

## BIO-MEDICAL ETHICS

PHI/STS 325-601 (DE course, 3 credit hours)  
North Carolina State University  
Spring 2020: Jan 6 – Apr 23

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

**GEP satisfaction:** 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.

**Instructor:** Dr. William A. Bauer

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Office location: online

Office hours (online): Tue/Thu, 1:30-3:00 p.m., or by appointment

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Office hours are held at my computer during which time I will be available to respond quickly to emails or discussion board comments; all other times, it is still best to email me. Outside of office hours, I intend to respond to emails within 24 hours (sooner during the weekdays but longer during weekends). If you email me please include **PHI-325** in the subject line. If you'd like to set up a time to talk on the phone or meet in person, email me. [Campus office: 434A Withers Hall. Office phone: 919-515-6330]

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

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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). 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 (insightful comments or good questions may give you a bump of 1-2 points) besides helping you better understand the material and 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:** You should do every activity for every topic. Carefully read the assigned article, reflect on it, study the handouts—which often contain information not in the readings—and make your own notes. Then go back through the assigned reading to test your understanding. If you do everything as assigned, 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. You will learn how to reason better about ethical issues by

carefully reading the assigned articles. 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 course consists of five units, as follows.

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 Categorical Imperative. 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 those surveyed in this course are 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 Mill’s Harm Principle, highly relevant to the debate over voluntary euthanasia. We will also examine the Hippocratic Oath and 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 (“A Defense of Abortion”) and Don Marquis (“Why Abortion is Immoral”). 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 Immortal*

*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.* It is a valuable community resource. 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 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 stated 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, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and exams.

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).]

Below is an example open-ended question requiring interpretation of a bioethical issue.

**Example essay question:** In the landmark case *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the SCOTUS ruled that women have the right to abortion. Specifically, in the first trimester, the state cannot regulate abortion; in the second trimester, the state can regulate abortion to protect the health of the mother; in the third trimester, the state can regulate against abortion but must allow exceptions for the life of the mother. The key idea behind the ruling was that the mother and fetus both have rights, and the fetus gains more protection as it becomes viable (capable of living outside the womb).

Your task is to briefly explain one theoretical perspective in *favor* of abortion rights, OR one theoretical perspective *against* abortion rights, and explain in what ways the theory is consistent and inconsistent (if at all) with the ruling. (Explain your answer in 2-3 paragraphs, approx. 300-400 words total.)

**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 of the rational and factual basis for diverse and nuanced perspectives regarding bioethics issues.

**How this Student Learning Outcome fulfills Humanities GEP Objective 2:** Comprehending 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, comprehending both the rational 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, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and exams.

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).]

Below is an example open-ended question requiring comprehension of a theoretical perspective regarding a bioethics issue.

**Example essay question:** Explain the Good Samaritan analogy given by Thomson. What is it? What is its purpose? How does it relate to her overall view of abortion? (Explain in 2-3 paragraphs, approx. 300-400 words.)

**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, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and exams.

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).]

Below is an example open-ended question requiring the construction of a concise argument.

**Example essay question:** Based on your assessment of Rachels’ discussion of evolutionary ethics, what do you think evolutionary theory has to do with ethical standards? (Present your argument, giving explicit reasons for your conclusion, in 1-2 paragraphs, approx. 100-150 words.)

### **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 stated 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.

**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, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and the midterm exam.

Below is an example objective question relating to the above Student Learning Outcome, requiring 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 an introduction to logic and philosophy 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).]

Below is an example open-ended question requiring *distinguishing between factual and philosophical-ethical claims* in order to more effectively analyze a bioethics issue.



**Example essay question:** Do animals have rights? What sort of rights? What is the theoretical and factual basis for your view? (You don't need to give detailed facts about animal biology or behavior, just sufficiently accurate information based on our studies and any additional knowledge you have.) (Explain your answer in 1 paragraph, approx. 100-150 words.)

**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 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 comprehending 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 comprehension 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 through both objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and the midterm exam, as seen in the example under Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP objective 1.

