, and health care. Focus on factual details and value questions, fact-value questions, fact-value interplay, and questions of impact assessment and policy formulation."

Overview of the course

What makes an action Right? What is the Good? These questions are the concern of ethics, one of the four main branches of philosophy (the others are metaphysics, epistemology, and logic).

One branch of ethics is *moral theory* or *ethical theory*, which aims to identify those properties that make actions morally right or wrong. Another branch of ethics is *applied ethics*, which investigates specific moral problems such as euthanasia, capital punishment, abortion, war, and surrogacy. Applied ethics aims to find plausible ethical conclusions by way of reasoning from empirical facts conjoined with

ethical theories or principles. One subfield of applied ethics is bioethics, and a slightly narrower field than bioethics is *bio-medical ethics*.

Bioethics addresses moral problems that arise in the context of the practice of medicine, biotechnology advancements, environmental changes, and the life sciences. Our primary focus in this course is on bio-medical ethics. This field covers moral problems typically generated by the practice of medicine, the delivery of healthcare, and the development of biotechnology. Specific issues we will examine, at varying levels of detail, include: euthanasia and end-of-life issues, abortion and beginning-of-life issues, animal rights, evolutionary ethics, 'HeLa' cells and related topics, and healthcare access. Along the way, but especially in the beginning, we will examine various influential ethical theories and principles that we will apply in analyzing issues. We will also step back at times to examine select metaphysical problems, e.g., the nature of personhood, that have strong implications for what moral conclusions should be drawn about specific issues. While the course focuses on the normative and philosophical dimensions of these issues, and specifically ethical reasoning, much of what we cover has direct application to policy and law formation.

Overview of course format and expectations

This is a web-based, distance education course on bio-medical ethics. Besides one hard copy book, all other course materials are online at the course Moodle website, including assigned readings and instructor-prepared materials.

You can use the discussion board (a continuously open online forum in Moodle) anytime for course-related questions and comments, either concerning content, readings, expectations, etc. (however, email me if you have *personal* concerns that need to be brought to my attention or you want to discuss quiz or exam questions before others answer them). Also, if you know the answer to someone's question, go ahead and respond—help out your peers—I will check all comments and follow-up as appropriate. I will keep track of good quality comments and questions. Good participation on the discussion board can be helpful to your grade at the end of the course (some insightful comments or good questions may give you a bump of 1-2 points), besides helping in your understanding of the material and a way to test out ideas.

Everyone in this course is an experienced student and learner, so it is assumed that everyone has the requisite study skills and habits to succeed in this course. But I emphasize that, in order to *do well* in this course, you must be willing to develop an individual study schedule and practice the appropriate study habits for completing everything on time. You will need to spend as much time with this course as you would if it were a regular, face-to-face course (including the time in and out of class involved in a face-to-face course). You are aiming for more than a good grade; the goal is to learn as much as possible about bioethics issues, and acquire and refine rational methods for solving bioethics problems. The problems, theories, and arguments we will go through are challenging enough. But you should challenge yourself, too, in order to get the most out of the class.

Recipe for success in the course

Ideally—and what is expected is ideal—you should do every activity listed under each topic. This usually consists of carefully reading an assigned article, reflecting on it, studying the handouts—which often contain information not in the readings—and making your own notes, then going back through the assigned reading to test your understanding. If you do everything as assigned—if you meet the ideal—you should expect to do very well in the course (achieve the ideal grade of A). However, various factors sometimes impede ideals, as we all know. Many students—perhaps not most, but many—will find that they can understand enough material in the course to get a passing grade by usually just studying the handouts and other instructor-prepared materials. If you fall behind on occasion, it is reasonable to skim the readings but carefully study the handouts and diagrams. But, this is not ideal. Assigned readings are

chosen for their value in teaching something important about philosophy and bioethics. The handouts complement the assigned articles or chapters, and are not meant as a substitute for them.

Detailed summary of the course

The first unit provides a brief introduction to bioethics and logic, with special attention to the nature of validity (the most important concept in logic). In the second unit, we begin to examine moral theories and perspectives on euthanasia. We will examine three influential moral theories – Cultural Relativism, John S. Mill’s Utilitarianism, and Immanuel Kant’s moral theory. Our discussion of Cultural Relativism will serve as a useful contrast with the other two theories, which aim to provide objective and universal (as compared to relative) standards for right action. Even though these theories face challenges, they prove useful in analyzing moral issues and we will apply them in exploring several topics. (There are other moral theories—e.g., Aristotle’s Virtue Theory, and Ethical Egoism as associated with Ayn Rand—but the three surveyed in this course are undoubtedly the most helpful in considering bioethical issues.)

Additionally, in the second unit we will look closely at the ethics of euthanasia. Studying some classic journal articles as a framework for investigation, we will look at whether there is a legitimate moral distinction between active and passive euthanasia, and whether euthanasia in any form is morally permissible. We will take time to study a selection from Mill’s classic work, *On Liberty*, since so much of the debate over euthanasia (in the case of competent patients) centers on fundamental questions about personal liberty. We will also watch an interesting PBS *Frontline* documentary, *Living Old*, which addresses end-of-life issues.

In the third unit, we will transition to beginning-of-life issues, focusing on the morality of abortion but also addressing embryos and stem cell research. It is crucial to lay out a spectrum of options in the abortion debate, and to do so we will examine several essays, including two very influential essays by Judith Jarvis Thomson and Don Marquis. Given the clear importance of the nature of personhood in the abortion debate (and in so many other debates), we will explore some conceptual issues regarding the nature of persons and life. We will also take a look at the moral status of embryos and watch two short PBS *Nova* videos on stem cell research (which relies on embryos in some cases).

Questions about the status of fetuses and embryos strongly overlap with questions about our attitudes towards non-human animals. How do we treat entities that are vulnerable to our actions? If an entity does not have sentience or moral rights, might it still be ‘vulnerable’ in some other sense?

The fourth unit addresses animal welfare and evolutionary ethics, with an eye towards the use of animals in medical research. After some background on the nature of animal minds, we will discuss four views of animal rights, including an influential Utilitarian argument for limits on the use of animals in medical research, and the land ethic (which is an environmental ethic with implications for animals). We will also examine the link between evolutionary theory and ethics, which has a complicated but very interesting history. Many philosophers and scientists have tried to make an intimate connection between these two fields. We will look at James Rachels’ critique of previous attempts to develop an evolutionary account of morality, as well as his analysis of an evolution-based understanding of ethics and the implications it has for whether it is ever morally justified to use animals in medical research. A background theme here is the relationship between humankind and the rest of nature.

In the fifth and concluding unit, we will investigate questions of health care access and distributive justice that permeate current political debate. Our primary concern, as with every other topic in the course, will be with moral foundations and principles, basic facts relevant to moral evaluation, and laying out an array of perspectives. We will step back to consider two contrasting theoretical frameworks regarding the problem of distributive justice. We will investigate an equal access principle advanced by Amy Gutmann, the justification for it, and the main challenges it faces; and we will watch a PBS *Frontline* documentary that investigates the healthcare systems of five capitalist democracies around the world. Additionally, we will study themes from Rebecca Skloot’s *The Immoral*

Life of Henrietta Lacks, many of which connect directly to ideas and arguments in this unit as well as the rest of the course.

