

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
FALL 2014 BIOLOGY 4650-A SYLLABUS
BIOETHICS

Learning outcomes: After completing this class, students will be able to: (1) Describe and apply basic ethical concepts. (2) Connect ethical thinking to biology and medicine. (3) Evaluate the ethical challenges and complexity of issues involved in medicine, biological research, and public policy. (4) Synthesize reading, discussion, presentation, and writing skills in order to assess bioethical issues.

Instructor:

Dr. Michael Goodisman (michael.goodisman@biology.gatech.edu) 404-385-6311; Cherry Emerson #A110. Office hours: By appointment.

Class organization: This is a two credit course intended for advanced undergraduates. BIOL 1510 or 1511 is a prerequisite. Class will be held Wednesday 3:05 pm – 4:55 pm, August 18 - December 12 in Cherry Emerson #204. This course includes reading assignments, exams, oral presentations, quizzes, class discussion, and written reports. Attending and participating in class is fundamental to this course. So be courteous to your fellow students and do not disrupt class by entering and leaving the room, reading, talking, allowing cell phones to ring, etc. Written confirmation of a legitimate excuse, such as a severe illness, will be required for any absences. If you miss any part of a class without legitimate excuse then you will receive no credit for that day's assignments. There are no make-up assignments. Therefore, if you legitimately miss a class, your grade will be calculated from the remaining graded assignments. Finally, your conduct should conform to the Student Honor Code (<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>).

Required textbooks: Lewis Vaughn, "Bioethics: Principles, Issues and Cases" 2nd Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2012, ISBN 9780199796236.

Bioethics Advanced Readings: A separate 1 credit class, Bioethics Advanced Readings, BIOL 4801, is being taught concurrently with BIOL 4650. BIOL 4650 is taught separately from BIOL 4801, but is a pre- or corequisite for 4801.

Assessments: All students are required to do weekly readings of book chapters. Students will also give a 15-minute oral presentation based on outside readings. A substantial component of the course grade will consist of written activities and class participation. Finally, there will be a midterm and a final exam. The relative values of the assignments are:

Assessment	Value
Presentation	20%
Written activities	25%
Class participation	15%
Midterm exam	17%
Final exam	23%
Total	100%

The most stringent scale used will be 90-100% an A, 80-89% a B, 70-79% a C, 60-69% a D, and 59% or less an F. This scale is subject to adjustment at the discretion of the instructor.

Class presentation

Each student will give one class presentation based on one article found outside of the classroom. *The purpose of the presentations is to educate the class in some matter related to the topic of the week.* Articles chosen for presentations should be obtained from some scholarly resource. The article must be related to the topic of the week in some way, although the relationship can be very loose. Articles may originate from many sources including peer-reviewed scientific studies, legal decisions, essays on ethical theory, policy statements, etc.

You must contact the instructor at least one week ahead of your scheduled presentation with ideas of the paper you wish to present. The instructor will then clear you to present on the suggested paper. Failure to get cleared to present a paper more than a week ahead of your presentation will incur a five percent penalty on your presentation grade.

Presentations will be on papers that other members of the class have not read. So it will be critically important that the information presented is clear. In addition, as a presenter, you should be able to explain your paper in depth, expand on the importance of the area of research, and be able to answer related questions.

Presentations should be 15 minutes long followed by a ~3 minute question session. Presenters are generally encouraged to use visual aids (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint), although other presentation methods may be used as well. An outstanding presentation will include many of the following elements: (a) background on the topic including important prior ideas that led to the focal study, (b) a description of the questions or issues being addressed and why they are important, (c) the methodology or arguments used to address the questions, (d) the interpretation of the subject matter by the authors, (e) the larger significance of the study, (f) the ethical implications of the work, (g) the distinct sides of the issue, (h) integration of other related studies, and (i) what you view as a resolution to the ethical problems. Your presentation grade will come from both student (50%) and professor (50%) assessments.

Written activities

Students will engage in various written activities, which will consist of pop quizzes, in-class short papers, or out-of class short reports. Pop quizzes will be unannounced and generally based directly on the readings for the week. The short papers may ask you to consider ethical positions related to class discussions or readings. Short reports may include comments on topics explored outside of class.

Class participation

Class participation in the form of discussing issues, raising questions, and evaluating peer presentations will make up a substantial part of your grade. However, you will not be graded, nor will you be judged, on your specific convictions. Rather, you will receive participation credit if it is clear that you have thought carefully about the subject matter and contributed to the class.