**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 through both objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false, etc.) and open-ended questions (requiring essay responses of various lengths) on quizzes and the midterm exam, as seen in the example under Interdisciplinary Perspectives GEP objective 1.

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://moodle-courses1920.wolfware.ncsu.edu/my/>) 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](http://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., *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 resources are available as a physical resource through the library, so please consult with me if you have issues with accessing Internet-based resources. 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." (The previous statement is based on University recommendation.)

#### 4. GRADED ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

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

- 10 online quizzes worth 10 points each: 100 points total. (30 minutes each)
- 1 online midterm/core exam (covers Units 1-3): 50 points total. (90 minutes)
- 1 online final exam (covers Units 4-5): 50 points total. (90 minutes)

**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, and (iii) take the final exam This means that, theoretically, you could skip or miss some quizzes yet still pass the course *so long as conditions (i) – (iii) are met*. You are *strongly encouraged* to complete everything.

The quiz and exam structure is carefully designed to motivate your progress, require you to carefully apply bioethics concepts, prompt you to think critically, 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

**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 academic integrity in section 5.)

**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 or exam question, you can of course consult me about it.

**Format:** When you take the quizzes and exams, questions are selected from a large databank of questions created by the instructor. You won't have your complete score until the instructor grades the essay parts. The quizzes and exams will assess your understanding of and ability to apply the main concepts, arguments, and theories that we study. Questions will reflect material covered in handouts, assigned readings, and videos (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?' Other questions (especially the essay questions) will require you to apply concepts in hypothetical situations, state and develop your own view, criticize a given view, etc.

**Quizzes:** There are 10 quizzes worth 10 points each, administered through Moodle. Quizzes consist of a mix of 8, or 10, closed questions (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, etc.) worth 1 point each. If a quiz has only 8 objective questions, then it will also have an open-ended question requiring an essay response (1 paragraph, or approx. 100-150 total words), worth 2 points (2 points for an excellent/good answer, 1 point for an average/sufficient answer, 0 points for a poor answer). You will typically see two questions on each page as you go through the quiz. You will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz; some, but not the majority, of the quizzes will contain short essays (before you start each quiz, an instruction page will tell you if there is a short essay question). Objective questions are graded automatically. I grade the essay questions manually, which will take at least a few days. See section 9 for the quiz schedule.

**Midterm exam:** The midterm/core exam is worth 50 points, and you will have 90 minutes to answer 30 closed questions (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, etc.) worth 1 point each, plus 1 open-ended question requiring an essay response (2-3 long paragraphs, approximately 300-400 total words) worth 20 points. The midterm is also known as the 'core' exam because it covers foundational bioethics topics (beginning and end-of-life issues, personhood, moral principles, etc.), which have logical connections to many other issues, thus preparing you for further studies in bioethics in this course and beyond. See section 9 for the exam dates.

**Final exam:** The final exam is worth 50 points, and you will have 90 minutes to answer 50 closed questions (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, etc.) worth 1 point each. It has no essay question. 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 section 9 for the exam dates.

**Essay questions:** The essay questions (on some quizzes and the midterm exam) require direct engagement with a particular bioethical issue, concept, theory, or argument. Excellent answers are typically concise, precise, and focused directly on the stated question. (See the rubric in Moodle for more details, example questions, and model answers.)

**Participation:** Participation on the discussion board is not required, but is encouraged. It is a tool that can help clarify course content, expectations, 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. 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 why not 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 at least 24 hours to respond (perhaps longer on weekends), so that others have a chance to respond.

### **Attendance/Absence Policy**

"Any absences and missed deadlines must be handled in accord with the university **Attendance Regulation (NCSU REG02.20.03)** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-03>." (The previous statement is from official University policy.)

Since this is an online course, 'attendance' consists of completing assignments, quizzes, and exams. Moodle keeps an activity log of individual users, which the instructor has access to.

**Late assignments and make-ups:** Make-ups for exams and quizzes are allowed for reasons approved by University policy (see the previous passage on attendance) such as official University athletic obligations, official religious holidays, or verifiable medical situations. Contact the instructor in person or by email, as soon as possible, with proof (in your email, include in the subject line: "PHI 325"). 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.

