**BIOS 4651 BIOETHICS**

**Class time and location**: 3:05 PM – 4:25 PM, 204 CE (Cherry Emerson)

**Instructor:**  Dr. Mirjana M. Brockett

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**Teaching Assistant**: Audrey Wood

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**Learning outcomes**: After completing this class, students will be able to: (1) Describe basic ethical theories and principles and evaluate the ethical current and historical challenges and complexity of issues involved in. (2) Apply ethical thinking to issues in biology and medicine.

(3) Describe medicine, biological research, and public policy. (4) Synthesize reading, discussion, and writing skills in order to assess bioethical issues. (5) Students recognize that an ethical issue is present and can distinguish ethical choices from mere self-interest. (6) Students are aware of the ways that culture shapes ethical views and can critically evaluate those views. (7) Students should learn to analyze a bioethical issue and engage in solving ethical problems in research or health professions.

**Class organization**: This is a three credit course intended for advanced undergraduates. BIOS 1107 AND (BIOS 1107L OR BIOS 1207L) OR BIOL 1510 OR BIOL 1511

is a prerequisite. Class will be held in 204 CE and some class times are dedicated for the service project. This course includes reading assignments, exams, group presentations and assignments, quizzes, class discussion, and written reports. Reading, attending, and participating in class is fundamental to this course. 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.

**Required textbook**: Lewis Vaughn, “Bioethics: Principles, Issues and Cases” 3rd Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2012, ISBN 9780190250102.

**Attendance & participation**: Attendance and class participation is required for success in this course. Arriving late will affect your participation score. Communicate with the course instructor as soon as possible if you have to miss a class for any reason; written confirmation of a legitimate excuse, such as a severe illness, will be required for excused 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. If your absence is excused, your grade will be calculated from the remaining graded assignments.

Class participation in the form of discussing issues, asking questions, and respectful listening will make up a substantial portion of your grade. Laptop and cell phone use will not be permitted, unless necessary for a planned class activity. You will not be graded, nor will you be judged, on your specific beliefs. Bioethical discussions often involve questions of values; such discussions can become personal, subjective, and emotional. However, it is essential to understand and develop skills in making rational decisions and arguments, and to remain respectful of others when they speak. Bioethical discussions in this course are not meant to lead to decisions regarding particular issues. Rather, they should result in understanding and evaluating the perspectives, ideas, and arguments both for and against different viewpoints. In addition, students will cofacilitate peer discussion with another student at least once during the semester. Discussion facilitators are responsible for organizing 20-30 minutes of class time around the assigned reading for that day. Facilitators should seek instructor approval for their class plan before they lead class.

You will receive participation credit if it is clear that you have thought carefully about the subject matter, applied moral reasoning to the topic at hand, and contributed to the class in a respectful manner. You will be assessed on the quality of your contributions to class and small group activities. A quality comment possesses one or more of the following properties:

* Offers a different, but relevant, perspective
* Contributes to moving the discussion and analysis forward
* Builds on other comments
* Does not rely on “I feel,” statements, but includes evidence-based arguments  Demonstrates reflective thinking

**Team activities & evaluations**: Students will work in groups to use moral theories, principles, and arguments to assess and evaluate case studies on bioethical topics. Students will also give a 15-20 minute oral presentation based on the community program they were involved with. Students will evaluate themselves and their team members on engagement and effectiveness within the team.

**Writing assignments**: Students will engage in various written activities including reading responses, in-class short papers, or out-of-class short reports: Reading response will be announced before each class. The reading response should be a brief (1-3 paragraphs) discussion of topics in the reading that you found interesting, confusing, or otherwise noteworthy. The reading response should not be simply a summary of the reading, but rather evidence of your critical thinking about the ideas discussed in the reading.

**Exams**: There will be two midterm exams and one final paper. The exams will be based on the assigned readings and application of ethics principles and theories to bioethical case study analyses, 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. Exams will typically consist of short answer questions and free response.

**Academic Integrity**: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. This includes cheating, lying about course matters, plagiarism, stealing classroom materials, 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. Plagiarizing is defined by Webster’s as “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; use (another's production) without crediting the source.” Plagiarism and other academic integrity violations will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. Unless specifically identified as group work, all assignments are to be completed alone. Please ask for help if any part of this policy is unclear.

**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 Office of Disability Services (http://www.disabilityservices.gatech.edu).

**Late Assignments**: In-class group activities are due at the end of class and will not be accepted late. Late assignments will be accepted with a 10% penalty per day late. Assignments more than 3 days late will not be accepted. Extensions are typically not permitted but will be considered on a case-by-case basis for exceptional circumstances. Please discuss such circumstances with the instructor outside of class as soon as possible.

**Final Grade Calculation:**

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| --- | --- |
| Assessment | Value |
| Class participation & discussion facilitation | 20% |
| Team activities & presentation | 25% |
| Reading and writing assignments | 10% |
| Midterm exams | 30% |
| Final paper | 15% |
| 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.

**Detailed Schedule:**

\*Please note that the exact reading assignments from the eleven chapters below, will be listed on the CANVAS in the week prior to that class.

**Date Topic Reading\***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1** | 10 January Introduction and Course Syllabus Review | | N/A |
|  | 12 January Principles and theories in bioethicsPhilosophy of Science and Ethics | | Ch. 1 |
| **Week 2** | 17 January Moral reasoning in Bioethics | | Ch. 1 (pg. 3-30) |
|  | 19 January | Bioethics and moral theories  “Utilitarianism”  “The Moral Law” | Ch. 2 (pg. 34-52)  Pg. 53-56  Pg. 56-61 |
| **Week 3** | 24 January | ***Group assignment activity*** | N/A |
|  | 26 January | Medical Professional and Patient | Ch. 3 (pg. 81-94,  104-115) |
| **Week 4** | 31 January Paternalism and autonomy | | Ch. 3 (pg. 120-136) |
|  | 2 February Truth-Telling and Confidentiality | | Ch. 4 (pg. 144-161) |
| **Week 5** | 7 February ***Work on the Group Project/Case study outside of class*** | |  |
|  | 9 February Informed Consent | | Ch. 5 (pg. 196-213) |
| **Week 6** | 14 February Human research | | Ch. 6 (pg. 239-263) |
|  | 16 February Life and Death | | Ch.6 |
| **Week 7** | 21 February Life and Death | | Ch. 7 |
|  | 23 February **Midterm 1** | |  |
| **Week 8** | 28 February Human research (***guest speaker***) &  Reproductive Technologies | | Ch. 8 |
|  | 2 March Reproductive Technology readings | | Ch. 8 |
| **Week 9** | 7 March ***Work on the Group Project/case study outside of class*** | |  |
|  | 9 March Genetic choices | | Ch. 9 |

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| **Week 10** | 14 March | Genetic Choices readings Ch. 9 | |
|  | 16 March | Gene Editing Reading on T-square | |
| **Week 11** | 21 March | No class | Spring Break |
|  | 23 March | No class | Spring Break |
| **Week 12** | 28 March | **Midterm 2** |  |
|  | 30 March | Euthanasia and physician Assisted  Suicide | Ch. 10 |
| **Week 13** | 4 April | ***Work on the Group Project/case study outside of class*** | Ch. 11 |
|  | 6 April | Environmental Ethics | T-square |
| **Week 14** | 11 April | Justice and Health care | N/A |
|  | 13 April | ***Student presentations and discussion*** |  |
| **Week 15** | 18 April | ***Student presentations and discussion*** |  |
|  | 20 April | ***Student presentations and discussion*** |  |
| **Week 16** | 25 April | Last day of classes  Class survey |  |
| **Week 17** | 2 May | ***Final Paper Due*** |  |

This syllabus is subject to change!