Bioethical discussions often involve questions of values. Such discussions sometimes become personal, subjective, and emotional. However, it is essential to understand and develop skills in making rational decisions and arguments. It is also important to remain respectful of

others when they speak. *Bioethical discussions are not meant to lead to decisions regarding particular issues. Rather, they should result in understanding the perspectives, ideas, and arguments of individuals with differing viewpoints.*

Exams

You will take one midterm and one final exam. The exams will be based on the assigned readings of the class and are meant to test if you have thoroughly understood and followed the subject matter. The exams will also ask you to synthesize materials and test your ability to make coherent bioethical arguments. The exams will consist of short answer questions and essays.

Tentative Schedule: This schedule is subject to change!

Week	Date	Topic and assigned readings	Pages
1	20-Aug	INTRODUCTION	NA
2	27-Aug	<i>Principles and theories in bioethics</i> Moral reasoning in bioethics Bioethics and moral theories	3-18 30-51
3	3-Sep	<i>Paternalism and patient autonomy</i> Paternalism and Patient Autonomy "The Refutation of Medical Paternalism" "Why Doctors Should Intervene?"	71-83 93-98 99-103
4	10-Sep	<i>Truth telling and confidentiality</i> Truth-Telling and Confidentiality "Telling the Truth to Patients: A Clinical Ethics Exploration" "On Telling Patients the Truth" "Respect for Patients, Physicians, and the Truth"	131-140 141-145 145-147 148-155
5	17-Sep	<i>Informed consent</i> Informed consent "Transparency: Informed Consent in Primary Care" "Informed Consent: Some Challenges to the ... Western Model" Canterbury v. Spence, United States Court of Appeals	180-190 205-211 211-216 217-220
6	24-Sep	<i>Human rights in research</i> Human Research "The Nuremberg Code" "The Belmont Report"	221-241 241-245 245-248
7	1-Oct	<i>The physician-scientist</i> "Of Mice but Not Men: Problems of the Randomized Clinical Trial" "A Response to a Purported Ethical Difficulty with Clinical Trials..." "The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World" "Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials in Developing Countries"	254-259 259-263 279-282 283-287
8	8-Oct	<i>Personhood and abortion</i> Abortion	291-306

		Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey	385-391
9	15-Oct	MIDTERM	NA
10	22-Oct	<i>The arguments surrounding abortion</i> "Why Abortion Is Immoral" "An Almost Absolute Value in History" "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion"	317-329 329-333 333-343
11	29-Oct	<i>Biotechnology and reproduction</i> Reproductive technology "IVF: The Simple Case" "... Respect for Human Life ... and the Dignity of Procreation"	392-410 410-414 438-446
12	5-Nov	<i>Surrogacy and cloning</i> "Surrogate Mothering: Exploitation or Empowerment?" "On Surrogacy" "The Wisdom of Repugnance"	454-463 464-471 483-498
13	12-Nov	<i>Genetic information and testing</i> Genetic choices "Implications of Prenatal Diagnosis for the Human Right to Life" "Genetics and Reproductive Risk: Can Having Children Be Immoral?"	518-538 538-542 542-548
14	19-Nov	<i>Genetic enhancement and therapy</i> "Is Gene Therapy a Form of Eugenics?" "Genetic Enhancement" "Germ-Line Gene Therapy"	571-577 577-582 582-589
15	26-Nov	TO BE ANNOUNCED	
16	3-Dec	<i>The right to die</i> Euthanasia & Physician-Assisted Suicide Vacco v. Quill, United States Supreme Court	594-610 669-672
17	10-Dec	FINAL EXAM-Wednesday 2:50-5:40	NA

Name: _____ Date: _____

Evaluation Form for Oral Presentations

Speaker: _____

Paper: _____

The scoring system is: 4 - excellent, 3 - good, 2 - fair, 1 - needs considerable improvement.

1. The talk was well presented because the speaker: (max 24 pts)
 - a. projected enthusiasm and interest in the topic _____
 - b. effectively controlled distracting behaviors _____
 - c. used adequate speaking volume _____
 - d. maintained eye contact with audience _____
 - e. had appropriate pacing throughout the talk _____
 - f. spoke for an appropriate length of time _____
2. The content well-organized and clearly explained because the speaker: (max 36 pts)
 - a. aimed the talk at an appropriate level _____
 - b. presented adequate background to understand the topic _____
 - c. captured audience interest _____
 - d. explained points of arguments clearly _____
 - e. showed knowledge of subject matter _____
 - f. used visual aids effectively _____
 - g. explained methods or framework adequately _____
 - h. related focal study to other studies in the literature _____
 - i. answered questions adequately _____

TOTAL: _____ / (max 60 points)

One thing the speaker did well was:

One thing the speaker could improve is:

Other comments: