

## **BIOL 4801: Bioethics Advanced Reading Course**

Fall 2014

1 credit hour

Pre-requisite: BIOL 4650 Bioethics must be taken prior to or concurrent with Bioethics Advanced Reading Course.

Time/Location: Mondays 3:05–3:55 pm / Cherry Emerson 204

Instructors:	Dr. Chrissy Spencer	Dr. Michael Goodisman
	474D Clough Commons (CULC)	A110 Cherry Emerson Building
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	Office hours T 12–1:30 pm or by appointment.	Office hours by appointment.

**Course summary:** Students will read a text with bioethical implications and use the fundamentals of ethics to discuss and come to a deeper appreciation of bioethical decision-making. Students will practice concepts learned in BIOL 4650 (Bioethics) to explore relevant scientific and ethics literature with the aim of understanding the ethical implications of the assigned reading, examining multiple ethical positions, and framing an ethical argument in both speech and writing. This course will be structured in the format of a humanities seminar, where effective participation and the ability to provide constructive and educated criticism of ideas are essential. During this course, students will

- develop oral discussion skills
- practice expressing a point of view and backing that point of view with evidence
- make connections between scientific knowledge and the ethics surrounding that knowledge
- write about science and ethics from multiple perspectives.

**Format:** Because this is a discussion-based course, attendance and active participation are required. Students must provide appropriate documentation for any absence to be excused. Examples of excusable absences include documented illness, death in the family, or accident. If a student knows that he or she will be absent from a class, he or she must let the instructor know ahead of time and provide documentation. Each unexcused absence will lower the final grade by 10%.

**Text:** “How We Do Harm: A Doctor Breaks Ranks About Being Sick in America” by Otis Webb Brawley. 2011. ISBN 9781250015761.

### **Assessment:**

Discussion – participation	20%
Discussion – facilitation	15%
Pre-class writings	10%
Reading quizzes	10%
Research Paper – Annotated Bibliography	10%
Research Paper – Draft	10%
Research Paper – Final	25%

**Discussion Facilitation** Students will co-facilitate peer discussion with another student at least once during the semester. Discussion facilitators are responsible for organizing 40-45 minutes of class time around the assigned reading for that day. Facilitators will seek instructor approval for their class plan at least 48 hours before class. Various discussion-leading styles will be modeled by the instructors early in the semester, and facilitators are encouraged to bring creative but effective approaches to class, with the goal of allowing all

class members to participate substantively during each class meeting. After facilitating discussion, facilitators will evaluate their own and their co-facilitators' contribution to and effective leadership of the class discussion time, and these peer-evaluations may be used to adjust discussion facilitation grades.

For each discussion that you lead, you'll evaluate your own and your co-facilitators' contributions to the discussion. Reflect on things well done and things that could use improvement, including but not limited to: idea generation, focus on ethics, organizational abilities/efforts, attention to ideas and references from the reading, outside research, ability to collaborate, ability to meet deadlines, depth of thought, etc. On t2, complete Reflection on Discussion Facilitation within 1 week of leading discussion. All responses are anonymous to classmates and it is a violation of the Georgia Tech honor code to discuss your reflections on your peers with others.

**Discussion Participation** is an integral part of this course. All students are expected to contribute verbally and substantively to each discussion, by asking questions, answering questions, offering ideas, opinions, and critiques of student presentation—backing their points with evidence from the reading or from outside sources. Readings must be carefully reviewed before class, and students will complete a short reading-related writing assignment before class.

**Pre-class writing** prompts and assignments will be available the preceding Thursday on the t2 Forum, and the assignment is due at least 24-hours before class. Responses to the prompt should be specific and cite evidence from the chapter. You may cite external sources as needed.

**Reading quizzes** based on the week's assigned readings will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes will be unannounced, at the beginning of class, timed, and brief.

**Annotated Bibliography:** Each student will complete a search of the Bioethics and scientific literature to compile sources appropriate for their proposed research topic. The research topic must be related to the ethics and science of one or more aspects of the reading. For each article, the literature review should include the full citation and a short summary of how the article applies to the student's proposed research topic. Instructors will provide feedback that should be taken into account to develop the Research Paper. A Research Guide with links to ethics research resources is linked from t2.