Respect, discussion, and participation

Throughout the course, I require that all class members respect others' rights to express their viewpoints about the controversial issues we will discuss. **You are encouraged to express your reasoned opinions, questions, and comments on the discussion board at any time.** However, exercise good judgment in what you post. The most important advice is to stick to the course content: e.g., ask about my formulation of a theory on one of the handout, or give your reaction to a thought experiment in one of the readings, or ask a clarification question about something that seems ambiguous, etc. **Avoid simply sharing interesting links to sources outside of the course**, unless you think it could be extremely helpful to everyone (e.g., an article or video that addresses, in a sophisticated and fair way, specific arguments or theories we discuss); if in doubt, you can ask me first. Recognize that almost everyone will have an opinion or claim about most every topic, but what Philosophy is interested in is the justification for such opinions and the assumptions that we make. What is the argument for the claim? What theories lend support to this opinion? Do those theories explain what they are supposed to explain? Whether you use the discussion board or not, these questions are ones you will engage with while completing course activities.

2. GEP OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

General Education Program (GEP) credit

This course satisfies *some* credits, specified below, of the NC State University General Education Program (GEP). Courses taken towards satisfying GEP requirements cannot be taken For Credit Only (S/U).

Successful completion of PHI/STS 325 (Bio-Medical Ethics) satisfies ***either*** 3 credit hours of the 6-hour **Humanities GEP** requirement, ***or*** 3 credit hours of the 5-hour **Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP** requirement, but *not* both; so, *this course cannot meet both of these GEP requirements at the same time, for the same individual*, but each individual can choose which requirement the course is used to satisfy. (Also, this course no longer meets the 1-course GEP requirement in U.S. Diversity.)

Humanities GEP Objectives

Because this course satisfies 3 credit hours of the 6-hour Humanities GEP requirement, it “will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:

1. Engage the human experience through the interpretation of human culture and
2. Become aware of the act of interpretation itself as a critical form of knowing in the humanities; and
3. Make academic arguments about the human experience using reasons and evidence for supporting those reasons that are appropriate to the humanities.”

(Quoted from the Office of Undergraduate Courses and Curricula, <http://oucc.ncsu.edu/gep-hum>)

Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objectives

Because this course satisfies 3 credit hours of the 5-hour Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP requirement, it “will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:

1. Distinguish between the distinct approaches of two or more disciplines; and
2. Identify and apply authentic connections between two or more disciplines; and
3. Explore and synthesize the approaches or views of the two or more disciplines.”

(Quoted from the Office of Undergraduate Courses and Curricula, <http://oucc.ncsu.edu/gep-ip>)

How the Humanities GEP Objectives are satisfied by course-specific Student Learning Outcomes

Under each Humanities GEP Objective, course-specific Student Learning Outcomes are specified with explanations of *how* the Humanities GEP Objectives are satisfied by specific Student Learning Outcomes, and *how* the Student Learning Outcomes are measured or assessed (examples are given).

Humanities GEP Objective 1: “Engage the human experience through the interpretation of human culture.”

Student Learning Outcome: Students will be able to clearly and precisely analyze issues in bioethics, by reference to philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and relevant factual data from scientific, sociological, and historical points of view.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Humanities GEP Objective 1: By learning to clearly and precisely analyze issues in bioethics, students gain the capacity to break down components of cultural beliefs and practices, related to bioethics issues, into simpler components. By seeing the fundamental components that make up a set of beliefs and practices, students can better assess whether such beliefs and practices are justified (or how they might be justified). For example, beliefs about the ethics of euthanasia break down into questions about whether a specific case of euthanasia is voluntary or involuntary (whether the patient can competently make a choice, and whether he or she is being coerced), and whether it is active (e.g., done by giving a lethal injection to the patient) or passive (e.g., done by taking the patient off of a life-support machine). This kind of analysis of an ethical issue is enhanced by reference to philosophical-ethical principles and theories, and relevant factual data from scientific, sociological, and historical points of view. For example, in ethical analysis, one can highlight the intentions behind euthanasia or the consequences that result from euthanasia, or both; e.g., examining the intentions apart from the consequences in an act of euthanasia permits a more specific and productive discussion to take place. This, in turn, allows one to more effectively interpret various beliefs about what is right or wrong.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false) and a bioethics case analysis (see section 4 of the syllabus for details of the case analysis assignment).

Below is an example objective question relating to the above Student Learning Outcome, emphasizing analysis of the concept of euthanasia in relation to a required reading (the journal article “Active and Passive Euthanasia” by James Rachels):

Example analysis question: Suppose that Rachels’ cases of Smith and Jones show that there is no moral distinction between ‘X killing Y’ and ‘X letting Y die’ (X and Y are persons). Which of the following implications is most accurate? (a) There remains a moral distinction between active and passive euthanasia. (b) There is no moral distinction between voluntary active euthanasia and voluntary passive euthanasia, but there is a moral distinction between non-voluntary active euthanasia and non-voluntary passive euthanasia. (c) There is no moral distinction between active and passive euthanasia regardless of whether it is voluntary or non-voluntary. [The correct answer is (c).]

Here is an example bioethics case analysis topic that requires analysis of facts and a moral problem associated with the case.

Bioethics cases analysis on an end-of-life issue: The end-of-life case analysis should consist of approximately 2 pages of written text with three components in a professional-looking, 10 to 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. The three components are: (i) careful description of crucial facts of the case or issue; (ii) specification of one ethical or philosophical problem the case presents; (iii) your proposed solution to the problem (identified in 2) and at least one plausible, clear, considered reason to believe your solution. Completing a case analysis requires some additional research with materials beyond those in the course schedule (further instructions are provide on the course Moodle site). The aim is to critically address an important aspect of the case you choose, not to address every important problem the case raises. Pretend this analysis will be part of a set of bioethics files for others to study in a medical school. The cases you can choose from include: the case of Dax Cowart, the case of Elizabeth Bouvia, the case of Karen Ann Quinlan, or the case of Terri Schiavo. These are all ethically and historically significant cases.

[Another case analysis option concerns a beginning-of-life issue, such as the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court Decision.]

Humanities GEP Objective 2: “Become aware of the act of interpretation itself as a critical form of knowing in the humanities.”

Student Learning Outcome: Students will develop a more advanced comprehension or understanding of the rational and factual basis for diverse and nuanced perspectives regarding bioethics issues.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Humanities GEP Objective 2: Understanding the reasons and facts that support a claim, regarding questions of human qualities and values, requires that one be aware that the same reasons and facts can be used to support *other* claims; in turn, this requires that one give a specific interpretation of the reasons and facts, linking them to other reasons and facts to generate a conclusion that yields possible new knowledge. In sum, understanding the rational basis (that is, relating to reasons) and factual basis for different perspectives puts one in position to discuss different interpretations of those reasons and facts.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false) and the final argumentative essay assignment.

Below is an example objective question relating to the above Student Learning Outcome, emphasizing understanding of a complex, historically important ethical theory formed by Immanuel Kant (based on a selection from his ethical writings).

Example comprehension/interpretation question: Suppose you form a maxim and imagine everyone acting on it. According to the Universal Law formulation of the Categorical Imperative, which outcome of universalizing the maxim requires one to reject the maxim? (a) A contradiction in will. (b) A contradiction with the Principle of Utility. (c) A contradiction in conception. (d) Either (a) or (c) are sufficient to reject the maxim. (e) None of the above. [The correct answer is (d).]

