



Dartmouth College

Department of Religion
6036 Thornton Hall

HANOVER • NEW HAMPSHIRE • 03755

TELEPHONE: (603) 646-3738

FAX #: (603) 646-1699

Fall Term, 2014

10A Hour

Instructor: Ronald M. Green

Office: 313 Thornton
(603) 646-3141 (direct)/3738 or 8172
(office)
Office Hours: Mon, Wed.
1-3 pm or by appt.

RELIGION 11

Introduction to Religion and Morality: Bioethics

Texts to Buy at Wheelock Books:

Chris Bohjalian, *Midwives* (Vintage PB)

Ronald Munson, *Intervention and Reflection: Basic Issues in Medical Ethics*, 9th ed. (Cengage).

(All other required readings are available electronically on the Canvas site for this course, as indicated by superscript^C for that reading. Readings on Canvas are listed in the order they appear in the syllabus. One copy each of the Munson and Bohjalian books is on reserve at Baker Library.)

Course Objectives:

One aim of this course is to examine the moral teachings and ethical methods of some of the major religious traditions that have shaped our culture. By focusing on some contemporary issues in bioethics—attitudes toward homosexuality, stem cells, cloning, human genetic engineering, the treatment of impaired newborns, and society's treatment of the dying—we hope to understand and evaluate the contributions of these religious traditions. Beyond this exploration of different teachings, however, lie two more basic questions. How do we reason or think about complex moral questions? And, what does religion bring (or not bring) to morality?

Course Requirements:

1. Four unannounced short-answer tests in class. These have one purpose only: to ensure that you keep up with the reading that is essential to class discussion. Each test represents 7% of the course grade and all the tests together constitute 20% of the course grade. Note: this means that you can miss *one* of these tests and still receive the full 20% that this course requirement represents. Apart from a *written* Dick's House medical excuse or equivalent dean's excuse, there is *no* exemption from these tests.
2. Presence in class and *thoughtful and informed* participation in class discussions (quality of contribution counts; not quantity). This requirement is important since a number of class sessions involve cases in biomedical ethics. When indicated by the instructor, cases of readings should be prepared in advance. Class participation constitutes 20% of the course grade.
3. One bioethics essay (30% of the course grade). The purpose of this essay is to develop your ability to analyze ethical and ethico-religious issues with clarity and rigor. The essay is to be based on one of the cases in a list of cases that will be available on Canvas.

Your essay must not exceed 6 pages in length (12 point type Palatino, double-spaced, 1 inch margins) including references or notes. The essay is due **as a PDF document** in the Bioethics Essay Drop Box of Canvas no later than 5:00 pm, Wednesday Oct. 22. *Please place your name and class only on a separate page attached to the **very end** of the essay. This page does not count toward the 6-page limit.*

4. A take-home final examination (30% of the course grade) on an assigned topic or topics. Your essay must not exceed 6 pages in length (including references; 12 point Palatino type, double-spaced, 1 inch margins). The essay is due **as a PDF document** in the Take-Home Final Drop Box on Canvas no later than 5:00 pm, Nov. 23. *Please place your name and class only on a separate page attached to the **very end** of the essay. This page does not count toward the 6-page limit.* As a precaution since some of you will be leaving following exams, email this exam essay to me as well: ronald.m.green@dartmouth.edu

[Note: Exceptional circumstances may require changes in this syllabus and revision of requirements and assignments.]

Honor principle

You should be aware of and conform to the Dartmouth Honor Code as expressed in the ORC. This means:

Exams: All work must be your own. At the time of the exam, you may not assist or receive assistance from any other student or use notes of any sort.

Papers: All research and writing should be done by you [If in doubt, see <http://www.dartmouth.edu/-sources/>]. All references and ideas are appropriately cited.