If you miss an exam or quiz without an official, University-approved reason then you will be allowed to make up the exam only if you can show documentation of some extenuating circumstances that reasonably prevented your attendance. If you do miss an exam or quiz for a non-official reason, do not have documentation of extenuating circumstances, yet the instructor agrees to allow a make-up, then you will be assessed a late penalty of a minimum of -2 points, and an additional -2 for each day you did not coordinate with the instructor after the missed exam or quiz. Keep in mind that make-ups should usually *not* be necessary in this online course, unless you have some verifiable emergency, because quizzes and exams are open on Moodle for several days.

**Discussing grades and performance:** I am always willing to discuss your grades on assignments/exams. 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 an essay, *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-).*

**Honors credit requirements:** If you are in the University Honors or Scholars Program and wish to take this course for Honors credit, I would be happy to work with you. I have completed a Faculty-Initiated Honors Contract form for this course. Please **contact me within the first two weeks of class if it is a fall or spring term (or, within the first week if it is a summer session)** to indicate that you wish to take this course for Honors credit. I will need your full name, ID number, and email address for the honors contract form that I will submit to the University Honors Program office. In contacting me, I assume that you are highly interested in at least one of the major topics of the course and that you are willing to do the extra required work, as follows.

The Honors requirement, on top of the normal course requirements (quizzes, midterm exam, final exam) outlined above and earning a B- or better, will be a **substantial argumentative essay** on a bioethics topic, defined as follows: approximately 5-6 pages (double-spaced, 10-12 point, normal-looking font, 1-inch margins) of concise, organized prose; formulates an interesting, specific thesis statement; advances a primary argument or theory (could be the student's own, or build on the work of another author) in support of the thesis; discusses an objection to the argument or theory; evaluates the objection by providing reasons for and against; incorporates significant discussion of at least two scholarly journal articles or scholarly book chapters (one from the assigned course readings, one from outside the course), either as part of the argument, the objection, or evaluation of the objection; and the essay contains a significant degree of originality (in the argument, objection, examples used, etc.).

As part of the process, you should send me a fairly robust outline of your paper around 2/3 of the way through the course (this is somewhat flexible, but keep the instructor informed). The topic should be one of the topics listed in the syllabus (beginning or end-of-life issues; animal rights; healthcare access; evolutionary ethics; a topic related to Skloot's *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*); other topics are possible but consult with me first. Your project should emphasize strategies such as creative thinking in solving bio-ethical dilemmas, critical thinking on a philosophical topic, analysis of philosophical concepts, argument construction and evaluation, and related methods.

As noted above, 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 a scholarly article or book chapter 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 it carefully, or they take up another's point of view and develop it their own way, etc.

Further guidance will be provided on Moodle or through email between us.

## 5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

"In all course work, students are bound by the Pack Pledge. ["I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment"]. Any violation of this Pledge will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct with a recommendation of a zero/F for at least the affected assignment; a failing grade for the course may be imposed as may other penalties. See the **Code of Student Conduct policy (NCSU POL11.35.1)** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01>." (The previous statements are from official University policy.)

**Don't plagiarize; don't cheat.** Plagiarism and cheating are serious ethical violations representing a lack of dedication to learning.

*You can consult your course materials (notes, books, handouts, etc.) on all exams and quizzes, but you cannot consult with fellow students or post questions on the Moodle discussion board or any other discussion board. 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.*

## 6. PRIVACY POLICY

“Students may be required to disclose personally identifiable information to other students in the course, 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 the privacy of each other by not sharing or using such information outside the course.” (The previous statements are from official University policy.)

Your assignments, quizzes, and exams will of course be viewed by the instructor. If you voluntarily raise a question or make a comment in class (on the discussion forum, for instance), then, of course, that is not private. We will sometimes address controversial topics in class, via examples that we apply logical principles to evaluate. Each participant has the right to raise questions that others may respond to, make comments, and advance observations about these topics. These discussions are for everyone's benefit, and everyone should feel free to express their personal opinions about the topics we discuss, or simply try out new opinions to test them. Treat your peers *with respect and courtesy*.