Here is an example final argumentative essay question that requires comprehension of the rational and factual basis of a bioethics issue, especially the first component of the essay, identified as (i) in the prompt below. (See section 4 of the syllabus for further details and additional questions students can choose from.)

Argumentative essay on universal healthcare access: This essay should be approximately 3 pages long (in a professional-looking, 10 to 12-point font, with 1-inch margins). It may be longer, but most important is to have all the necessary components. Further guidance will be provided on Moodle, but here are the essential points. The essay must (i) explain an argument concerning the moral dimension of universal healthcare access [*this portion of the assignment especially is used as a measure of the above Student Learning Outcome*], (ii) explain an objection to that argument, and (iii) present an evaluation of that objection. The evaluation explains or argues your *judgment* about the objection, i.e., whether you think the objection actually works or not, which is different from simply explaining the objection. Your thesis statement will reflect either your support or criticism of the argument (it could be your own argument or someone else's that you are objecting to, and the objection could be your own or someone else's that you are employing). Either way, you need to take a stand and defend your viewpoint. Assessment is based on the complexity and worthiness of the content of the essay, and the clarity and precision of the presentation, not on your specific viewpoint or conclusion.

Humanities GEP Objective 3: "Make academic arguments about the human experience using reasons and evidence for supporting those reasons that are appropriate to the humanities."

Student Learning Outcome: Students will be able to competently *critique and construct arguments* regarding bioethics issues by incorporating philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and scientific facts and theories.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Humanities GEP Objective 3: By learning logical concepts, like the concept of a valid argument, and studying examples of various forms of logical argument, students will begin to employ these in their own reasoning about bioethics issues. Additionally, they will notice ethical principles and theories, as well as important scientific claims, in arguments, and learn to incorporate them into their own arguments. These theories and claims, given the nature of the course material, relate directly to human experience (e.g., theories about values and the nature of right and wrong, sociological and anthropological facts, and other claims). Given all of these factors, students will formulate arguments based on ethical principles and factual humans concerning human experience and values. In doing so, they will display rational sensitivity to competing arguments and objections.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false) and the final argumentative essay assignment.

Below is an example objective question relating to the above Student Learning Outcome, emphasizing the ability to critique an argument. (The question is based on two required reading assignments, the article "All Animals are Equal" by Peter Singer and the article "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research" by Carl Cohen.)

Example of a question concerning the critique of an argument: In response to Singer's Utilitarian view of animal rights, Cohen offers this dilemma: *Either* rodents and humans have equal rights, *or* neither rodents nor humans have rights. Both options are unacceptable; therefore, Singer's anti-speciesist view is false. *If* you support Singer's Utilitarian view, what would be the best response to Cohen, that is, the one that most accurately reflects the Utilitarian view? (a) Both rodents and humans are part of the land community, so they *do* have equal rights. (b) Both rodents and humans deserve equal consideration, but equal consideration

does NOT imply equal treatment. (c) We should pretend that we are in the Original Position to determine the best response. [The correct answer is (b).]

The **argumentative essay question under Humanities GEP Objective 2 above provides an example essay question that requires *critiquing and constructing an argument***. The ‘critique’ component primarily is emphasized by element (ii) of the assignment, and the ‘constructing’ component primarily is emphasized by elements (i) and (iii) of the assignment. (See section 4 of the syllabus for further details and additional questions students can choose from.)

How the Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objectives are satisfied by course-specific Student Learning Outcomes

Under each Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective, course-specific Student Learning Outcomes are specified with explanations of *how* the Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objectives are satisfied by specific Student Learning Outcomes, and *how* the Student Learning Outcomes are measured or assessed (examples are given).

The Student Learning Outcomes here are the same as the Student Learning Outcomes for the Humanities GEP Objectives, thus demonstrating the integration of skills and concepts that the course emphasizes. However, *how* the specific Student Learning Outcomes are satisfied for the Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objectives differs in several respects from how they are satisfied for the Humanities GEP Objectives, as explained below.

Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 1: “Distinguish between the distinct approaches of two or more disciplines.”

Student Learning Outcome: Students will be able to clearly and precisely *analyze* issues in bioethics, by reference to philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and relevant factual data from scientific, sociological, and historical points of view.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 1:

By learning to clearly and precisely analyze issues in bioethics, students gain the capacity to break down components of cultural beliefs and practices (related to bioethics issues) into simpler components. By seeing the fundamental components that make up a set of beliefs and practices, the student can better distinguish between factual claims (historical facts, biological facts, sociological facts) and moral claims. That is, students will learn to distinguish facts from values. Furthermore, in studying logic, students will learn to distinguish the logical force or validity of arguments (validity means that, if the premises of an argument are true, the conclusion must be true), from the truth of the premises in the argument (which sometimes requires empirical science to assess, and sometimes requires examination of philosophical theories).

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false) and the final argumentative essay assignment.

Below is an example objective question relating to the above Student Learning Outcome, emphasizing distinguishing between the purported truth of biological-scientific claims and the validity of the argument (validity is the central concept of logic, which is a primary tool of philosophy). So the question requires distinguishing between biology and logic, two different disciplines. (The question is based on a required reading assignment, the “Introduction” in

Knowledge, Nature, and Norms, which emphasizes the tools of logic, by David Shoemaker and Mark Timmons.)

Example of a question requiring distinguishing between the logic of an argument and its biological claims: Suppose someone presents this argument: “If Darwin is right that evolution by natural selection occurs, then all species existing today are descended from prior forms in the tree of life. All species existing today are descended from prior forms in the tree of life. Therefore, Darwin is right that evolution by natural selection occurs.” Suppose that the premises of this argument are true. Which statement best describes the argument? (a) It is a valid argument. (b) It is an invalid argument. (c) It is neither a valid nor an invalid argument. [The correct answer is (b).]

The **argumentative essay question under Humanities GEP Objective 2** above provides an example essay question that requires *distinguishing between factual and philosophical-ethical claims* in order to more effectively analyze an issue. All the elements of the assignment, depending on each student’s chosen thesis and strategy, can emphasize both factual and philosophical-ethical components relevant to the above Student Learning Outcome. For example, in discussing the ethics of universal health care (one possible essay topic), the student can incorporate relevant economic or medical facts, as well as political theories or moral values through which those facts are interpreted. (See section 4 of the syllabus for further details and additional questions students can choose from.)

Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 2: “Identify and apply authentic connections between two or more disciplines.”

Student Learning Outcome: Students will develop a more advanced comprehension or understanding of the rational and factual basis for diverse and nuanced perspectives regarding bioethics issues.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 2: Genuinely *understanding* the reasons and facts that support a specific claim about human qualities and values requires awareness that the very same reasons and facts can often be used to support contrary claims. Thus, students learn to discern and give a specific interpretation of the reasons and facts, and arrange them logically, linking them to other reasons and facts to generate a conclusion that yields possible new knowledge. In doing so, students draw on multiple perspectives, from multiple disciplines, as follows. The factual basis for the kind of understanding aimed at in this Student Learning Outcome derives from various sources in the course, primarily medicine, biology, sociology, and anthropology. The rational arguments studied in the course derive from ethics and philosophy, and the arguments are formed on the basis of logical principles.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed primarily through the bioethics cases analysis and the final argumentative essay assignment.

The **bioethics case analysis on an end-of-life issue, under Humanities GEP Objective 1** above, requires understanding of the rational and factual basis of different perspectives, thus the identification and application of connections from different disciplines.