Accommodations for disabilities

I encourage students with disabilities, including “invisible” disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities to discuss with me after class or during my office hours appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to them. Please do this well in advance of the corresponding course requirement. All discussions will remain confidential, although I may consult the Student Accessibility Services office to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

Late Policy

Bioethics essays and take-home final examination are due (as PDF documents) in the appropriate drop box on Canvas. Extensions without late penalty will be granted only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. documented illness). Late assignments will be accepted, but a full letter grade will be deducted for each 24-hours that the assignment is late.

X-Hours:

The course X-hour is from 3:00-3:50 pm on Wednesdays. We will definitely be using some of these X-hour time slots, as indicated below, for discussions, films, or visiting speakers. In some cases we may also use the X-hour as additional discussion hour, which will be announced in advance. In the meanwhile, keep the X-hour free and available.

Topics and Reading Assignments:

I. *The Conflicts of Religious Bioethics*

Sept. 16 Introduction: Divine Command: For and Against

Reading: Plato, *The Euthyphro*C

***** Wed, Sept.17, (3-3:50 pm): Video, Bill Moyers, "The New Holy War"*****

Sept. 18 The Debate over Homosexuality

Reading: Biblical texts dealing with homosexualityC [*Hebrew Bible* (= *Old Testament*; preferably Revised Standard Version) Genesis, Chs. 1-3, 19 vss. 1-11; Leviticus, Ch. 18; *New Testament*, Romans, Ch. 1, I Corinthians Ch. 6]; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)/Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (subsequently Pope Benedict XVI), "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons (1986)"C; Furnish, "The Bible and Homosexuality: Reading the Texts in Context"C; Richard B. Hays, "Awaiting the Redemption of Our Bodies"C; Robert Kirschner, "Halakhah and Homosexuality: A Reappraisal"C; St. Thomas Aquinas, Excerpts from the "Treatise on Law" (skim)C; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)/Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions between Homosexual Persons"C; Pope Francis (two online articles): [<http://www.advocate.com/politics/religion/2013/07/29/pope-francis-says-he-wont-judge-gay-priests>] and [<http://www.advocate.com/politics/religion/2013/09/19/pope-francis-church-shouldnt-interfere-spiritually-lgbt-lives>].

Also, see

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/15/opinion/sunday/bruni-the-catholics-still-in-exile.html?hp&rref=opinion&_r=0

and brief video:

<http://www.nytimes.com/video/style/100000002591154/vows-making-it-important.html>

Sept. 23 Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs)

Reading: Munson, Ch. 4. pp. 330-401, 426-430 (decision scenarios 1-7 and 9)

***** Wed., Sept. 24, (X-hour: 3:00–3:50 pm), Library Resources for Bioethics
Research: William Fontaine, Reference Librarian*****

Sept. 25 Human Cloning

Reading: Munson, pp. 401–411 and 430 (Decision Scenario 8); Ronald M. Green, “I, Clone,” *Scientific American*.C

Sept. 30 Death and Dying: The Case of Terri Schiavo

Reading: Munson, Ch. 7; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Responses to Certain Questions of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Concerning Artificial Nutrition and Hydration” available online at:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070801_risposte-usa_en.html;

Paris, “Terri Schiavo and the Use of Artificial Nutrition and Fluids: Insights from the Catholic Tradition on End-of-Life Care.”C

II. *Toward an Ethic of “Mere Reason”*

A. Methods of Moral Reasoning

Oct. 2, 7 Theoretical Options

Reading: Munson, Part VI “Foundations of Bioethics: Ethical Theories, Moral Principles, and Medical Decisions,” (pp. 859–915); Ronald M. Green, *The Ethical Manager*, Chs. 2 and 3C; Munson, Ch. 2, “Research Ethics and Informed Consent.”

***** Oct. 8, (X-hour, 3–3:50 pm): Additional class meeting: Thomas Aquinas and Natural Law**

Reading: St. Thomas Aquinas, Excerpts from the “Treatise on Law”C (re-read carefully) ***

B. Applying Reason to Complex Biomedical Issues

Oct. 9 Truth telling and Confidentiality in Medical Decision Making

Reading: Munson, Ch. 1, “Physicians, Patients, and Others: Autonomy, Truth Telling, and Confidentiality.”

