

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH ETHICS

PHI 816 (1 credit)

North Carolina State University

Prerequisites and co-requisites: none

Enrollment restrictions: graduate standing

Spring 2017: Jan 9-Mar 1 (first 8-week session)

Time & place: Mon 4:30-6:20 p.m., 140 Withers Hall

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Email: wabauer@ncsu.edu (I intend to respond to all emails within 24 hours, probably sooner during the weekdays, perhaps longer during weekends. When emailing me, please use “PHI 816” in the subject.)

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1. COURSE OVERVIEW

Course catalog description

“Institutional rules guiding the responsible conduct of research (RCR) and their philosophical justification. Rudiments of moral reasoning and their application to RCR. Topics: plagiarism, falsification and fabrication of data, and ethics versus custom, law, science, and religion.”

Ethics and the responsible conduct of research: an overview of the course

Why are you in graduate school?

Some of your reasons will likely include, among others: learning more about your chosen field of study, improving your research skills, increasing the prospects of succeeding in your chosen profession, and increasing your economic potential. However, arguably, the fundamental purpose of a university is to expand human knowledge and understanding of all aspects of humans and the universe we inhabit. If this is true, then no matter what your reasons are for being in graduate school, you are part of a community of learners and researchers. You are contributing to the teaching and advancement of

human knowledge. You are fulfilling what Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) hypothesized is your fundamental purpose as a human: to use rationality.

Aristotle, student at Plato's Academy and teacher of Alexander the Great, argued that humans are the 'rational animal'. He claimed in his *Metaphysics* that 'All men [humans] by nature desire to know'. Rationality is our distinguishing feature in the animal kingdom. Although we now know that many kinds of animals have degrees of rationality—e.g., gorillas have learned thousands of words in sign language, and whales have sophisticated songs—the evidence appears to indicate that humans possess rationality to a higher degree than all other animals. Importantly, Aristotle further maintained that rationality and the pursuit of knowledge must be *guided by virtue*. Rationality, he observed, can be used for ill or benefit. It is our responsibility to cultivate in ourselves and others the requisite values to be responsible—ethical, moral, virtuous—researchers. And that is what this course concerns: the responsible conduct of research (RCR).

How should you proceed in your graduate studies?

Besides using and mastering the methods and tools of your specific discipline, you should use the 'Socratic method', or the method of *elenchus*, made famous by Socrates (469-399 B.C.E.). This is a cooperative conversation between two or more people asking critical questions and giving answers (supported by arguments), and repeating this with the aim of arriving at truth. Socrates famously claimed that the only thing he knows is that he knows nothing. But he claimed he was good at helping other people understand their own beliefs and cooperatively working towards truth. He did so using the method of *elenchus*. It is not hard to see that this method, in various forms, has influenced the conduct of politics, philosophy, and science.

Make your beliefs, hypotheses, and values explicit. Ask questions about your beliefs and those of others. What reasons do you have to support them? What reasons do you have to reject them? Critically examine them. Give reasons and evidence. Ask more questions. Be willing to reject unsupported claims you formerly believed. As Socrates stated, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Seek out others' perspectives, and offer your perspective, on the research questions you investigate and the ethical concerns they raise. You are part of a community of question-askers, as Comstock notes in the introduction to his *Research Ethics*. We can help each other in resolving moral dilemmas we face along the way in doing our research.

Where are you going in graduate school and beyond?

In his *Republic*, Plato (427-347 B.C.E.) invents the Myth of the Cave. Imagine people chained to the floor of a cave, so they can only look in one direction towards a cave wall. Behind the people and out of their view burns a fire. A series of puppets and shapes move just in front of the fire, casting shadows on the cave wall in front of the people. These shadows are all the chained people see; it constitutes the only reality of which they are aware. One day, one of the prisoners breaks free, and discovers the true source of the shadows—the moving puppets and the fires. She tells her imprisoned peers the truth, but they do not believe her. So she leaves the cave and witnesses the sun and objects in the outer world, an even deeper reality than the shadows, shapes, and fire of the cave. She returns, trying to convince the others that they lack knowledge of the true reality. They do not believe her, and remain comfortable with their given situation.

Whether we are humanists, scientists, or technologists, it is our job to seek, discover, and invent. It is our job to break down barriers to knowledge, to deepen understanding of ourselves and our world. We may not be in an actual cave, but there are surely aspects of reality of which we are unaware or know little about. Through questioning, probing, and analyzing as a community of learners we can

expand our knowledge and deepen our understanding. Remember, though, that in leaving the cave and unpeeling the layers of reality, we must be properly guided by virtue. We must be responsible.

