

Spring 2022
IDS 385W Special Topics- Bioethical Issues of the 21st Century
MW 1pm-2:15pm in [Callaway Center S420](#)

“In short, bioethics investigates ethical issues arising in the life sciences (medicine, health care, genetics, biology, research, etc.) by applying the principles and methods of moral philosophy to these problems.”
- Adele Langlois

Course Description:

Following the atrocities committed during WWII with human experimentation, an awakening of sorts took place, spurring the creation of our modern conceptions of bioethics. These ideas have helped shape our current regulations regarding clinical research and the implementation of certain medical techniques but have also shined light on age old conversations regarding issues like abortion. However, technology continues to advance, and as new technologies emerge and new possibilities are unlocked, more ethical issues will undoubtedly come to the forefront of the public conscious. For instance, during the latter half of the 20th century bioethics wrestled with questions related to cloning, invitro fertilization, and end of life care in a world where machines can keep humans alive past the point of brain death. What issues will we face post 2021? In this class, we will cover contemporary and future issues in bioethics, with an eye toward those which are likely to play a major role in societies interactions with healthcare. Topics will include biomedical enhancement, “designer” babies, privacy in the age of big data, and regulating research in a global society. This will be accomplished through a series of short papers and a group research project, which will be shared at an open symposium with faculty from the Center for Ethics and the Institute for Liberal Arts.

Course Instructor:

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Course Objectives:

In this class, we will be evaluating bioethics with an eye toward future issues which are likely to play an important role in healthcare. In doing this, we will be covering a breadth of topics using a variety of learning techniques. The main learning objectives of the course are as follows:

- Students will Identify the main guiding principles of modern bioethics and examine how they inform current practice and interact when applied to pertinent cases.
- Students will review major milestones and historical cases in bioethics, particularly those which developed our current bioethical framework(s).
- Students will learn about the importance of bioethics and the role it plays in our interactions with the healthcare system and biotechnology.
- Students will examine a major bioethical topic of future importance from multiple points of view and present a “white -paper” presentation to the ILA and Ethics Center.

Course Zoom Link:

<https://emory.zoom.us/j/98212179707>

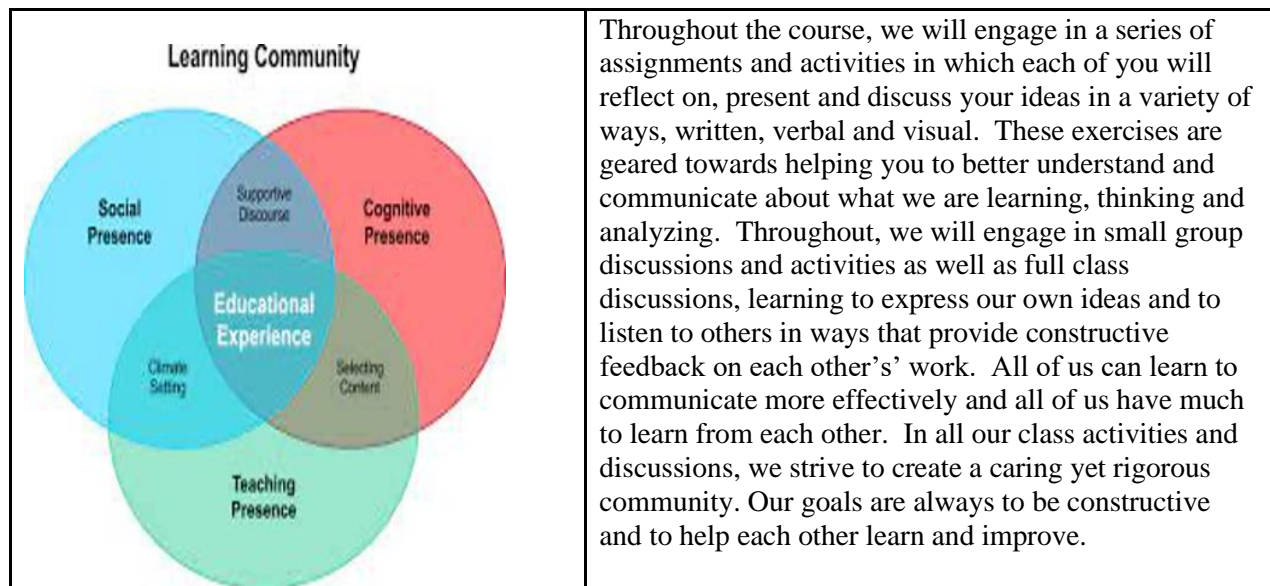
Required Course Materials:

