

Bioethics

PHIL 3250-001
Spring 2023



Course Information:

Instructor: Adam Smith (he/him/his)

Email: adam.c.smith@utah.edu (contact me using Email or Canvas messaging)

Days: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Time: 9:40am-10:30am

Location: Gardner Commons (GC) 5620

Office Hours:

In-Person, Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building (CTIHB), Room 405

Mondays – 10:30am-11:30am

Wednesdays – 10:30am-11:30am

Or by Appointment, In-Person or via Zoom

M, W, Th, F – in-person available

Tu – Zoom only

Course Description:

Bioethics is the study of ethical issues that arise in the practice of medicine, the study of human biology, and other biological research. We will begin by learning the basic philosophical skills of constructing a logically sound argument and properly responding to such arguments. Next, we will cover three major moral theories in philosophy and the four main principles of biomedical ethics. The majority of this course will involve applying these skills, theories, and principles to various cases, both classic and contemporary. Topics covered in this class include: human research ethics, physician assisted dying, abortion, health care justice, racial bias in medicine, genetics, and disability.

This class will be roughly half lecture and half open discussion. While philosophy deals in arguments, this will be a class based on collaboration and support. We will be discussing challenging material that many will have strong feelings about. We will work together to create a space where **everyone** feels comfortable participating in discussions. For more information on discussion norms, see classroom policies below.

Objectives:

- Learn about classic and recent issues in bioethics.
- Develop critical thinking skills, such as constructing a logically sound argument.
- Become familiar with three major theories of moral philosophy and the different methods of bioethics.
- Articulate and defend an interpretation of an ethical dilemma using one of the primary moral theories and/or methods of bioethics.

- Extract subtle points from complicated readings, and use these in the construction of your own arguments.

Reading Materials:

All readings will be made digitally available on Canvas. No need to purchase anything!

Here are some great (and free!) resources for anything philosophy:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (SEP) – <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (IEP) - <https://iep.utm.edu/>

1,000-Word Philosophy - <https://1000wordphilosophy.com/>

Wireless Philosophy (WiPhi) - <https://www.youtube.com/@WirelessPhilosophy>

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

1. Attendance: 12%
2. Reading responses: 15%
3. Guest Speaker Questions: 12%
4. Midterm Exam: 15%
5. Mini-Presentation: 6%
6. Final Research Paper Outline: 5%
7. Final Research Paper: 35%

Grade scale:

A+ = 100-97 C+ = 79-77

A = 96-93 C = 76-73

A- = 92-90 C- = 72-70

B+ = 89-87 D+ = 69-67

B = 86-83 D = 66-63

B- = 82-80 D- = 62-60

F = 59-0

Assignments

Attendance

Attending this class is vital for two reasons. The first is that philosophy is best when done through discussion. If you aren't in class, then you won't be able to participate in discussions. The second is that I will present material in class that is not in the readings in order to provide background and context to the material that I assign.

Reading Responses:

There will be 6 chances to do a reading response throughout the semester; you only need to do 3. Each reading response will be about a specific reading and must be uploaded to Canvas before that reading is discussed in class. For example, if we are discussing a reading on a Wednesday, the reading response must be submitted before class starts on that Wednesday. Each reading response should be about 3/4-1 page, single-spaced, and 12 pt. font. The first half of the response should be a brief summary of the main argument and/or points of the reading. The second half of the response should be some sort of critical engagement with the reading: offer further support, state an objection, defend it from a possible objection, apply the material to an example, etc. No late submissions will be accepted for reading responses.

Guest Speaker Questions:

We will have 4 guest speakers throughout the semester. For each guest speaker, you must write a question for them and submit it to Canvas before the guest speaker visits class. Your questions should be detailed, show some serious consideration, and be engaged with the reading or with the topic of the reading. Aim for 2-4 sentences.

Midterm Exam:

This exam will cover the three main moral theories in philosophy, the methods of bioethics, and the first two cases we study – history of human research and end of life issues. It will consist of 5 multiple choice questions and 2 essay questions. There will be 4-6 essay questions and you choose any 2 to answer. This exam will be taken in class and be taken on a Blue Book, which you buy at the bookstore (they're about 75 cents).