Ethics as a field of study

What makes an action right? What is ultimately good? These questions are the concern of ethics—the study and theory of *value*—one of the four main branches of philosophy. Other branches of philosophy include metaphysics (theory of reality), epistemology (theory of knowledge) and logic (theory of reasoning and argumentation).

Ethics has three subdivisions. One subdivision is *meta-ethics*, which concerns the nature of moral discourse and language. It operates at a high level of abstraction, asking questions concerning whether morality is real or unreal, and whether moral claims having any truth-value (or, are they simply expressions of emotion, having no truth-value). Another subdivision of ethics is *moral theory* or *ethical theory*, which aims to identify those properties that make actions morally right or wrong. A third subdivision of ethics is *applied ethics*, which aims to find plausible ethical solutions to specific problems by reasoning from empirical facts conjoined with ethical theories or principles. Applied ethics investigates specific moral problems generated by, for instance, the practice of medicine (abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, etc.), business (manager-employee relations, corporate responsibility, etc.), war (e.g., is it ever justified?), and research. So research ethics is part of applied ethics but inherently involves moral theoretic dimensions as well.

What is research ethics?

If ethics is the study the right and the good, what is research? Research is the use of reason, analysis, senses, empirical methods, and investigative tools to learn about, and solve problems concerning, the world, humanity, and humanity's place in the world. (There may be other ways to conceive of research, but this definition aims to be maximally broad.) Therefore, research ethics is the study of moral and normative problems as they relate to research. RCR requires studying research ethics—RCR and research ethics go hand in hand.

Research ethics concerns practical and theoretical questions that arise in the context of research, thereby incorporating elements of both ethical theory and applied ethics. Ethical theories provide frameworks for the evaluation and assessment of particular issues. But the theories themselves are of course challengeable. As we explore some traditional ethical theories, we will also see various problems that arise for them.

In this course we will think about particular issues like the responsible presentation of data, the use of statistics, the role of intuitions, plagiarism, the use of non-human and human animals, and mentoring, among other issues. At every reasonable opportunity we will look at these issues through the lenses of ethical theories such as egoism and utilitarianism.

You should know that in this course you may study some topics and do some activities that may have little to do with your specific research areas (such as animal or human subjects, and ethical issues in physics). But this is good. First, you don't know where your academic research career may take you. Second, as a member of the research community it is important to be familiar with topics and issues outside of your more specific interests.

Expectations regarding discussion and respect

As the ancient Greeks were fond of saying, "Know thyself." Everyone in this course is an experienced student and researcher, so it is assumed that everyone has the requisite study skills and habits to succeed in this course. The problems, theories, and arguments we discuss will challenge your

ideas and thinking process. But you should challenge yourself, too, in order to get the most out of the class. And this requires knowing your own learning preferences and habits.

This course uses active learning, so it is not just straight lecture. I will ask you questions in class; I expect you to answer (at least some of the time). We will do activities or exercises together as a class; I expect you to participate. I will place you in small groups; I expect you to share your perspective.

All class members should respect others' rights to express their viewpoints about controversial issues. You should treat your peers, in the content *and* tone of your observations, with respect and courtesy. You are encouraged to express your reasoned opinions, questions, and comments at any time (including on the discussion board through Moodle). Try to stick to the course content: for instance, offer your perspective on an issue, ask about my formulation of a theory or idea, give your reaction to a thought experiment, or ask for clarification if something is ambiguous. Exercise good judgment. Almost everyone will have an opinion about most topics, but what philosophers are interested in is the justification for such opinions and the assumptions that we make. What is the argument for the claim? What theories, facts, or values lend support to the claim?

The moment we stop asking questions is the moment we stop doing research.

2. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student Learning Outcome # 1: Students will be able to clearly analyze, discuss, and make informed and defensible decisions concerning various issues in research ethics by reference to ethical principles and theories, logical principles, and relevant scientific and philosophical information.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false, matching) on quizzes, short assignments, and participation in group discussions.

Example objective question: The expanding circle metaphor encapsulates which of the following moral theories?

- Egoism (roughly, do that action which most benefits the self)
- Utilitarianism (roughly, do that action which maximizes everyone's happiness or interests)
- Moral nihilism (roughly, no action is inherently right/wrong)
- Both a. and c.
- Both a. and b.