Principles of Biomedical Ethics 7th edition by Tom Beauchamp & James Childress
ISBN-13: 978-0199924585, **ISBN-10:** 0199924589

Additional Course Materials:

Other readings for the course will be available online via Canvas. Many of these will come from Bioethics: Principles, Issues & Cases 3rd edition by Lewis Vaughn. Since this book is more expensive than the one listed above, I have decided to photocopy the portions you will be required to read and make them available via Canvas. However, this book is a very good resource and may prove useful during other portions of the class, so feel free to purchase if you wish.

Creating a Learning Community:



Attendance policy:

This semester due to the pandemic, some students might be sick or will need to go into isolation or quarantine. If you are sick, understand that I will be flexible about attendance. Please make sure to email me so we can discuss your individual circumstances. For students in quarantine who are well, I will provide ways that you can keep up with your schoolwork. Please also contact me via email if you are in quarantine.

Zoom Etiquette:

Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases at the end of 2021, Emory University has decided to start Spring 2022 courses virtually and transition to in person learning on January 31. As such, our class sessions on January 12,17,19,24 and 26 will be conducted via Zoom. During these sessions, we will use the following protocols for Zoom. These will be discussed more on the first day of class.

- Cameras are to be turned on whenever possible.
- Please remain muted when not speaking.
- Questions can be placed in the Zoom chat at anytime or can be asked aloud via using the “hand up” feature.
- The expectations below regarding class participation apply to Zoom sessions as well.

Assignments & Grading:

Participation (15%): Thorough preparation, insightful participation, and consistent presence are expected, as outlined in the rubric at the end of the syllabus. You will get the most out of this class and be most prepared for the group assignments and final paper, by carefully engaging with the content for the duration of the semester. Please pay attention to the guidelines for engagement.

Online Thought Post (15%): Beginning the first week of class, students will be asked to post an online response to the “question of the week”. These questions will help you dive deeper into a topic we have discussed previously in the class. Posts will provide an opportunity for thoughtful consideration of the question at hand. These posts should be ~175 words in length. Feel free to integrate material from other courses and/or current events. These will be due once every two weeks (except for the week of Spring Break) and should be submitted by the end of Friday that week. Weeks: 1,3,5,7,8,11,13,15

Midterm Paper (15%): In the first third of the course, we explored ethical frameworks and the principles of bioethics. We also briefly looked at the history of the field of bioethics and some of the important cases which have led to our current understanding of the field. As we look back through history, there are countless cases that may have turned out differently had the parties involved been trained in bioethics. However, there are also many cases where applying the 4 principles of Autonomy, Beneficence, Non-maleficence, and Justice may still lead to a range of morally defensible actions. In this paper, you will pick one interesting historical bioethics case and evaluate it using these four principles. You must: A. Explain the facts of the case and the real-life outcome, B. Explain the rationale of the court decision (if there was one), C. Evaluate the scenario using the three primary principles, and D. Summarize the position you believe these would lead you to take or the range of positions it may lead to. This paper must be 2500 words and should be written in MLA or APA format. Additionally, students will create a PowerPoint presentation (max 2 slides) describing their case, what happened, and the main conclusions. These will be presented in class after Spring Break.