“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.” (The previous statement is approved by the Office of the General Counsel).

## 7. DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

“Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with the Disability Resources Office at Holmes Hall, Suite 304, Campus Box 7509, 919-515-7653. For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG02.20.01) <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-01>” (the previous statements are from official University guidance).

## 8. ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND IMPORTANT NOTES

### N.C. State Policies, Regulations, and Rules (PRR)

“Students are responsible for reviewing the NC State University PRR’s which pertains to their course rights and responsibilities:

- **Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy Statement**  
<https://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-04-25-05> with additional references at <https://oied.ncsu.edu/equity/policies/>
- **Code of Student Conduct** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/policy/pol-11-35-01>
- **Grades and Grade Point Average** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-03>
- **Credit-Only Courses** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-15>
- **Audits** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-04>
- **Incompletes (IN)** <https://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-50-03>”

(The above statements are from official University guidance.)

**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](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/campus_environ) or [http://www.ncsu.edu/equal\\_op](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.” (The previous statements are from official University policy.)

### Support for transgender students

“In an effort to affirm and respect the identities of transgender students in the classroom and beyond, please contact me if you wish to be referred to using a name and/or pronouns other than what is listed in the student directory.” (The previous statement is recommended NC State Student Government.)

### Supporting fellow students in distress

“As members of the NC State Wolfpack community, we each share a personal responsibility to express concern for one another and to ensure that this classroom and the campus as a whole remains a safe environment for learning. Occasionally, you may come across a fellow classmate whose personal behavior concerns or worries you. When this is the case, I would encourage you to report this behavior to the NC State Students of Concern website: <http://studentsofconcern.ncsu.edu/>. Although you can report anonymously, it is preferred that you share your contact information so they can follow-up with you personally.” (The previous statement is from Division of Student and Academic Affairs.)

### Student Ombuds

The Student Ombuds is a confidential resource (to the extent allowable by law), that provides a sounding board to discuss concerns related to your university experience - be they academic, personal or interpersonal, if it is important to you, it is an issue you can discuss with the Ombuds. The Student



Ombuds provides information, discusses university policies and procedures, and helps students navigate their time at NC State. You can learn more about Student Ombuds Services and schedule an appointment by visiting <https://ombuds.ncsu.edu/> (University recommended statement).

### **Food and housing challenges**

“Any student who faces challenges securing food and/or housing or has other financial challenges and believes this may affect their performance in this course is encouraged to notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. Alternatively, you can learn more about the Pack Essentials program and available resources by visiting <https://dasa.ncsu.edu/pack-essentials/> (University recommended statement).

**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](mailto: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>.

### **Recording lectures and discussion**

“Students may not use recording devices in the classroom without explicit prior permission of the instructor. If permission is granted, there must also be no member of the class who objects. Instructor and class permission is not required when an accommodation notification from Disability Services has been received by the instructor, which identifies a student that requires the use of a recording device. However, the instructor may prohibit the use of any recording device when it would inhibit free discussion and free exchange of ideas in the classroom.” (The previous statements are from University policy at <http://policies.ncsu.edu/regulation/reg-02-20-11>.)

### **Philosophy opportunities and CHASS Career Services**

From time to time, I might email or discuss in class information about scholarship opportunities, graduate opportunities, etc. 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.

CHASS Career Services encourages you to “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](http://careers.ncsu.edu).” However, the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies states that “The

Career Development Center's career-choosing inventories classify Philosophy misleadingly as *Artistic* or *Social*. Philosophy should be classified as *Investigative*. See also: <http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/philosophy/>."

## 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 some time 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 I usually (not always) 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.