Example discussion question: Explain the key differences between the theories of egoism and utilitarianism. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each theory?

Student Learning Outcome # 2: Students will be able to understand and competently evaluate arguments concerning various issues in research ethics.

Outcome assessment: This outcome is assessed through objective questions (multiple-choice, true/false, matching) on quizzes, short assignments, and participation in group discussions.

Example objective question: What is the primary reason Douglas MacLean gives—in his essay “Informed consent and the construction of values”—for claiming that the deliberative model of informed consent is the best model?

- It allows the public to feel confident in research methods.
- It allows the patient's value to be constructed in the process of being informed within a specific context.
- It allows the agent's (patient's) preconceived values to determine what he or she chooses.

d. It allows the organization the researcher works for to be legally protected.

Example discussion question: Identify and discuss one reason for, and one reason against, requiring informed consent in conducting experiments with human subjects.

3. COURSE MATERIALS

(1) **Moodle:** It is assumed that you have reliable access to a computer and a reliable internet connection. You will need to access Moodle (<https://moodle-courses1617.wolfware.ncsu.edu/>) with your Unity ID and password. Moodle is a University-approved Learning Management System. It is recommended—but not required—to have a laptop computer which you can bring to class so that you can access Moodle to see materials, record notes, take quizzes, etc.

(2) **Research Ethics: A Philosophical Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Research, Gary Comstock, Cambridge UP, 2013.** ISBN: 0521187087. This is the primary source of reading assignments in this course, and you'll read the entire book. You should bring a copy to class every day we meet. Most chapters include both an analysis of the chapter topic by Comstock and one or two background essays further exploring the main issues. Price at NC State bookstore: \$49.99 new, \$37.50 used. The bookstore also has a comparison shopping tool. Amazon sells it new for approximately \$42 new, and used through various sellers for less. D.H. Hill Library at NC State has a copy of this book on physical reserve. It is also available electronically through Hill library if you are logged in with your Unity ID and password (<http://catalog.lib.ncsu.edu/record/NCSU2767712>).

(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 and slides.** These are instructor-copyrighted materials and will be available on Moodle or in class. They provide background information, and commentary on key arguments or ideas.

Many recommended articles, videos, and other resources are available through links provided at the course Moodle site.

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 may 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). Any 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. Some resources linked from Moodle are available on the internet freely 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). Please consult with me if you have issues 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 816 (Introduction

to Research Ethics) taught at NC State University in the current term are copyrighted and intended for my personal use. By logging into the PHI 816 website (through Moodle), you certify that you will not share any content of the class PHI 816 NC State University website with a third party without written permission from the instructor, Prof. William Bauer” (statement based on University recommendation).

4. GRADING

All assignments, quizzes, and exams combined are worth 200 points, as follows:

- 6 weekly quizzes (x 20 points each) = 120 points [30 minutes each]
- 1 final exam (x 30 points) [45 minutes] (cumulative, but emphasizes topic/week 7)
- Interview your mentor (if you are doing research in your graduate program) and submit an interview report (300-400 words) OR complete a critical essay (300-400 words) responding to an ethical issue raised in a peer-reviewed article in your main field of study (x 30 points)
- Complete training tutorial (animal subjects OR human subjects; choose the one that is most relevant to your research, but if neither the one that is most interesting to you) (x 10 points)
- Attend a colloquium, guest lecture, or discussion group on an ethical issue in your field OR attend the guest lecture in our class meeting on ethics in physics, date TBD (x 10 points)
- Attend at least 5 out of 7 class meetings (x 0 points, but required to pass the course; if this is going to be a problem, talk to me—further absences require official excuses)

In order to PASS the course (earn an “S” for satisfactory), you MUST do all of the following: (i) achieve sufficient points (140) to earn a passing grade (see the scale below), (ii) take the final exam, (iii) submit either a complete interview report OR the short essay response on an ethical issue, (iv) complete either the animal OR human subjects training, (v) attend at least 5 out of 7 class meetings, and (vi) attend an ethics colloquium. This means that, theoretically, you could miss some quizzes (not recommended) yet pass *so long as conditions (i)-(vi) are met*.

Altogether, the assignment load is not terribly burdensome, but there is a significant amount of required reading and all of the assignments are designed to motivate your progress and challenge you.