Final Paper (20%): In this paper, you will choose, and ethically defend, a stance on your group project topic. While your group presented a white paper covering all the relevant sides of an ethical issue, you will choose a particular stance and defend why you think it is the "right" answer. Your arguments should reflect back on either a particular ethical framework or normative theory, and/or should include careful consideration of the principles outlined in the Belmont Report. This should be 2000 -2500 words double spaced and in either Calibri, Times New Roman, or Arial font. Your paper can be in MLA or APA style.

Grades will be based on both structure and content of the paper. Structure includes sentence structure and grammar, paragraph structure, and coherent logical structure across the entire essay. Content is what you actually say, the descriptions and definitions you provide, the arguments you make, and so forth.

A good guideline for structuring a longer essay is:

<https://marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/classes/204writingworkshop/pdfs/Galvan2009Ch10GuidelinesCoherentEssay.pdf>

And remember that the writing center is always a great resource!!

Final Project (25%): It has been said that every new technology presents a new bioethical controversy. As scientific progress shows no signs of slowing down, perhaps we ought to expect the future to be rife with controversy? Many of these questions will deal with major ethical themes like personhood and the definition of death, while others will create entirely new conversations all together. Regardless, as a society we will undoubtedly come up with a diverse array of conclusions about the morality of these technologies and what they mean for us. In this final project, the class will divide into 5 groups and cover

one bioethical topic of critical importance to the 21st century. These topics will be discussed in class and a module will be made available on line with information for each.

These presentations will be “[white papers](#)” and should effectively inform the audience of all relevant sides of an issue and clearly state the groups’ philosophy. These presentations will consist of 22-minute-long presentations with 8 minutes of Q&A. Every member of the group should speak, and group choice will be done by general open sign up on Canvas. You will receive time to work on these presentations in class however this will require substantial meeting time outside of class to complete. A presentation rubric has been provided at the end of this document.

Group Feedback (10%): For the group project, you will be asked to complete a group evaluation for each of your groupmates, asking about their helpfulness, timeliness, cooperative skills etc. 10% of your grade will be determined by average score your group gives you on the project. Full group evaluation criteria will be provided via Canvas.

Resources:

Health: Emory provides a host of resources related to student health, including information about physical and mental health services: <http://studenthealth.emory.edu>

Writing: As always, the writing center is available for tutoring: <http://writingcenter.emory.edu>

Accommodation: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Emory University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. For more information, please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Accessibility Services (404-727-9877). It is important to schedule this meeting well in advance in order to organize appropriate accommodations. For this reason, it is best if you do so at the start of term. For more information, please visit their website: <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/index.html>

Stress management and mental health: As a student, you may find that personal and academic stressors in your life, including those related to remote study, COVID-19, economic instability, and/or racial and social injustice, are creating barriers to learning this semester. Many students face personal and environmental challenges that can interfere with their academic success and overall wellbeing. If you are struggling with this class, please visit me during office hours or contact me via email (first page of the syllabus). If you are feeling overwhelmed and think you might benefit from additional support, please know that there are people who care and offices to support you at Emory. These services – including confidential resources – are provided by staff who are respectful of students' diverse backgrounds. For an extensive list of well-being resources on campus, please go to: <http://campuslife.emory.edu/support/index.html>. And keep in mind that Emory offers free, 24/7 emotional, mental health, and medical support resources via **TimelyCare**: <https://timelycare.com/emory>.

Other Emory resources that may be of interest or need include:

- [Counseling & Psychological Services](#)
- [Office of Spiritual & Religious Life](#)
- [Student Case Management and Interventions Services](#)
- [Student Health Services Psychiatry](#)

- [Support During A Crisis: A Guide for Faculty & Staff](#)
- [Emory Anytime Student Health Services](#)

Emory's Honor System:

The Honor Code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

For more information about the Honor System, see: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

COVID-19 Specific Precautions & Information:

Teaching and learning during the pandemic: Some of you may need to be off campus for some portion of the semester. We want our classroom community to thrive no matter the classroom delivery method or your individual methods of participating in class. We cannot guarantee an identical experience for students who cannot be physically in the classroom or an experience that is identical to pre-pandemic semesters, but our goal is to treat all students equitably and to ensure grading is clear, consistent, and fair for all of you.