Oct. 14Issues in Death and Dying

Reading: Munson, Ch. 7, "Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide," (re-read). Pay special attention to the James Rachels' article "Active and Passive Euthanasia."

*****Oct. 15, (X-hour, 3-3:50 pm): Discussion of the Film "Suicide Tourist"**
Please view at: <http://video.pbs.org/video/1430431984/> before the
X-hour class on October 15.***

Oct. 16 The Abortion Controversy

Reading: Munson, Ch. 5, "Abortion"; Paul B. Fowler, "The Bible Prohibits Abortion," **C**; John M. Swomley, "The Bible Does Not Prohibit Abortion" **C**; Michael Tooley, "Abortion and Infanticide" **C**; Ronald M. Green, "Toward a Copernican Revolution in Our Thinking about Life's Beginning and Life's End." **C**

Oct. 21 Organ Transplants and Scarce Medical Resources

Reading: Munson, Chapter 8; Michael Finkel, "This Little Kidney Went to Market," *NYT Magazine*, May 27, 2001, pp. 26-59 passim
[<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/27/magazine/27ORGAN.html?pagewanted=all>]; Farhat Moazam, Riffat Moazam Zaman, and Aamir M. Jafarey, "Conversations with Kidney Vendors in Pakistan: An Ethnographic Study," *Hastings Center Report* 39, no. 3 (2009): 29-44. **C**

***** Wed, Oct. 22: Ethics essays due by 5:00 pm as a PDF in the Bioethics Essay Drop Box on Canvas*****

*****Wed, Oct 22, 7:00 pm: Public Screening of "Perfect Strangers," followed by Q&A with the film's director, Jan Krawitz, Loew Auditorium (Black Family Visual Arts Center). Attendance required.*****

Oct. 23 Ethics and The Care of Newborns

Reading: Munson, Chapter 6, "Treating or Terminating: The Dilemma of Impaired Infants."

*****Streaming video: "Dreams and Dilemmas"*****

Oct. 28 Human Genetic Engineering

Reading: Munson, Chapter 3, pp. 216-316 and 325-327 (Decision Scenarios 1-7); Michael Sandel, "The Case against Perfection"^C; Ronald M. Green, *Babies by Design*, Introduction.^C

Oct. 30 The Stem Cell Debate

Reading: Munson, pp. 316-328 and 329 (Decision Scenario 8); Richard Doerflinger, "The Ethics of Funding Embryonic Stem Cell Research: A Catholic Viewpoint"^C; N. Ford, "The Human Embryo as Person in Catholic Teaching,"^C; R. M. Green, "Benefitting from Evil."^C

Nov. 4 The Right to Health Care

Reading: Munson, Chapter 9.

III. *Exploring Human Nature, Human Destiny, and Re-exploring the Place of Religion in Ethics*

3. Why Should I/We Be Moral?

Nov. 6, 11 Humanism—and Beyond

Reading: Bertrand Russell, "A Free Man's Worship"^C; George I. Mavrodes, "Religion and the Queerness of Morality" in Robert Audi and William J. Wainwright, *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment*^C; Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God*, Ch. 1^C; William James, "The Will to Believe"^C; R. M. Green, *Religion and Moral Reason*, Ch. 1^C

4. Why Are We So Often Immoral? How Can We Become Better?

*****Film, "Triumph of the Will" (X-hour, Nov. 12, 3-3:50 pm) *****

Nov. 13 Rediscovering Human Sinfulness

Reading: Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, Introduction, Ch. 1^C; Francis Collins, *The Language of God*, pp. 219-224^C

Nov. 18 The Anguish of Moral Choice

Reading: Chris Bohjalian, *Midwives*

***** Monday, Nov. 23. Take-home exam essays due by 5:00 pm as a PDF, in the Take-Home Essay Drop Box on Canvas. Please send a back-up copy to my email: ronald.m.green@dartmouth.edu *****