Course grading scale

S = Satisfactory (receives credit) [must earn C- or better]

U = Unsatisfactory (does not receive credit)

| Numerical total | Grade |
|-----------------|----------|
| 139-200 | S |
| 138 or below | U |

Further details about all graded assignments

Integrity: When you log onto Moodle to take a quiz or exam, or you take a hard copy version in class, you are directly affirming your commitment to University policies concerning academic integrity. You are permitted to consult with up to two peers during the quizzes or exams, and you can use your *Research Ethics* book (hard copy or electronic copy) and your personal 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. (See more on integrity in section 5.) When you submit any written assignment it should be your original work.

Quizzes and Final Exam: Weekly quizzes and the final exam will be given during class, and you can take them through the Moodle site OR via hard copy. The quizzes and exam will assess your understanding of the main concepts, facts, arguments, and theories that we study. Questions are based on material from the reading assignments, as well as class activities and discussions that reinforce certain points from the readings (e.g., if we do an exercise or activity on plagiarism or the fabrication of data, this will complement material from the assigned reading). The first quiz will also ask some questions about the syllabus (especially but not exclusively section 1, the course overview).

What if you have a bad quiz one day? You get ONE quiz retake to be used as you need for the entire term, to be given through Moodle. Let me know if you think you need to do this. My suggestion is to wait until you've taken most of the quizzes, and if one is truly threatening your earning credit for the course, then retake it.

The Final Exam is cumulative but emphasizes Week 7 topics (Part D of Comstock, *Research Ethics*). 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?'

Interview OR Essay

Purpose: To increase your awareness and understanding of ethical issues in your field, either by discussion with your mentor or through the literature of your field.

Interview your mentor: Using the interview format given in Comstock (2012, pp. 195-6), interview your mentor if you are doing research in your graduate program and especially if you are working in some sort of laboratory setting. (If not, then instead complete the ethics essay assignment as explained below. If you need help deciding which assignment to do, don't hesitate to talk to me. Whichever assignment you do, it will be valuable.) If you choose to do this assignment, but you do not have someone you consider a mentor, try to find one or find the person best situated to be your mentor such as your advisor (one person may serve both roles), a faculty member in your department you've worked closely with, your department chair, etc. You should send them the list of questions ahead of time to review (preferable) and then meet with them, or just meet with them and ask as many of the questions as possible. The interview is intended to take about 30 minutes, but it can be shorter or longer depending on your circumstances. You don't have to ask all the questions, but you should try to ask all of the ones you think are most relevant (some will clearly not be relevant to your research or goals). Based on your interview, prepare and turn in a 300-400 word synopsis of the interview explaining the most important things you learned during the interview, as well as any ethical questions or concerns that were raised during the conversation which may require further contemplation and investigation. Be sure to identify your field of study and the official role of your mentor. (See the schedule below or the Moodle page for the due date.)

OR

Respond to a peer-reviewed article about ethics in your field: Select a peer-reviewed article about ethics in your field, or a peer-reviewed non-ethics article that raises or implies an ethical issue. Form a critical question about the ethical issue addressed or implied by the article. Provide a reasonable answer to that question—an answer supported with reasons, i.e., a logical argument. The question can be based on how the research was conducted, the implications of the research, the possible uses of the research, etc. As stated, this could be a peer-reviewed article specifically concerning an ethical issue or issues in your field, but it need not be. For example, if you are in statistics, you might

find an article about the two different conceptual approaches (Bayesian v. frequentist), discuss how these might affect the interpretation of specific results in some experiment, and the ethical implications of this. Alternatively, you can find an article concerning ethics in a field *other* than your own, or on science or humanities in general. But it must appear in a scholarly journal of some sort and you must be able to tie the critical question you form explicitly to the topic of the article. You should use parenthetical citations in the essay and give a bibliography (use MLA, Chicago, or some other professional method for references). Be prepared to talk about your question and response in class with small groups. (See the schedule below or the Moodle page for the due date.)

Complete Human OR Animal Subjects training: Complete either the Animal Subjects or Human Subject training module (links in Moodle). Choose the one that is most relevant to your research. If it is unlikely that you are to use humans or animals in your research, I still want you to do one of modules, so choose the one that is most interesting to you. Email me (wabauer@ncsu.edu) a screen shot of the module completion page, certificate, or message (e.g., you can “print” the page and save it as a PDF). (See schedule below or the Moodle page for the due date. See Moodle for further details about this assignment.)