As always, communication is important. We commit to responding to emails within 48 hours of receipt, and our intention to respond faster than that most of the time. We will likely be slower on weekends. Likewise, if your situation changes regarding health, housing, or in any other regard with respect to your ability to participate in the class, please contact the appropriate Emory student support organization first and then us as soon as feasible. It is easier for us to address your needs if we know about them as soon as they arise. This does not mean we can successfully respond to every request for consideration, but we emphasize that our goal is to treat you all equitably and do what we can to help you succeed in this course.

Health considerations: At the very first sign of not feeling well, stay at home and reach out for a health consultation. Please consult the campus FAQ for how to get the health consultation. Recognize that Emory is using several layers of safety: the vaccine mandate, the indoor face mask requirement, and contact tracing.

Classroom safety: Everybody must keep their face mask on at all times when they are indoors on campus, and this includes in our classroom. Your face mask must cover your nose, mouth, and chin, and should fit snugly. Due to the necessity of keeping your PPE on, eating and drinking is forbidden in the classroom. Please read this Emory advice about quality and fit of mask. If you aren't complying with the masking requirement, we will have to ask you to leave the classroom to ensure my safety and the safety of your classmates. Keep in mind that some of your classmates may not be able to be vaccinated and/or are immunocompromised, so Emory's campus masking policy ensures everyone's safety without requiring anybody to disclose their personal situation

Emergency Zoom Link: In the event we are forced to stop meeting in person for class, we will move forward using the zoom link at the top of this [syllabus](#). For students who are must quarantine during the semester, this link can be used to attend class digitally. Please note, we will not know to use the link or record the class if we are not aware of your absence, so it is imperative to contact us as soon as possible.

Course Schedule:

*Topics are in bold. Readings for that day are in plain text & should be completed before class.
 PBN = Beauchamp & Childress. BPI = Vaughn Book (Available in PDFs on canvas)

Week	Monday	Wednesday
Module 1: Foundations & Principles		
Week 1: 1/12		Classes Begin Introduction/ Overview
Week 2: 1/17 & 1/19	MLK Holiday	What is Ethics? There are no readings this week, I recommend getting ahead.
Week 3 1/24 & 1/26	Major Normative Theories Bioethics and Moral Theory. BPI pgs. 34-47 & PDF	Principles of Bioethics - Autonomy PBN pgs. 101-124
Week 4 1/31 & 2/2	Principles of Bioethics- Nonmaleficence PBN pgs.150-171	Principles of Bioethics- Beneficence PBN pgs. 202-217
Week 5 2/7 & 2/9	Principles of Bioethics- Justice PBN pgs. 250- 266	A short History of Bioethics Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)—Historical and Contemporary Issues Pertaining to Human and Animal Experimentation. PDF
Week 6 2/14 & 2/16	Current Regulations Rethinking the Belmont Report? pdf	IRB Case Debate Discuss Midterm Paper (MP)
Module 2: Classic Controversies with a Futurist Twist		
Week 7 2/21 & 2/23	Surrogacy & Reproductive Technology Ethical issues in gestational surrogacy PDF	The Many faces of the Abortion Debate BPI pgs. 309-322 & PDF Deadline to Submit MP Topic
Week 8 2/28 & 3/2	Organ Allocation & Donation Ethical Issues in Organ Transplantation. PDF	End of Life Care BPI pgs. 625- 637 & PDF
Week 9 3/7 & 3/9	Spring Break	Spring Break
Module 3: Group Projects		
Week 10 3/14 & 3/16	Introduction of final project & Midterm PowerPoint Presentations Midterm Due before 1pm	Challenges of Bioethics in practice Moral uncertainty: A case study of Covid-19. PDF