Min-Presentation:

You will give a short, 3-minute mini-presentation on a bioethics case that interests you. I will provide a list of possible topics but you are welcome to pick something that is not on my list. Just run it by me before you begin working on it. The goal of this assignment is to present the facts of the case, then apply something you have learned from class – a moral theory, a biomedical principle, an argument from an article we read, etc. – to that case. You do not need to have a well-developed argument. After your presentation there will be a roughly 3-minute Q&A where other students can ask you questions. The presentation can be done by yourself or with one other person and can be done at any point throughout the semester. If you do a joint presentation with someone, the presentation will need to be 5-6 minutes long.

Final Research Paper and Outline:

An 8 page, double-spaced, 12 pt. font research paper with at least 5 sources will be due at the end of the semester. I will again provide a list of possible topics, and you are again free to pick something not on the list. If you want to do something not on the list, you need to discuss your paper idea with me before you start working on it. In your paper you will argue for a thesis. This can be done in many ways and I will spend a day of class talking about how to write a good philosophy paper (they are kind of strange). You will hand in a full outline of your paper a few weeks before the paper is due. This outline should be detailed and include your thesis and each step of your argument.

Class Policies

Dates/Deadlines & Extensions: All assignments should be completed on time. For each day that an assignment is late, 5% will be taken off with a maximum penalty of 50%. If, due to an unexpected extenuating circumstance – illness, family emergency, etc. – you are unable to complete an assignment, contact me as soon as possible and we will work something out. You will not be penalized in these cases. If you think you will be unable to complete an assignment on time, get in contact with me **BEFORE** the assignment is due so that we can discuss your particular circumstance. I will very likely give you an extension of some sort.

Classroom Civility Statement: We will be discussing some controversial topics in the class. I will ensure that we all work together to create and maintain a safe and constructive classroom environment. Philosophy deals in arguments but think of this class more as a collaborative discussion where we all share our ideas to help us get closer to the truth. We benefit by hearing from people with different viewpoints, but I will not tolerate hateful or discriminatory views of any kind. So, be critical but also be constructive and kind. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Object to arguments, not people.
- Try to state all objections as constructively as possible.
- Don't worry about being right or winning an argument. That does not matter. What matters is developing philosophical skills and understanding the material.

- You can say things and then later change your mind.
- You can argue for things you don't believe for the sake of argument.
- Do not monopolize the discussion. Follow the "me then three" rule, where you speak and then allow three (or at least 2) other people to speak before raising your hand again.
- If you think someone in class (including me!) has said something that crosses a line, feel free to say something, but do so respectfully. You can also tell me after class or through an email.

Cheating/Plagiarism: Anyone caught cheating during an assignment will have the test confiscated, a zero will be given to the work, and the student's action will be reported to the Dean. Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the University's Code of Conduct as it pertains to plagiarism: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>. In short, when you draw upon any source (class notes, an article, a website, a textbook, etc.), you must cite that source whether you are quoting from it directly or only paraphrasing it. The basic idea here is that you can draw on someone else's idea(s), but you cannot spin someone else's idea(s) as your own. Any assignment with evidence of plagiarism will be assigned a zero, and the student's action will be reported to the Dean.

Administrative and Campus Policies

The Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct/Title IX: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status, or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Wellness Statement: Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

University Safety Statement: The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

Class Schedule

Part 1 – Intro to Bioethics

Week 1: Critical Thinking & Moral Reasoning

Monday (1/9)

- Introduction to the class.
- Readings
 - None

Wednesday (1/11)

- Readings
 - Watch Geoff Pynn (2014) “Critical Thinking – Fundamentals: Introduction to Critical Thinking” from *Wireless Philosophy*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cum3k-Wglfw> [10 minutes]
 - Carolina Flores (2022) “Critical Thinking” from *1,000-word Philosophy*:
<https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2021/09/28/critical-thinking/>

Friday (1/13)

- Readings
 - Gregory Pence (2020) *Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases*, Chapter 1: Good and Bad Ethical Reasoning, pp. 1-8. [8 pages]

Week 2: Moral Theories

Monday (1/16)

- NO CLASS – MLK Jr. Day

Wednesday (1/18)

- Readings
 - *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 7th ed. by Beauchamp & Childress, Chapter 9: Moral Theories, pp. 351-361. [11 pages]
 - Essential reading is pp. 354-361. [8 pages]