Attend an ethics colloquium: Attend an ethics colloquium, discussion panel, discussion group, guest lecture, or some similar event on an ethical issue in or related to your field OR attend the session in our normal class meeting on ethics in physics. Attending the ethics in physics seminar is the easiest way to complete this task. But if you choose some other event, note that “ethics” is broadly construed to include political, moral, and social issues, and your field of study is broadly construed as well (if you are in physiology, anything in the life sciences would be appropriate). The date you attend the event can be during the 8-week period of this course or anytime else this semester or next semester. I trust you to do this. Report to the instructor through Moodle (through the link under Week/Topic 6) that you completed this task and you will be awarded 10 points. For possible events, you might look at the following places: <https://scienceandsociety.duke.edu/>, <http://parrcenter.unc.edu/>, <http://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/>, <https://iei.ncsu.edu/>, <https://research.ncsu.edu/ges/> (See Moodle for further details about this requirement.)

Participation: We are a learning community. What are you doing in graduate school if you are not actively participating? Actively participating means: reading assignments attentively and critically; completing assignments and quizzes carefully and with integrity; and attending classes while listening, asking questions, making observations, and developing interests in the issues—even issues outside your field that impact your field, which, of course, includes ethics. In this class, there is a discussion board (a continuously open online forum in Moodle) on which you may ask questions and make observations. If someone posts something, you don’t have to wait for the instructor to respond. Go ahead—help each other.

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, in order to make arrangements (in your email, include in the subject line: “PHI 816”). 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 you did not coordinate with the instructor after the missed exam or quiz.

Discussing grades and performance: Do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss your grade or course performance.

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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.

For all quizzes, exams, or assignments submitted electronically or on paper, you are automatically affirming the following statement: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment."

You **can** consult your own course materials (notes, books, handouts, etc.) and up to two peers on all exams and quizzes. You **cannot** have someone else take a quiz or exam for you, survey the class about an answer to quiz question, or perform other similar violations of integrity. If you need further guidance, talk to me. 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, 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" (this statement is from official University policy). In this course, no personally identifiable information will be disclosed to individuals outside the class enrollment/roster (but those enrolled in the course can see who else is enrolled) 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 or speak up in class, then, of course, that is not private.

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

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>” (statement from official university policy).

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 certainly be conducted per NC State University policies. The evaluation system will be available near the end of the course. 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>.

9. ADVICE FOR DOING WELL

Suggestions to maximize your learning:

1. Read each assignment carefully, taking note of key ideas, facts, and arguments (note that many chapters have useful conclusions and 'take home lessons').
2. View any required videos or visit any required web resources.
3. Participate actively in class (listen carefully; ask questions; make observations; participate).
4. Complete all assignments in a timely manner.
5. Seek help from your peers or the instructor as needed.

What to bring to class:

1. Your copy (either hard or electronic) of Comstock's *Research Ethics*.
2. Your laptop computer or tablet (not required, but you can take the weekly quizzes electronically through Moodle, which I recommend).
3. Notebook with any questions or observations from the reading that you may have.
4. Your perspective and critical thinking skills.

Time management:

1. The reading assignments each week should take you about 2-3 hours to complete. Some weeks are heavier, so plan accordingly. You wouldn't be in graduate school if you weren't organized and good at planning your studies.
2. Quizzes are given during the last 30 minutes of each class, so read assignments ahead of class.
3. Other assignments (the essay *or* interview, animal *or* human subjects training, etc.) should take you about 4-10 hours total, depending on which options you choose.
4. Adding up total time commitments, everything in the course (including class meetings) is estimated to take you about 32-45 hours.

10. COURSE SCHEDULE: TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS¹

Important University dates for the first 8-week session

- First day of classes: Mon, Jan 9
- Holiday – NO CLASSES (MLK, Jr. Day): Mon, Jan 16
- Census Date/Official Enrollment Date: Mon, Jan 23 (Last day to add a course; last day for tuition refunds due to dropping a course or changing from credit to audit)
- Drop/Revision Deadline – MyPack Portal closes for drops at 11:59 p.m.: Thu, Feb 2
- Last day of classes: Wed, Mar 1
- Grades due: Fri, Mar 3

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

JAN 9

Week 1: Course overview, logic, & ethical thinking

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Course syllabus
- Introduction, pp. 1-20, Comstock *Research Ethics*

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).

DURING CLASS

- Logistics and course overview
- Logic and ethics
- Ethics, science, religion, and law
- Ethical theory and the expanding circle

QUIZ 1 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

JAN 16

Week 2: MLK, Jr. Day – No Class

Advice: Get ahead on reading assignments and other assignments (e.g., the interview or essay requirement, animal or human subjects training)

¹ Thanks to Gary Comstock for providing a model of how to structure this course and for other useful advice.

JAN 23

Week 3: Protect my interests

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Part A – Protect my interests, pp. 21-38, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 1, Report misconduct, pp. 39-7, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 4, Justify decisions, pp. 79-90, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Considerations for posterity in scholarship, NCSU (link in Moodle)

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).
- Find out who the Research Integrity Officer is at NCSU

DURING CLASS

- Review of course goals and requirements
- Overview of egoism
- “The Lab” interactive activity (Office of Research Activity)
- Other activities TBD

QUIZ 2 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

JAN 30

Week 4: Protect my interests (cont.) & promote our interests

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Ch. 2, Avoid plagiarism, pp. 58-7, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 3, Beware intuition, pp. 68-8, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Part B – Promote our interests, pp. 91-104, Comstock *Research Ethics*

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).

DURING CLASS

- Overview of social contract theory (contractualism)
- Avoiding plagiarism exercise (Comstock, based on Bronson)
- Other activities TBD

QUIZ 3 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

FEB 6

Week 5: Promote our interests (cont.) & the ethical use of statistics

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Ch. 5, Articulate reasons, pp. 105-17, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 6, Write cooperatively, pp. 118-32, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 7, Protect manuscripts, pp. 133-43, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 8, Clarify statistics, pp. 144-53, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Short article(s) assigned by Prof. Muse (TBD)

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only). It would be useful to prepare a question about the responsible use of statistics to ask Dr. Muse.

DURING CLASS

- Guest speaker: Dr. Spencer Muse (Prof. of Statistics), responsible use of statistics [need to confirm]
- Other activities TBD

QUIZ 4 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

FEB 13

Week 6: Respect strangers' rights & colloquium on research ethics in physics

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Ch. 10, Mentor inclusively, pp. 184-201, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 11, Recognize property, pp. 202-17, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 12, Reveal conflicts, pp. 218-28, Comstock *Research Ethics*

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).

DURING CLASS

- Guest speaker: Dr. Michael Paesler (Prof. of Physics), research ethics in physics [confirmed 12/12]
- Other activities TBD

ETHICS COLLOQUIUM ASSIGNMENT: If you do not attend the ethics in physics colloquium (with Dr. Paesler), then you need to attend some other ethics colloquium as explained above and at the Moodle site. No matter what, you have to tell me what your plan is through the designated Moodle link.

QUIZ 5 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

COMPLETE SOON

INTERVIEW REPORT OR ETHICS ESSAY (300-400 words), due NLT Feb 27

ANIMAL SUBJECTS OR HUMAN SUBJECTS TRAINING, complete NLT Feb 27

(Instructions for these assignments can be found above in the syllabus ad on Moodle.)

FEB 20

Week 7: Respect strangers' rights (cont.)

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Part C – Respect strangers' rights, pp. 155-68, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 9, Inform subjects, pp. 169-83, Comstock *Research Ethics*

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).

DURING CLASS

- Overview of moral rights and Kant's moral theory
- Informed consent, the use of human subjects, and Milgram's experiment
- Other activities TBD

QUIZ 6 [30 min, 20 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

FEB 27

Week 8: Honor all interests & course conclusion

BEFORE CLASS

Read:

- Part D – Honor all interests, pp. 229-42, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 13, Treat humanely, pp. 243-66, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 14, Preserve environments, pp. 267-73, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Ch. 15, Cultivate responsibility, pp. 274-84, Comstock *Research Ethics*
- Conclusion, pp. 285-7, Comstock *Research Ethics*

Complete:

- Record 2-3 questions or observations about the readings and bring to class (for your reference only).

DURING CLASS

- Overview of utilitarianism
- Overview of animal ethics (legal and moral dimensions)
- Other activities TBD
- Complete a Class Evaluation

FINAL EXAM [45 minutes, 30 questions, in class]

It is open book, open notes, and you can team up with peers (2 maximum) to discuss your answers.

If you have not completed any requirements (the interview report or ethics essay, and the animal or human subjects training) to pass the course, this is your last chance.

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.

11. WILLIAM BAUER – 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 and how science overlaps with philosophy (see for instance my article "[Why Science Needs Philosophy](#)").

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.