The **argumentative essay question under Humanities GEP Objective 2** above provides a further example of an assignment that requires understanding of the rational and factual basis of different perspectives, thus the identification and application of connections from different disciplines. As

another example, another of the essay options concerns the theoretical connections between ethics and evolutionary theory. Students electing this option must incorporate understanding of the basic claims of Darwinian evolutionary theory (as studied for example in James Rachels' book *Created from Animals*), with understanding of the aims and scope of ethical theorizing. (See section 4 of the syllabus for further details and additional questions students can choose from.)

Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 3: "Explore and synthesize the approaches or views of the two or more disciplines."

Student Learning Outcome: Students will be able to competently *critique and construct arguments* regarding bioethics issues by incorporating philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and scientific facts and theories.

How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP Objective 3:

Exploring fundamental ethical principles and supporting philosophical arguments furnishes a framework for analysis of differing opinions and perspectives, and for offering novel interpretations and arguments based on purported facts. In looking for appropriate facts to support an interpretation or argument, students must search relevant scientific and sociological sources. Students learn to distinguish between facts and values, citing evidence and discussing reasons in favor of the factual and value-based components of their arguments.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed primarily through the bioethics cases analysis and the final argumentative essay assignment. Below are examples of the two main assessments of this Student Learning Outcome.

The **bioethics case analysis on an end-of-life issue, under Humanities GEP Objective 1** above, is an assignment that requires students to competently *critique and construct arguments* regarding bioethics issues by incorporating philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and scientific facts and theories; thus, it emphasizes synthesizing medical and historical facts with philosophical-ethical problem identification and resolution.

The **argumentative essay question under Humanities GEP Objective 2** above provides a further example of an assignment that requires students to competently *critique and construct arguments* regarding bioethics issues by incorporating and synthesizing philosophical-ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and scientific facts and theories. This, in turn, requires understanding of the rational and factual basis of different perspectives, thus the identification and application of connections from different disciplines. As another example, one of the essay options concerns the theoretical connections between ethics and evolutionary theory. Students electing this option must incorporate understanding of the basic claims of Darwinian evolutionary theory (as studied for example in James Rachels' book *Created from Animals*), with understanding of the aims and scope of ethical theorizing. (See section 4 of the syllabus for further details and additional questions students can choose from.)

Contact the instructor for further examples of how Student Learning Outcomes are assessed, or for questions about how Student Learning Outcomes satisfy GEP Objectives.

3. COURSE MATERIALS

(1) **Moodle:** Since this is an online course, **it is assumed that you have reliable access to a computer and a reliable internet connection** (preferably a land line connection, especially for taking quizzes and exams). You will need to access Moodle (<https://moodle1415-courses.wolfware.ncsu.edu/>) with your Unity ID and password. (Moodle is a University-approved Learning Management System.)

(2) ***The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Rebecca Skloot, Broadway, 2011.** (Price at NC State bookstore: approx. \$4.00 used and \$10.00 new. The bookstore has a comparison shopping tool. Check online bookstores like www.amazon.com for prices as low as \$2.00 used. D.H. Hill Library at NC State has a copy of this book on physical reserve.)

(3) **Journal articles, book chapters, documentaries, and other resources.** All of these are linked through Moodle. Some links go directly to a freely accessible online resource, but many go to the NC State e-reserves website (<https://reserves.lib.ncsu.edu/>) where you may have to log in again. All e-reserve resources are reviewed by library staff for uploading in e-reserves. A bibliography of all resources is included after the Course Schedule below (except for recommended items I may add during the course).

(4) **Handouts (notes, outlines, diagrams as PDF files) and audio files (mp3 format).** These are all instructor-copyrighted materials and will be available on Moodle to accompany assigned readings. They provide analysis of readings, commentary on key arguments, and important background information helpful in placing core ideas and arguments in context.

Copyright of course materials: All course materials are copyrighted, including instructor-prepared materials (handouts, etc.). They are intended solely for your personal, educational use. You will be required to access the NCSU library electronic reserve (in all cases where materials are on e-reserve, a link is provided from Moodle to the e-reserve site). The electronic copies of journal articles and online resources assigned for this course are made accessible only to individuals enrolled in this course, and provided only for educational purposes consistent with fair use rules. A few resources linked to from Moodle are available on the Internet freely (e.g., PBS *Nova* videos, *Frontline* documentaries, news articles), but you should be aware of policies at those sites when visiting (again, it is assumed that you are using these only for educational purposes). Most of these videos and documentaries can also be made available as a physical resource through the library or other means if you wish, so please consult with me if you have issues with accessing Internet material outside the confines of Moodle or electronic reserves. Be familiar with the University Copyright Infringement Policy Statement, regarding the restriction on sharing content of course materials at <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-01-25-02>. When you access electronic reserves or other copyrighted course material (including instructor-prepared material), you are affirming this statement: "I acknowledge that all documents (hard-copy or electronic, to include articles, lecture notes, handouts, exams, etc.) made available to me for the course PHI/STS 325 taught at NC State University in the current term are copyrighted and intended for my personal use. By logging into the PHI /STS 325 website (through Moodle), you certify that you will not share any content of the class PHI/STS 325 NC State University website with a third party without written permission from the instructor, Prof. William Bauer" (statement based on University recommendation).

4. GRADED ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

All assignments, quizzes, and exams combined are worth 200 points. The assignments are:

- 10 online quizzes with 8 questions each (mix of multiple-choice, true/false): 80 points total
- 1 online midterm/core exam with 40 questions (mix of multiple-choice, true/false): 40 points total
- 1 online final exam with 40 questions (mix of multiple-choice, true/false): 40 points total
- 1 bioethics case analysis (approx. 2 pages, can be longer): 20 points total
- 1 final exam argumentative essay (approx. 3-5 pages, can be longer): 20 points total

In order to PASS the course, you must do all of the following: (i) achieve sufficient points to earn a passing grade (see the scale below), (ii) take the midterm/core exam, (iii) take the final exam, and (iv) complete the final exam argumentative essay. This means that, theoretically, you could skip or miss some quizzes, and not complete either case analysis, but still pass, *so long as conditions (i) – (iv) are met*. However, you are *strongly encouraged* to complete everything; it is beneficial to do the case analysis, receive feedback, and then apply any lessons learned to the argumentative essay.

Altogether, the assignment load is not terribly burdensome, but there is quite a bit of required reading (detailed in section 10 in this syllabus) and all of the assignments are carefully designed to motivate your progress through the material as well as challenge you to examine new perspectives and develop your own views.

Course grading scale

The following scale, with 200 possible points, assigns letter grades according to traditional percentages: A's in the 90-100% range, B's in the 80-89% range, C's in the 70-79% range, D's in the 60-69% range, and F's at or below 59%. (Percentages ending in .5 are rounded up, as reflected in the scale below.)

Numerical total	Letter grade
195-200	A+
185-194	A
179-184	A-
175-178	B+
165-174	B
159-164	B-
155-158	C+
145-154	C
139-144	C-
135-138	D+
125-134	D
119-124	D-
118 or below	F

Guidance concerning quizzes and exams

Integrity: You are not permitted to consult others during the quizzes or exams. It is required that your answers are solely your own effort—just as when you do an out-of-class essay in a face-to-face course, it is expected that the work is your work alone. *All the quizzes and exams can be taken with open books and open notes.* However, many questions are not the kind that you can simply look up an answer to quickly—i.e., some questions are inferential or based on hypothetical situations. **When you log onto**

Moodle and take a quiz or exam, you are directly affirming your commitment to University policies concerning academic integrity. (See more on integrity in section 5.)