	PowerPoint Slides due on 3/13.	
Week 11 3/21 & 3/23	In Class Case Study Debates: For or against?	In Class Case Study Debates: Where do you stand? Group selection deadline
Week 12 3/28 & 3/30	Bioethics & The Big Picture Are there good experiments that shouldn't be done?. PDF	Asynchronous Group Meetings
Week 13 4/4 & 4/6	Meet with me to discuss final project Email Me	Meet with me to discuss final project Email Me
Week 14 4/11 & 4/13	Asynchronous Group Meetings	Asynchronous Group Meetings
Week 15 4/18 & 4/20	Mock Presentations & Group Feedback	Mock Presentations & Group Feedback

Important Deadlines:

Date	Event & Details
1/14	Canvas Discussion 1
1/28	Canvas Discussion 2
2/11	Canvas Discussion 3
2/25	Submit Midterm Paper Topic
2/25	Canvas Discussion 4
3/4	Canvas Discussion 5
3/14	Midterm Paper Due (1pm)
3/25	Canvas Discussion 6
4/8	Canvas Discussion 7
4/22	Canvas Discussion 8
4/ 29	Final Paper Due
5/2	Final Presentation Period (11:30 AM – 2:00 PM)

Class Participation Rubric:

	Strong Work	Needs Development	Unsatisfactory
Listening	Actively and respectfully listens to peers and instructor	Sometimes displays lack of interest in comments of others	Projects a lack of interest or disrespect for others
Quality of Contributions	Arrives fully prepared with all assignments completed, and notes on reading, observations, questions	Comments are sometimes irrelevant, betray lack of preparation, or indicate lack of attention to previous remarks of other students	Comments reflect little understanding of either the assignment or previous remarks in seminar

Impact on Seminar	Comments frequently help move seminar conversation forward	Comments sometimes advance the conversation, but sometimes do little to move it forward	Comments do not advance the conversation or are actively harmful to it
Frequency of Participation	Actively participates at appropriate times	Sometimes participates but at other times is “tune out”	Seldom participates and is generally not engaged

Final Presentation Rubric:

	Strong Work	Needs Development	Unsatisfactory
Analysis	The group covers the bioethical topic in superb detail, showing thoughtful consideration of various aspects of the issue. Additionally, the controversies are fully articulated and explained.	The group covers the bioethical topic in detail, showing decent consideration of various aspects of the issue. The main controversies are discussed, but perhaps not in adequate detail.	The group does not cover the topic in adequate detail and misses considerations of the issue. All main controversies are not covered, or are missing significant detail.
Coverage of the Issue	The group discusses the major themes of the literature surrounding the topic and compares them in detail.	The group discusses the majority of the major themes of the literature surrounding the topic but misses at least one thread. If all are covered details may be lacking.	The group misses major themes of the literature and does not cover the ones completed in adequate detail.
Design & Structure	The presentation was done in a logical fashion and had a good flow. PowerPoint slides were well designed.	The presentation was done in a logical fashion and had a good to adequate flow, however certain portions did not mesh well. The PowerPoint slides were adequately designed, but visuals can be improved.	The presentation lacks flow and pacing. PowerPoint slides are not well designed or are hard to read. Visuals are lacking.
Group Participation	Every member of the group contributed to speaking during the presentation.	Group members all spoke but the presentation was dominated by 2-3 students.	The presentation was dominated by 1-2 student, and group members did not take an active role.
Discussion and Q&A	The group raises morally, socially or scientifically, relevant questions and answers class questions showing a good command of the content.	The group raises some questions but misses large conceptual threads and/or shows a lack of understanding in the Q&A.	The group does not raise any particularly thought-provoking questions or concerns and/or shows a lack of command of the topic in Q&A.