OR

 - Watch 2 Videos from *Wireless Philosophy* and 1 Video from *CrashCourse* [21 minutes total]
 - Utilitarianism Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvnz5E75ZIA>
 - Utilitarianism Part 2:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGDk23Q0S9E>
 - Utilitarianism (CC): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a739VjqdSI>
 - Assignment
 - Reading Response Option #1 – due before class starts

Friday (1/20)

- Readings
 - *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 7th ed. by Beauchamp & Childress, Chapter 9: Moral Theories, pp. 361-367. [6 pages]

OR

 - Watch 1 Video from *Wireless Philosophy* & 1 Video from *CrashCourse* [16 minutes total]

- Kant on The Good Life:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6UQLiHB0k0>
- Kant & Categorical Imperatives:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bIys6JoEDw>

Week 3: Moral Theories & Principles of Bioethics

Monday (1/23)

- Readings
 - *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 7th ed. by Beauchamp & Childress, Chapter 9: Moral Theories, pp. 375-384 [10 pages]
- OR**
- Watch 1 Video from *Wireless Philosophy* & 1 Video from *CrashCourse* [15 minutes total]
 - Aristotle on The Good Life:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFPBf1AZOQg>
 - Aristotle & Virtue Theory:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrvtOWEXDIQ>

Wednesday (1/25)

- Readings
 - Alison Reiheld. (2022). “Methods of Bioethics”. In *The Disability Bioethics Reader* (pp. 50-60). [10 pages]
 - Katy Waldman (2020) When The World Isn’t Designed For Our Bodies. *The New Yorker*. [6 pages]

Friday (1/27)

- Review Day & In-class “debate” [there will be treats!]
- Readings
 - None

Part 2 – History of Human Research Ethics

Week 4: History of Human Research Ethics

Monday (1/30)

- Readings
 - *Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases* by Gregory Pence, Chapter 9: Medical Research on Vulnerable Populations, pp. 212-226 [15 pages]
 - Additional Resources
 - CDC page on the Tuskegee Syphilis Study:
<https://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/index.html>
 - Read *Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases* by Gregory Pence, Chapter 9: Medical Research on Vulnerable Populations, pp. 226-234 [9 pages]

Wednesday (2/1)

- Readings
 - *45 years ago the nation learned about the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. Its repercussions are still felt today.* by Sarah Toy (2017).
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/07/25/tuskegee-syphilis-study-its-repercussions-still-felt-today/506507001/>

- Watch: The Problem with Race-Based Medicine by Dorothy Roberts [14.5 minutes] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxLMjn4WPBY>
- Assignment
 - Possible Reading Response #2 – due before class starts

Friday (2/3)

- Readings
 - Paul A Lombardo (2010) *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and Buck v. Bell*, Introduction pp. ix-xiv [6 pages]
 - Supreme Court Opinion of Buck v. Bell (1927) by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. [3 pages]
 - Additional Resource
 - <http://exhibits.hsl.virginia.edu/eugenics/3-buckvbell/>
- Assignment
 - Question for Guest Speaker Katie Petrozzo – due before class starts

Week 5: Issues in Human Research Ethics & End-of-Life Issues

Monday (2/6)

- Readings
 - Listen to NPR Podcast Interview, *Henrietta Lacks: A Donor's Immortal Legacy*, featuring Rebecca Skloot. [37 minutes]
<https://www.npr.org/2010/02/02/123232331/henrietta-lacks-a-donors-immortal-legacy>
 - Additional Resource
 - The Henrietta Lacks Foundation: <http://henrietalacksfoundation.org/>

Wednesday (2/8)

- Readings
 - Lida Sarafranz (2021) Understanding and Correcting Sex Disparity in Cardiovascular Disease Research: Ethical and Practical Solutions. *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*, Volume 14(2): 81-96. [13 pages]
- Assignment
 - Question for Guest Speaker Lida Sarafranzapataph – due before class starts

Part 3 – Issues at the End of Life

Friday (2/10)

- Readings
 - Rachels, James. (1975). Active and Passive Euthanasia. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 292(2): 78-80. [5.5 pages]
 - Fletcher, Joseph F. (1974). Four Indicators of Humanhood: The Enquiry Matters. *Hastings Center Report*, 4(6): 4-7. [6 pages]
- Assignment
 - Possible Reading Response #3 – due before class starts

Week 6: Physician Assisted Dying

Monday (2/13)

- Readings
 - Battin, Peggy. (2005). Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide - Section 3. In Hugh LaFollette (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics* (pp. 673-682). [10 pages]

- We will be watching a video about physician assisted dying in class and then discussing it.