Format: When you take the quizzes and exams, questions are selected from a large databank of questions created the instructor, and you'll know your score immediately after completing the quiz/exam. The quizzes and exams will assess your understanding of the main concepts, arguments, and theories that we study, and how all of these relate to each other. Questions will reflect material covered in handouts or in assigned readings (there will often be significant overlap between these, but not always). Some questions will be *factual or definitional*, such as 'what does X mean?' or 'who maintains that X is the case?' or 'how does X respond to Y?' Other questions will be *inferential*, such as 'if X is true, then does Y or Z follow?' or 'is it true that Z is an objection to Y?' or 'is it true that reason X supports claim Y?' or 'what conclusion does this argument support?'

Quizzes: Each of the 10 quizzes is worth 8 points (1 point for each question). You will see two questions on each page as you go through the quiz. You will have 15 minutes to complete each quiz through Moodle (this is an increase of 5 minutes compared to previous sections of this course, which should be very helpful!). See section 9 or 10 for the quiz schedule.

Midterm and final exams: The midterm/core exam and the final exam are each worth 40 points, and you will have 60 minutes to complete each exam. The questions will be similar to the quiz questions, so the quizzes prepare you to do well on the exams. The midterm is also known as the 'core' exam because it covers fundamental bioethics topics (abortion, euthanasia, and moral theory), the details of which have logical connections to many other issues, thus preparing you for further studies in bioethics in this course and beyond. The final exam covers everything after the midterm (animal rights, evolutionary ethics, and health care justice), so it is not comprehensive. However, much of the material after the midterm builds on pre-midterm material, so familiarity with that material is expected (but it will not be directly tested on the final exam). See sections 9 or 10 for exam dates.

Bioethics case analysis (20 points): There are two case analysis options—one on an end-of-life case (option 1) or one on a beginning-of-life case (option 2), due on different days. *You cannot do both and take the higher score.* Also, you can choose to skip the case analysis altogether, and *instead do a longer final exam argumentative essay* (see below for more info).

The case analysis should consist of approximately 2 pages (it can be longer) of written text with three components (suggestion: give these components headings in your analysis) in a professional-looking, 10 to 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. The three components are:

1. Careful description of crucial facts of the case or issue [1-2 paragraphs] (6 points)
2. Specification of one ethical or philosophical problem the case presents [1 paragraph] (6 points)
3. Your proposed solution to the problem (identified in 2) and at least one plausible, clear, considered reason to believe your solution [1-2 paragraphs] (8 points)

Completing a case analysis requires some additional research with materials beyond those in the course schedule; see the instructions (on Moodle) for each case analysis for further information. The aim is to address an important aspect of the case you choose, not to address every important problem the case raises. Imagine this analysis will be part of a set of bioethics files for others to study in a medical school.

Final argumentative essay (20 points): Write an argumentative essay on animal ethics, evolutionary ethics, healthcare access, or a bioethics theme from Skloot's book. This essay should be approximately 3-5 pages long (in a professional-looking, 10 to 12-point font, with 1-inch margins). It can be longer, but it is most important is to have all the necessary components (specified below). Further guidance will be

provided on Moodle, but below is some initial information about the assignment for your planning purposes.

The essay must (i) explain an argument concerning an important bioethics claim, (ii) explain an objection to that argument, and (iii) present an evaluation of that objection. The evaluation explains your *judgment* about the objection, i.e., whether you think the objection actually works or not, which is different from simply explaining the objection. Your thesis statement will reflect either your support or criticism of the argument (it could be your own argument or someone else's that you are objecting to, and the objection could be your own or someone else's that you are employing). Either way, you need to take a stand and defend your viewpoint. The possible topics include (a) **healthcare access** (e.g., universal health care, distributing scarce goods), (b) **animal ethics or welfare** (e.g., to what extent if any experimentation involving animals should be allowed) (c) **evolutionary ethics** (e.g., implications of evolutionary theory for moral theory, implications of evolutionary theory for animal welfare), or (d) **a theme from Skloot's *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*** (e.g., informed consent, body tissue and DNA ownership). Whatever you choose, make it specific and focused. You are not expected to do a comprehensive survey of a topic, or address a battery of arguments, but rather make a small and significant contribution to the debate over your chosen topic.

This essay must carefully incorporate some discussion—as part of the main argument, or the objection, or the evaluation—of at least two resources relevant to the topic. One of these must be one of the assigned readings in the course (book chapter, journal article), and the other can be either (i) another assigned reading from the course *or* (ii) one external resource such as a journal article, a book chapter, or a good online resource (it could be a quality news report, informative website, etc.). But it is important to stick to developing your thesis, whether it is an objection to someone else's argument, supporting a familiar argument through an original insight, developing a new argument, etc. Incorporating discussion of an article does not mean providing a detailed summary of it—that would be a different kind of assignment. Rather, consider the ways that some of the articles you've studied in the course make use of other research: they take an objection and explain in carefully, they cite another's point of view and develop it their own way, etc.

Long essay option: If you choose to skip the bioethics case analysis, then you must do a longer final essay, and you must indicate at the top of the essay that you are doing the "**long essay option**". I will then grade it on the same 20-point scale as above but award you the same score for both the case analysis and the final essay (so if you earn 16/20, you'll get that score in both Moodle categories). The long essay option has exactly the same requirements as the Honors credit option, stated below. (But if you are taking this course for Honors credit, your argumentative essay *cannot* replace the bioethics case analysis).

Honors credit (for UHP students wishing to take this course for Honors)

If you are a University Honors Program student wishing to take this course for Honors credit, please contact me. I typically do allow this, but in doing so I assume that you are highly interested in at least one of the major topics of the course. The main requirement, on top of the normal course requirements outlined above and earning a B- or better, will be a *more substantial argumentative essay*, defined as follows: approximately 7-9 pages (instead of approximately 3-5); incorporation of significant discussion of an additional (i.e., on top of the 2 resources in the regular assignment) scholarly journal article or scholarly book chapter, either as part of the argument, the objection, or evaluation of the objection; and a higher degree of originality (in the argument, objection, examples used, etc.). As part of the process, you should send me a half-page outline of your paper sometime around 2/3 of the way through the course (this is somewhat flexible, but stay in touch with me). The topic should be one of the topics listed

in the syllabus; other topics are possible, but consult with me first. If you do seek Honors credit, you should take the initiative to prepare the Honors course contract using the requirements specified in this paragraph. For the "objectives" part of the contract, emphasize attributes like creative thinking in solving bio-ethical dilemmas, critical thinking on a philosophical topic, analysis of philosophical concepts, argument construction and evaluation, etc.

Participation: Participation on the discussion board is *not* required, but encouraged. It is a tool provided for the benefit of the class to help clarify course content, assignments, etc. Also, you might find yourself talking face-to-face with others in the course, or out of it, about some topics we cover, which could prompt you to post a question or observation on the discussion board. I will keep track of good quality comments and questions, and good participation on the discussion board can be helpful to your grade at the end of the course; a couple of insightful comments or good questions can give you a bump of a couple of points, besides helping in your understanding of the material.