**Research Paper:** Each student will prepare a research paper that critically reviews the science and ethics of one or more aspects of the reading and include appropriate citations from both scientific and ethics sources. Students may use ideas discussed in class but the paper is a single-authored assignment. Instructor feedback from the draft version should be incorporated into the final paper. Rubric is at the end of this syllabus.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes cheating, lying about course matters, plagiarism, or helping others commit a violation of the Honor Code. Students are reminded of the obligations and expectations associated with the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct, available online at [www.honor.gatech.edu](http://www.honor.gatech.edu). While students will collaborate in discussion of ideas, each student is expected to write his or her own pre-class assignments and research paper. Plagiarism includes reprinting the words of others without both the use of quotation marks and citation, or reproducing the published ideas of others without appropriate rephrasing, citation and attribution. If this is unclear, please ask your instructor for help.

**Learning Accommodations:** If needed, we will make classroom accommodations for students with disabilities. These accommodations must be arranged in advance and in accordance with the ADAPTS office (<http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>).

**Schedule – Subject to revision and discussion leader sign-up.**

Week	Date	What's due	Discussion Leader	Topic
1	8/18	Read Syllabus Bioethics Review.pdf	CS and MG	Course overview BioEthics Overview How to prepare for a discussion How to lead a discussion
2	8/25	Ch 1	CS and MG	
3	9/1	<i>Labor Day Holiday-No Class</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>
4	9/8	Ch 2–3		
5	9/15	Ch 4–5		
6	9/22	Ch 6–8		
7	9/29	Ch 9–11		
8	10/6	Ch 12–13 <b>Literature Review due</b>		
9	10/13	<i>Fall recess-No class</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>
10	10/20	Ch 14–16		
11	10/27	Ch 17–18		
12	11/3	Ch 19–21		
13	11/10	<b>Draft Research Paper due</b>		Peer-review in class
14	11/17	Ch 22–24		
15	11/24	Ch 25 & Epilogue		
16	12/1	<b>Research Paper due</b>	CS and MG	The Big Picture

**BIOL 4801 Bioethics Advanced Reading Course (BARC) – Research Paper Rubric**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Exc</b>	<b>Acc</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>Abs</b>	<b>Earned</b>	<b>Out of</b>
<b>Title</b>	Is specific and informative	5.0	3.8	2.5	0.0		5.0
<b>Introduction</b>	Provides background necessary to your thesis	3.8	2.8	1.9	0.0		15.0
	Includes elements related directly to the Brawley source text	3.8	2.8	1.9	0.0		
	Links ideas from the Brawley text to broader themes in bioethics.	3.8	2.8	1.9	0.0		
	Ends with strong statement of thesis and supporting arguments	3.8	2.8	1.9	0.0		
<b>Discussion of supporting evidence</b>	For each supporting argument, provides clear statement of supporting evidence from Bioethics literature	6.0	4.5	3.0	0.0		30.0
	Links supporting evidence from Bioethics literature to citations from Brawley	6.0	4.5	3.0	0.0		
	Provides evidence for each point of view	6.0	4.5	3.0	0.0		
	Describes how the evidence supports (or fails to support) the thesis	6.0	4.5	3.0	0.0		
	Identifies and includes all relevant perspectives on the thesis	6.0	4.5	3.0	0.0		
<b>Synthesis</b>	Clearly links thesis to supporting arguments	3.0	2.3	1.5	0.0		15.0
	Identifies strengths and weaknesses of the sourced supporting evidence, connecting ideas to introduction	3.0	2.3	1.5	0.0		
	Uses ethical concepts accurately and convincingly to explain whether the evidence supports the thesis.	3.0	2.3	1.5	0.0		
	Synthesizes or debates the multiple points of view presented above	3.0	2.3	1.5	0.0		
	Describes why thesis matters & its significant implications, including sources of uncertainty, improvements, or extensions	3.0	2.3	1.5	0.0		
<b>Lit Cited</b>	Cites appropriate resources from the Bioethics literature	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0		10.0
	Excludes websites and other inappropriate sources	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0		
	Sufficient number of references to support breadth of argument	2.0	1.5	1.0			
	Citations formatted for APA	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0		
	In-text citations with concept	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0		
<b>Writing</b>	No grammatical or spelling errors	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		20.0
	Sentences clear and to the point	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		
	Flow of ideas cohesive and logical	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		
	Accurately uses and defines ethical concepts as they are introduced	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		
	Entire work is written in author's own words (avoiding plagiarism)	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		
	Quotations used sparingly or not at all	3.3	2.5	1.7	0.0		
<b>Format</b>	No separate title page	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.0		5.0
	Sentence/paragraph structure	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.0		
	Separate sections with bold headings	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.0		
	Times New Roman 12 pt; 1 inch margins; single-spaced; page numbers	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.0		
<b>Score</b>							<u>        </u> / 100.0