Wednesday (2/15)

- Readings
 - Battin, Peggy. (2005). Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide - Section 3. In Hugh LaFollette (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics* (pp. 682-690). [9 pages]
 - Additional Readings
 - Silvers, Anita & Francis, Leslie P. (2014). Death, Dying, and the Disabled. In Younger, Stuart J. & Arnold, Robert M. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Ethics at the End of Life* (pp. 260-278). [15 pages]
 - Battin, Peggy. (2005). Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide - Section 3. In Hugh LaFollette (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics* (pp. 690-699). [10 pages]

Friday (2/17)

- Reading
 - None
- Midterm Review – Bring in any questions you have about material covered so far

Week 7: Midterm Week

Monday (2/20)

- NO CLASS – President’s Day

Wednesday (2/22)

- Midterm Exam – buy a Blue Book from the bookstore for this exam

Friday (2/24)

- NO CLASS – Instructor out of town at conference

Part 4 – Reproductive Ethics

Week 8: Abortion

Monday (2/27)

- Reading
 - Katie Watson (2018) *Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion*, Chp. 1 – Ordinary Abortion: Common and Clandestine, pp. 17-37 [21 pages]
 - Additional Resources
 - Mary A. Warren (1991) Abortion. In *A Companion to Ethics* (pp. 303-313). [11 pages]
 - Katie Watson (2018) *Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion*.
- Mid-semester course feedback survey

Wednesday (3/1)

- Reading
 - Katie Watson (2018) *Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion*, Chp. 2 – Abortion Storytelling: Law, Masterplots, and Counter-Narratives, pp. 39-47 [9 pages]

- Nina Totenberg & Sarah McCammon (2022) Supreme Court Overturn Roe v. Wade, ending right to abortion upheld for decades. *NPR*.
- Assignment
 - Question for Guest Speaker Dr. Leslie Francis – due before class starts

Friday (3/3) – NO CLASS

- Get an early start to your spring break! :)

SPRING BREAK March 6th-10th

Week 9: Abortion

Monday (3/13)

- Reading
 - Hon-Lam Li (1997) Abortion and Degrees of Personhood. *Public Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 11(1): 1-13. [13 pages]

Wednesday (3/15)

- Reading
 - Don Marquis (1989) Why Abortion Is Immoral. *Journal of Philosophy*, 86(4): 183-202. [20 pages]
 - Essential Reading: pp. TBD [TBD pages]
 - Additional Readings
 - Critique of Marquis: Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (1999) You Can't Lose What You 'Aint Never Had: A reply to Marquis on abortion. *Philosophical Studies*, 96:59-72. [12.5 pages]
 - Critique of Sinnott-Armstrong: Mark Brown (2000) The Morality of Abortion and the Deprivation of Futures. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 26: 103-107. [8 pages]

Friday (3/17)

- Reading
 - Judith Jarvis Thomson (1971) A Defense of Abortion. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1(1): 47-66. [20 pages]
 - Essential Reading: pp. TBD [TBD pages]
 - Additional Resources
 - Short Article about Thomson's Life: <https://philosophy.mit.edu/people/faculty/thomson/>
- Assignment
 - Possible Reading Response #4 – due before class starts

Week 10: Abortion & Healthcare Justice

Monday (3/20)

- Reading
 - John Finnis (1973) The Rights and Wrongs of Abortion: A Reply to Thomson. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 2(2): 117-145. [29 pages]
 - Essential reading: pp. 118-132 [15 pages]
 - Additional Reading
 - David Boonin (1997) A Defense of "A Defense of Abortion": On the Responsibility Objection to Thomson's Argument. *Ethics*, 107(2): 286-313. [28 pages]

Part 5 – Health Care Justice

Wednesday (3/22)

- Reading
 - Marc Ereshefsky (2009) Defining Health and Disease [12 Pages]
- Assignment
 - Possible Reading Response #5 – due before class starts

Friday (3/24)

- Reading
 - Norman Daniels (2001) Justice, Health, and Healthcare. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 1(2): 2-14. [26 pages]
 - Essential reading: pp. 2-9. [16 pages]

Week 11: Healthcare Justice

Monday (3/27)

- Reading
 - Adam Smith (draft) Healthcare Without ‘Health’: A justice-focused account. [9 pages]

Wednesday (3/29)

- How to Write a Philosophy Paper – Bring questions you have about the final paper
- Readings
 - None

Friday (3/31)

- Reading
 - Adina Preda & Kristin Voigt (2015) The Social Determinants of Health: Why Should We Care? *American Journal of Bioethics*, 15(3): 25-36. [20 pages]

Week 12: Bias in Healthcare & History of Genetics

Monday (4/3)

- Readings
 - Huzeyfe Demirtas (2020) “Epistemic Injustice” from *1,000-word Philosophy*. [2 pages] <https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2020/07/21/epistemic-injustice/>
 - Listen to “Miranda Fricker on Epistemic Injustice” (2007) on *Philosophy Bites*. [14 minutes] <https://podcastaddict.com/episode/78450261>
 - Audre Lorde (1985) “Poetry is Not a Luxury”. [2 pages]
- Assignment
 - Possible Reading Response #6 – due before class starts

Wednesday (4/5)

- Readings
 - Keisha Ray (2016) on Inefficient Pain Management for Black Patients. <https://bioethicstoday.org/blog/inefficient-pain-management-for-black-patients-shows-that-there-is-a-fine-line-between-inhumane-and-superhuman/>
 - Keisha Ray (2018) on Racial Health Disparities in Maternal Mortality Rates. <https://bioethicstoday.org/blog/black-women-are-dying-in-disproportionate-numbers-during-and-after-giving-birth-and-not-even-celebrity-serena-williams-is-safe/>

Part 6 – Genetics & Eugenics

Friday (4/7)

- Readings
 - Jim Tabery (2019) Genetics – Section 1: The Science of Genetics. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
 - Additional Reading
 - Robert Sanders (2021) FDA approves first test of CRISPR to correct genetic defect causing sickle cell disease.

Week 13: Eugenics

Monday (4/10)

- Reading
 - Inmaculada de Melo-Martin & Sara Goering (2022) Eugenics – Introduction & Section 1: Short History of Eugenics. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Wednesday (4/12)

- Reading
 - Jim Tabery, Nicole Novak, Lida Sarafraz, & Aubrey Mansfield (forthcoming) Victims of Eugenic Sterilisation in Utah: Cohort Demographics and Estimate of Living Survivors Assignment. [11 pages]
- Assignment
 - Question for Guest Speaker Dr. Jim Tabery – due before class starts

Friday (4/14)

- Final Paper Workshop Day - Bring 3 hard copies of your outline to class.
- Readings
 - None

Week 14: Embryo Selection & Disability

Monday (4/17)

- Reading
 - Julian Savulescu (2001) Procreative Beneficence. *Bioethics*, 15(5-6): 413-426. [14 pages]

Wednesday (4/19)

- Reading
 - Robert A. Wilson (2022) Eugenics, Disability, and Bioethics. In *The Disability Bioethics Reader*. [13 pages]
 - Additional Reading
 - Joseph Stramondo (2017) Disabled By Design. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, 27(4): 475-500. [21 pages]

Friday (4/21)

- Student Choice of Topic
 - Rationing ethics, surrogacy, reproductive technologies (IVF, cloning), doctor-patient relationship (confidentiality, truth telling, risk communication and medical screening), gender and sexuality, animal research ethics, livestock and factory farms, stem cell research, organ donation and transplants, public health ethics, or gene patenting.

Week 15: Last Day of Class

Monday (4/24)

- Last Day of Class – We will do a wrap up activity / discussion of the entire class.
- Reading
 - None

Weeks 15 & 16: Final Exam Period

Thursday (4/27) – Wednesday (5/3)

- Final Paper Due Wednesday (5/3) by the end of the day

* This syllabus is NOT a binding legal contract, only a general outline. I reserve the right to revise this schedule (including dates of exams and assignments) as I see fit. If there are any changes regarding exams or anything else, they will be reflected on the CANVAS course page.

** I was kindly provided past bioethics syllabi by Robert Kok, Dr. Jim Tabery, Dr. Matt Haber, and Katie Petrozzo, which I used to help create this syllabus.