If you post a message on the discussion forum, it will not be private; if you are not comfortable doing this, yet you have a comment or observation you'd like to make, you can communicate to me, and I can post it anonymously. If you post something, don't fret if no one responds. It doesn't mean it wasn't an interesting comment or question. (I will respond when—and this will probably often be the case—I judge that it would be beneficial for the class). Note that if you want to respond to someone individually, you can do that too—I'm sure the person would appreciate the response; however, if your observation could be helpful to everyone, then let it be read by everyone. In all cases, be professional, stick to the topic, and be respectful.

I am not assigning you into small online groups that you have to do activities with. Some of you might appreciate this very much, and others might not. There are costs and benefits to this. My prediction is that a good portion of the class will naturally discuss topics or arguments with others you know who are also enrolled, or with other peers and acquaintances, and you are encouraged to do so. What is most important is that you personally engage with the material. You are invited to have as much discussion as you desire, based on your individual learning tendencies. Some students who are shy and quiet can get just as much out of listening carefully to (or reading comments from) other students.

I will not necessarily respond to all discussion forum posts, though I will respond to most. I will always respond when I deem that a response is helpful to the majority of the participants, or a clarification needs to be made, or in other circumstances. Typically I will wait for 12-24 hours to respond (perhaps longer on weekends), so that others have a chance to respond (and sometimes I just won't be able to respond sooner due to other obligations).

Do NOT post questions from the quizzes or exams to the discussion forum while they are open for the rest of the class; doing so would constitute an integrity violation. However, if you have a question about a particular quiz question, you can of course consult me about it.

Late assignments and make-ups: Late essays will be penalized 1 point for each day late. Measures are taken to ensure that there are no assignments or exams on days of verifiable religious observance; however, if a verifiable conflict remains for you, please contact the instructor as early as possible to establish make-up arrangements. Make-up exams and quizzes are not allowed without prior arrangement with the instructor, and are only allowed for reasons approved by University policy (see the previous passage). (Make-ups should *not* be necessary anyway, unless you have some verifiable emergency, because quizzes and exams are open on Moodle for two or more days.)

Discussing grades and performance: I am always willing to discuss your grades on assignments/exams, and reviewing your performance with me is a good way to make progress. If you wish to contest your grade on an assignment, do not expect a grade increase unless it is clear that a verifiable mistake was made. When this is not the case, and you believe there was a misjudgment of the quality of your assignment, *it is advisable to not make a case for more points unless you believe that the assigned grade is off by at least a full letter grade (e.g., you earned a B- but you believe it should be an A-).*

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ON COURSEWORK

All students are required to follow the standards of academic honesty as stated in the NC State Code of Student Conduct. **Plagiarism and cheating are serious ethical violations** representing a lack of moral character and dedication to learning. Violations may lead to failure of the course. **Don't do it.** Don't cheat others and don't cheat yourself.

On all quizzes, exams, or assignments, when you submit these through Moodle you are automatically affirming the following statement: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment." Your logging onto Moodle constitutes your personal affirmation that you are doing your own work (thus not consulting other people or their notes).

You **can** consult your own course materials (notes, books, handouts, etc.) on all exams and quizzes, but you cannot consult with fellow students. **Keep in mind the following points:** questions and answers are randomized on quizzes/exams; Moodle tells me if you take the exam on the same computer at overlapping times with someone else; Moodle provides instructors detailed information about testing behavior; if you ask someone a question about a question on an exam or a quiz, believing their answer is akin to believing a rumor. Trust your own studying and reasoning ability; be confident and stay focused, and you should do well. *When submitting essay assignments,* you affirm that you have not plagiarized others' work, and that you have given credit to others as required, e.g., where you quote someone, paraphrase someone's quote or ideas, or employ their ideas in your project.

Penalties for integrity violations will range from grade-reduction to failure of the course; infringements will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Be familiar with the Code of Student Conduct addressing academic integrity and other important issues, as outlined by the Office of Student Conduct, at this web address: <http://studentconduct.ncsu.edu/policies-and-procedures>. The official University policy is available at <http://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01>, and you should be familiar with it too.

6. PRIVACY POLICY

"Students may be required to disclose personally identifiable information to other students in the course, including via electronic tools like email or web-postings, where relevant to the course. Examples include online discussions of class topics, and posting of student coursework. All students are expected to respect one another's privacy by not sharing or using such information outside the course" (this statement is from official University policy). In this course, no personally identifiable information will be disclosed to individuals outside the class enrollment or the course administrative chain (unless required by law or some other University policy). Your assignments, quizzes, and exams will be viewed by the instructor. If you voluntarily post a comment on the discussion forum, then, of course, that is not private.

We will be using an online forum/discussion board throughout the course as a virtual classroom, where each participant can post questions that others (including the instructor) can respond to, comments,

and observations about course content. Please use this tool as appropriate. It is the best way to raise questions—about bioethics issues under discussion, key arguments and theories, or assignments—that the instructor can answer for the benefit of all participants. Student assignments will not be posted to this forum, but you are encouraged to share your ideas questions in the online forum. For example, you can ask a question about your case analysis or argumentative essay. Treat your peers, both in the content and tone of your postings, as you would in a face-to-face class: *with respect and courtesy*.

See University regulation at: <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-08-00-11>.

Furthermore: “All students in this class are expected to respect the privacy of their classmates by (1) not revealing course work and course identities outside the classroom, especially sensitive information, and (2) by refraining from publicly sharing information (e.g., assignments, exams, and creative work, etc.) to which you have access as a member of the class.” (This statement is approved by the Office of the General Counsel).

7. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

“Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at Suite 2221 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 919-515-7653. <http://dso.dasa.ncsu.edu/> For more information on NC State’s policy on working with students with disabilities, see the **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG02.20.01)** <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-01>.”

“Students with verified disabilities are encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss academic accommodations.”

(The above statements are from official University guidance.)

8. ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND IMPORTANT NOTES

NC State Polices, Regulations, and Rules (PRR)

“Students are responsible for reviewing the NC State University PRR’s located at <https://dso.dasa.ncsu.edu/responsibilities/> which pertains to their course rights and responsibilities.” (This statement is from official University guidance.) (The specified website includes links to policy statements on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination, Code of Student Conduct, Grades and Grade Point Average, Credit-Only Courses, and Audits.)

Equality of opportunity

“NC State University provides equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Accordingly, NC State affirms its commitment to maintain a work environment for all employees and an academic environment for all students that is free from all forms of discrimination. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation is a violation of state and federal law and/or NC State University policy and will not be tolerated. Harassment of any person (either in the form of quid pro quo or creation of a hostile environment) based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation also is a violation of state and federal law and/or NC State University policy and will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any person who complains about discrimination is also prohibited. NC State’s policies and regulations governing discrimination, harassment, and retaliation may be

accessed at http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/campus_environ or http://www.ncsu.edu/equal_op. Any person who feels that he or she has been the subject of prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should contact the Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO) at 515-3148” (statement from official university policy).

Class evaluations

Your feedback about the course and the instruction is valuable. I might ask for informal feedback in an online discussion forum along the way about specific materials or activities in order to make appropriate adjustments to this and further courses. Formal, end-of-course, online evaluations will be conducted per NC State University policies. The evaluation system will be available near the end of the course, and will close before final exams begin. Here is the official University statement regarding class evaluations: “Students will receive an email message directing them to a website where they can login using their Unity ID and complete evaluations. All evaluations are confidential; instructors will not know how any one student responded to any question, and students will not know the ratings for any instructors.” More information about class evaluations: <http://www.ncsu.edu/UPA/classeval/>; Evaluation website: <https://classeval.ncsu.edu/>; Student help desk: classeval@ncsu.edu

Student grievances

Please see University regulation: <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-11-40-01>.

