

Social Issues in Biology

[Microbiology 213](#): A Reading/Discussion Course

Course Director: [Rick Born](#)

The course covers historical and contemporary readings about controversial issues related to biology and the social responsibility of scientists. Building on the virtual format of previous years, we've expanded our course faculty to include colleagues from a variety of disciplines in far-flung geographical locations: *Emily Hamilton* on the public perception of vaccinations; *Christine Korsgaard* on the ethics of animal experimentation; *Nancy Gray* on women in science. Our goal is to provide future scientists with a background for considering the ethical and social implications of biology.

For each session, readings and study questions can be obtained at the [course web site on Canvas](#). Course enrollment is limited to 20 students. No prerequisites.

Contact 'Busola Olukoya before the starting date to request a spot.

Class meets on Wednesdays from 2 – 4 PM in TMEC L-008*

Jan 25	Rick Born	Probability, statistics and “truth” in science
Feb 1	Emily Hamilton	A history of vaccines and public perception of vaccinations
Feb 8	Louis Guenin	The ethics of climate change
Feb 15	Carole Hooven	Let's talk about sex: language, sex-based rights, and academic freedom
Feb 22	Nancy Gray	Women in Science: experience with the GRC Power Hour
March 1	Nuno Martins	Do genetic studies offer support for different human “races”?
March 8	Christine Korsgaard	Should we use animals for research?
March 15	NO CLASS	Spring Recess
March 22	Nadine Vincenten	Engaging diverse publics on issues in genetics
March 29	'Busola Olukoya	Ethical Considerations in Biodata Mining in Low-resourced Settings: A case study of the African Continent
April 5	Steve Lory	Eugenics, past, present and future
April 12	David Glass	Silenced voices: EE Just & Rosalind Franklin
April 19	Rick Born	History and current therapeutic uses of psychedelic drugs

Assessment: Grades are based on attendance, participation in class discussions and written assignments. Each week, students will choose one question from a list of study questions—or make up their own question—and write a 500-1000 word essay in response to that question. Essays will be due by 5 PM on the Monday *prior* to that week's Wednesday discussion. There are no exams.

* On February 22 and April 19 we will meet in TMEC 423