There are 5 units with a total of 29 sub-units. Graded activities have set closing dates, but are open for relatively long periods; the schedule for all reading assignments is flexible. **Plan accordingly so that you can complete all activities on time because there is a significant amount of material.**

### **Important course and University dates**

- First day of classes: Mon, Jan 6
- Last day to add a course without instructor permission: Fri, Jan 10
- Census Date/Official Enrollment Date: Fri, Jan 17 (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)
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (MLK, Jr. Day): Mon, Jan 20
- **Quizzes 1-4 close on Wed, Feb 5 (11:59 p.m.)**

- Drop/Revision Deadline – MyPack Portal closes for drops at 11:59 pm: Mon, Mar 2
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (Spring Break): Mon-Fri, Mar 9-13
- **Quizzes 5-6 close on Wed, Mar 4 (11:59 p.m.)**
- **Midterm/Core Exam (covers units 1-3) is open Wed, Mar 4 (8 a.m.) – Thu, Mar 5 (11:59 p.m.)**
- **Quizzes 7-9 close on Wed, Apr 8 (11:59 p.m.)**
- Last week of semester: Mon-Thu, Apr 20-23 (the last day of classes is Thu, Apr 23)
- Reading Day: Fri, Apr 24
- **Quiz 10 closes on Mon, Apr 27 (11:59 p.m.)**
- **Final Exam (covers units 4-5) is open Mon, Apr 27 (8 a.m.) – Tue, Apr 28 (11:59 p.m.)**
- Final exam period: Mon, Apr 27 to Tue, May 5
- Fall Graduation Exercises: Sat, May 9

### **Recommended quiz schedule**

This recommended quiz schedule can help organize your schedule and give you time before the exams to review quiz questions and receive feedback.

- Quiz 1: Jan 10
- Quiz 2: Jan 17
- Quiz 3: Jan 27
- Quiz 4: Feb 3 [quizzes 1-4 officially close Feb 5, 11:59 p.m.]
- Quiz 5: Feb 17
- Quiz 6: Feb 28 [quizzes 5-6 officially close Mar 4, 11:59 p.m.]
- Quiz 7: Mar 20
- Quiz 8: Mar 27
- Quiz 9: Apr 3 [quizzes 7-9 officially close Apr 8, 11:59 p.m.]
- Quiz 10: Apr 17 [quiz 10 officially closes Apr 27, 11:59 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** (30 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 (30 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 Tyson, “The Hippocratic Oath Today” (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 (30 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 (30 minutes online, open book, open note)

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

## 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** (30 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:**

Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

### **QUIZ 6** (30 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:**

Read Singer, “The Moral Status of the Embryo” (Moodle)  
Read “The Stem Cell Debate: Is It Over?” (Utah Genetic Science Learning Center) (Moodle)  
Study handouts & other material (Moodle)

### **CORE / MIDTERM EXAM (Units 1-3) (90 min., through Moodle, open books and open notes)**

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

## **Unit 4: Animal Rights and Evolutionary Ethics**

### **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** (30 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** (30 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)

**Required activities:**

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

**QUIZ 9** (30 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:**

Watch “Introduction to the U.S. Healthcare System” (11 min., 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 (30 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) (90 min., through Moodle, open books and open notes)

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

## 11. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

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- 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/>
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## 12. WILLIAM A. BAUER – BIOGRAPHY (FYI)

William Bauer joined the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at NC State as a Teaching Assistant Professor in the fall of 2010. Previously, he was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he completed a PhD in Philosophy and taught for two years. Before that, he finished an MA in Philosophy at Miami University (in Oxford, Ohio), served as a US Army officer for about six years, and completed a BA in Biology (minor in Philosophy) at Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Before that, he was born, raised, and attended public schools in Arizona. Bauer's main areas of interest include metaphysics, philosophy of science, and applied ethics (especially bioethics and AI ethics). He has published papers on the nature of mass, dispositional properties, pantheism, personal identity, scientific reasoning, and artificial moral agents. At NC State, Bauer has taught Introduction to Philosophy, Thinking Logically, Bio-Medical Ethics, and Introduction to Research Ethics (graduate level). He says "I really enjoy discussions with everyone taking my courses, both in and out of class. I intend for my courses to be places of exploration, where together we map out argumentative territory, explore and critique new possibilities, and attempt to better understand the relationship between the world, the self, and values." (For more information about Bauer's professional interests, see [www.wabauer.com](http://www.wabauer.com).)