Adverse weather policy

Weather can affect Internet accessibility which is essential to the completion of this course. Check <http://www.ncsu.edu/> for updates on the University’s open/closed status, or call 919-513-8888. For the policy on Adverse Weather and Other Emergency Conditions, please see <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-04-20-07>.

Philosophy, careers, and further studies

From time to time, I might forward information about scholarship opportunities, graduate opportunities, etc., to the class. Additionally, I am happy to discuss with any of you how philosophy connects with various career paths, or about further undergraduate or graduate studies in philosophy. Here is a statement from CHASS Career Services that may be of interest especially if you are a CHASS major: “Explore career options related to your major, make decisions about your major or minor, build resumes and cover letters, prepare for interviews, develop internship/job search strategies, maximize career fairs, and more. Use ePACK to make an appointment with your career counselor [...] through ePACK. Career Development Center, 2100 Pullen Hall. careers.ncsu.edu.”

9. ADVICE ON HOW TO PROCEED AND SUMMARY OF KEY DATES

Required activities are those you are expected to do if you desire to have the best chance of earning an “A”. The schedule in section 10 lists all the required activities and these are also listed under each sub-unit at the Moodle site. But the Moodle site also contains some **recommended/optional activities** which will allow you to explore a topic further but will not be tested or evaluated (though these could be helpful for one or both of the writing assignments). Many of the handouts also have **study and reflection questions** that prompt you to engage critically with the material. Take a few extra minutes to consider them, for they can help you test your understanding of the material. If you are an active learner and interested in the topics, you will be doing these kinds of reflections habitually. If you do all the required activities and engage with the study and reflection questions, you will be in position to do very well; the less of the required activities you do, the greater is the likelihood you’ll see negative

consequences. Therefore, if you want positive consequences, do as many of the required activities as you can.

Suggestions to maximize your learning outcome and course performance:

1. Read each article carefully, taking note of key points and arguments;
2. View any required videos or visit any required web resources;
3. Read the handouts/notes (PDFs) while listening to any audio files (if available) and viewing the diagrams (PDFs) as necessary (note: nearly every sub-unit has a handout, and about one-fourth of the sub-units have either accompanying diagrams or audio files);
4. Consider the study or reflection questions; ask questions as needed to clarify.

Besides Skloot's *Immortal Life*, all of the other reading assignments are on e-reserve or online. Most major topics discussed on the handouts will be approached through the lens of the assigned readings, but not every assigned reading will be addressed in detail. Some handouts cover a lot of material not found in the assigned readings. Questions on quizzes and the exams will be formulated based on concepts and arguments that are both addressed in the readings and on the handouts, although the tendency is to formulate question that are covered both in assigned readings and emphasized on handouts. **You should start reading Skloot's *Immortal Life* early in the course.** Although it is much easier reading than the assigned journal articles, please set aside adequate time to read it; a handout with key issues to focus on is available on Moodle. As you go through this book, make connections between its themes and the current topic we are investigating. If you choose to address a topic from this book in your final argumentative essay, you should get a head start on it.

Graded activities have set due dates or closing dates. The schedule for all reading assignments is flexible to fit your schedule. **You must plan accordingly so that you can complete all activities on time because there is a significant amount of material.** There are 5 units with a total of 29 sub-units (plus the assignments and exams). Units 1 and 2 will open immediately at the start of the course; after that, Unit 3 will open a week or so into the term; unit 4 will open immediately after the Midterm Exam opens (thus allowing you to start the remaining units right away, if you wish, upon completing the Midterm); unit 5 will open a week or so after the Midterm Exam. It is recommended that you **complete about 2 sub-units per week** (there are 29 sub-units over 15 weeks).

Important course dates combined with important University dates [course information is bolded]

- First day of classes: Wed, Jan 6
- Last day to add a course without instructor permission: Tue, Jan 12
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day): Mon, Jan 18
- Census Date/Official Enrollment Date – Last day to add a course; last day for tuition refunds due to dropping a course or changing from credit to audit; last day for undergraduates to drop below 12 hours or drop a course without a W grade: Wed, Jan 20
- **Quizzes 1-4 close on Fri, Feb 12 (6 p.m.)**
- **Quizzes 5-6 close on Fri, Mar 4 (6 p.m.)**
- **Bioethics Case Analysis:** [do just one]
 - **Option 1 due Wed, Feb 17 (by 6 p.m.)**
 - **Option 2 due Wed, Mar 16 (by 6 p.m.)**
- Drop/Revision Deadline – MyPack Portal closes for drops at 11:59 p.m.: Wed, Mar 2
- **Midterm/Core Exam (covers units 1-3) is open Wed, Mar 2 (8 a.m.) through Fri, Mar 4 (6 p.m.)**
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (Spring Break): Mon – Fri, Mar 7 – 11
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (Spring Holiday): Fri, Mar 25
- **Quizzes 7-9 close on Fri, Apr 1 (6 p.m.)**

- Last day of classes: Mon, Apr 25
- **Quiz 10 closes on Wed, Apr 27 (6 p.m.)**
- Reading Day: Tue, Apr 26
- Final exam period: Wed, Apr 27 – Thu, May 5
- **Final Argumentative Essay: due Wed, Apr 27 (by 6 p.m.)**
- **Final Exam (covers units 4-5) is open Wed, Apr 27 (8 a.m.) through Thu, Apr 28 (6 p.m.)**

Recommended quiz schedule

The quizzes are open for a long time to give you flexibility. However, below is a recommended schedule based on the idea that you should take a quiz every 7-10 days.

- Quiz 1: Jan 15
- Quiz 2: Jan 22
- Quiz 3: Feb 3
- Quiz 4: Feb 10 [quizzes 1-4 officially close Feb 12, 6 p.m.]
- Quiz 5: Feb 24
- Quiz 6: Mar 2 [quizzes 5-6 officially close Mar 4, 6 p.m.]
- Quiz 7: Mar 16
- Quiz 8: Mar 23
- Quiz 9: Mar 30 [quizzes 7-9 officially close Apr 1, 6 p.m.]
- Quiz 10: Apr 25 [quiz 10 officially closes Apr 27, 6 p.m.]

10. COURSE SCHEDULE: TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS

The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule and syllabus content with appropriate notification to students. Any changes will be promptly announced.

Unit 1: Introduction to Bioethics and Basic Logic

1.1 Introduction to bioethics

Required activities:

Read this entire syllabus (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

1.2 Basic logic

Required activities:

Read Timmons & Shoemaker, "Introduction" esp. pp. 4-11 (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 1 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 1.1-1.2 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

Unit 2: Moral Theories and the Ethics of Euthanasia

2.1 Cultural relativism

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

2.2 Utilitarianism: theory, objections, and applications

Required activities:

Read Mill, "In Defense of Utilitarianism" (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 2 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 2.1-2.2 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

2.3 Introduction to the euthanasia debate and the killing/letting die distinction

Required activities:

Read Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia" (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

2.4 The Harm Principle

Required activities:

Read Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 1 (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

2.5 Voluntary active euthanasia and end-of-life decisions

Required activities:

Read Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia" (Moodle)
Watch PBS *Frontline* documentary: "Living Old" (60 min., Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 3 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 2.3-2.5 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

2.6 Kant's moral theory

Required activities:

Read Kant, "The Moral Law and Autonomy of the Will" (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 4 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 2.6 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

Bioethics Case Analysis, OPTION 1: End-of-Life Issues

DUE by Wed, Feb 17 (by 6 p.m.) (see instructions on Moodle)

Unit 3: The Nature of Persons and the Ethics of Abortion

3.1 Introduction to the abortion debate

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

3.2 Thomson's defense of abortion rights

Required activities:

Read Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

3.3 Warren's response to Thomson

Required activities:

Read Warren, "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion" (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

3.4 English's view on abortion and personhood

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 5 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 3.1-3.4 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

3.5 The Valuable Future Theory

Required activities:

Read Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral" (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

3.6 Tooley's desire account; critique of the Potentiality Principle

Required activities:

Read Tooley, "Abortion and Infanticide" (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 6 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 3.5-3.6 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

3.7 Stem cells and moral status of embryos

Required activities:

View PBS videos: “Stem Cells: Early Research” & “Stem Cells: Breakthrough” (15 min. each, Moodle)

Read Singer, “The Moral Status of the Embryo” (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

CORE / MIDTERM EXAM (Units 1-3) (60 minutes, through Moodle, open books and open notes)

OPENS Wed, Mar 2 (8 a.m.) and CLOSSES Fri, Mar 4 (6 p.m.)

Bioethics Case Analysis, OPTION 2: Beginning-of-Life Issues

DUE by Wed, Mar 16 (by 6 p.m.) (see instructions on Moodle)

Unit 4: Animal Rights and Evolutionary Ethics
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4.1 The lives of animals

Required activities:

Read Bekoff, “Emotional Lives of Animals” (Moodle)

Read Paulson, “The Cosmopolitan Ape” (interview with primatologist Frans de Waal) (Moodle)

4.2 The anthropocentric view of animal rights

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

4.3 The utilitarian view of animals

Required activities:

Read Singer, “All Animals are Equal” (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 7 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 4.1-4.3 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

4.4 The intrinsic rights view of animals

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

4.5 Critique of animal rights views

Required activities:

Read Cohen, “The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research” (Moodle)

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

4.6 The land ethic and animals

Required activities:

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 8 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 4.4-4.6 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

4.7 Evolution and ethics, part 1 (Rachel’s critique of evolutionary ethics)

Required activities:

Listen to PBS *Nova* audio clips: Big Thinkers on Evolution
Read Rachels, Ch. 2, *Created from Animals* (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

4.8 Evolution and ethics, part 2 (Rachel’s Moral Individualism theory)

Required activities:

Read Rachels, Ch. 5, *Created from Animals* (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 9 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 4.7-4.8 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

Unit 5: Healthcare Justice

5.1 Overview of healthcare in America

Required activities:

View PBS *Frontline* documentary “Sick around America” (60 min., e-reserve, through Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

5.2 Rawls’ Original Position thought experiment and distributive justice

Required activities:

Read Rawls, selections from *A Theory of Justice* (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

5.3 Healthcare around the world

Required activities:

Watch PBS *Frontline* documentary “Sick around the World” (60 min., e-reserve, through Moodle)

5.4 Nozick’s entitlement theory of justice

Required activities:

Read Nozick, selections from *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

QUIZ 10 (15 minutes online, open book, open note)

Covers 5.1-5.4 (Opening & closing times: see Moodle or the list of **important course dates** in section 9.)

5.5 HeLa cells, DNA ownership, and Justice

Required activities:

Read Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (including the ‘Afterword’)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

5.6 The Equal Access Principle

Required activities:

Read Gutmann, “For and against Equal Access to Health Care” (Moodle)
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

FINAL EXAM (Units 4 & 5) (60 minutes, through Moodle, open books and open notes)
OPENS Wed, Apr 27 (8 a.m.) and CLOSSES Thu, Apr 28 (6 p.m.)

FINAL ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

DUE: Wed, Apr 27 (by 6 p.m.) (see instructions in section 4 above *and* further details on Moodle)

11. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography includes all materials assigned in the course. Some recommended/optional sources may be found only on specific course handouts, or as links under some sub-units in Moodle; in such cases, bibliographical information is provided on that particular handout or at the relevant website.

An American Philosopher: The Career of Tom Regan. NCSU Library.

<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/exhibits/regan/>

Barrett, Matthew, Sara Holt, and John Rubin. 2009. What Darwin Never Knew. 2009. PBS *Nova*, WGBH Educational Foundation. Boston. Produced by Matthew Barrett, John Rubin, and Sarah Holt. (Video)

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<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/can-animals-save-us/we-second-that-emotion>

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<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/body/stem-cells-research.html>

Dax's Case. 2000. Filmmaker's Library: New York, NY. (Copyright 1984, Concern for Dying). (Video)

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Irwin, Dean. 2008. Stem Cells: Breakthrough. PBS *Nova*. WGBH Educational Foundation. Boston.

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Kant, Immanuel. 1785 and 1797. The Moral Law and Autonomy of the Will. In *Knowledge, Nature, and Norms: An Introduction to Philosophy*, eds. Mark Timmons and David Shoemaker, Wadsworth, 2009. (This selection is assembled from Kant's *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 1785, and *The Metaphysics of Morals*, 1797.)

Kaplan, Matt. 2009. "Bizarre" Octopuses Carry Coconuts as Instant Shelters. *National Geographic* (online magazine). Article published December 15, 2009. (There is a corresponding video with this article, which students are required to watch.)

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/12/091214-octopus-carries-coconuts-coconut-carrying/>

- Lewis, Susan K. and David Levin. 2009. Big Thinkers on Evolution. PBS *Nova*. WGBH Educational Foundation. Boston. Produced by Susan K. Lewis and David Levin. (Interviews with Daniel Dennett, Sylvia Earle, Stephen Jay Gould, Ken Miller, and James Moore.) (Audio)
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/evolution/big-thinkers-evolution.html>
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- Warren, Mary Anne. 1973. On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion. *The Monist* 51(1), pp. 43-61

12. WILLIAM BAUER – MINI BIOGRAPHY (FYI)

I joined the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at NC State in the fall of 2010, as a Teaching Assistant Professor of Philosophy (equivalent to a visiting assistant professor at other universities).

Previously, I was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where I completed my doctoral studies in Philosophy and taught for five years. Before that, I studied Philosophy at Miami University (in Oxford, Ohio), served as a US Army officer for about six years, and completed a degree in Biology (minor in Philosophy) at Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Before that, I was born, raised, and attended public schools in Arizona.

My primary areas of research and teaching interest include metaphysics (theory of reality, especially how to classify properties), philosophy of science, and bioethics. My interests in metaphysics overlap strongly with central problems of bioethics, such as the nature of persons and its importance for beginning-of-life and end-of-life moral issues. I also have an abiding interest in the structure of scientific reasoning.

I enjoy discussions with everyone taking my courses. I intend for my courses to be a place of open, respectful, rigorous philosophical exploration. For more information, see www.wabauer.com.

Thank you for taking my course.

The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule and syllabus content with appropriate notification to students. Any changes will be promptly announced through Moodle or email