**PHIL 3180: Science, Technology, and Human Values—Biomedical Ethics**

Dr. Justin B. Biddle *Course Time*: MW 1:35-2:55

School of Public Policy *Course Location*: Hefner Dormitory 001

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***Course Description:*** This course will be a primarily case-based survey of the main issues in contemporary biomedical ethics. Biomedical ethics is a rapidly growing interdisciplinary field that draws (at least) upon perspectives and expertise from medicine, nursing, public health, law, anthropology, religious studies, literature, psychology, political science, and philosophy. Although we will engage with all of these disciplines to some extent, our focus will be on philosophical methods and perspectives. The topics that we will address include: reproduction, health care systems and resource allocation, doctor-patient relationships and clinical ethics, medical experiments and research ethics, the nature of disease, and death and end of life care.

***Texts:*** Gregory Pence, *Medical Ethics: Accounts of Ground-Breaking Cases* (7th edition), New York: McGraw Hill.

Jerome Kassirer, *On the Take: How Medicine’s Complicity with Big Business Can Endanger Your Health*, New York: Oxford University Press.

***Course Goals***: While one of the primary goals of the course is to develop an understanding of the field of bioethics, there are other goals that are important not only for those who wish to continue to study philosophy, but virtually any other subject as well. In particular, this course should help you to learn to understand the structure of arguments, to present arguments clearly, and to evaluate arguments. The course assignments – student presentations, midterm and final exams, etc. (described below) – are meant to help you achieve these goals.

***Learning Objectives***:

* Students should develop an understanding of, and be able to describe clearly, the central issues in bioethics.
* Students should be able to identify arguments in texts and present them clearly in their own words – both verbally and in writing.
* Students should be able to compare and contrast the meaning of major texts, including the main arguments in these texts.
* Students should be able to evaluate and/or critique arguments in their own words – both verbally and in writing.

***Course Format:*** Each class session will be part lecture and part class discussion. Each class session will have a student presentation, in which a student will identify the main arguments of the readings for the day, present them as clearly as possible, and pose one or more discussion questions on the readings. Following the presentation, we will continue, as one large group, or sometimes in small groups, to discuss the material. There will be times when I will lecture, in order to provide background to the readings, fill in details that were missed during the discussion, and so on. But I will also facilitate class discussion, and it is expected that each student will contribute to the discussions. Prepare accordingly!

***Course Requirements:***

Class Presentation 25%

Pop Quizzes 25%

Midterm Exam 25%

Final Exam 25%

***Grade Scale:***

[90, 100] A

[80, 90) B

[70, 80) C

[60, 70) D

[0, 60) F

For those who take the class pass/fail, you are required to achieve a 70% or better in order to receive a grade of Satisfactory.

***Class Presentation:*** Each student is required to do one class presentation. In the presentation, you should explain the central argument (or arguments) of the reading for that day as clearly, as precisely, and as accurately as possible. You should also do some outside reading on the topic of your presentation and include this material in your presentation as is relevant. It is also helpful to provide a brief evaluation of the argument (or arguments) of the text that you are presenting. Doing all of this should take roughly 20 minutes, though you should feel free to take more time if you like. You should then conclude the presentation by asking a couple of discussion questions. I will then use these questions as a starting point for the discussion that follows the presentation.

The presentation will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

* It should identify the main arguments of the reading(s) in question, and it should present these arguments clearly. You should not overload the class with information; a good presentation will not recount every single detail of a reading, but will identify the *most important* points and arguments and present them clearly.
* You should do some outside reading on the topic of your presentation and discuss this material as is relevant. This outside reading could by on any topic, so long as it relates to the main topic of the presentation. For example, it could be material that calls into question the main argument of the text, or that provides additional evidence in favor of the main conclusion of the text, and so on.
* Your presentation should be professional, and you should do your best to make it engaging. At some point in your life, regardless of what career path you take, it is likely that you will need to give presentations to others (e.g., to your boss, or to a group of investors, or to a set of academic peers). In these presentations, it is not only important *what* you say; it is also important *how you say it*. While there are many ways to do a presentation in a professional manner, there are some things that you should definitely avoid. For example, you should not read your presentation; rather, you should speak to your audience extemporaneously. If you use Power Point (which is encouraged), be sure to use your Power Point as a starting point for what you should say, rather than as a text to be read. You should also be sure to practice your presentation ahead of time. It is sends a bad signal to stumble around in front of your audience, searching for what to say or how to explain something; you should have this worked out in advance.
* You should identify one or two questions that can serve as a basis for discussion. At the end of your presentation, present these questions to the class, and explain why you think that these questions are important. I will then use these questions as a springboard for a broader class discussion.

An electronic copy of your presentation, which includes your discussion questions, should be sent to me prior to the start of class.

***Pop Quizzes:*** There will be a number of pop quizzes given throughout the semester (approximately one per week). Each quiz will consist of two questions that should be easy to answer, provided that you have completed the assigned readings. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class; in general, quizzes cannot be made up or taken late. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest two quiz grades.

***Midterm and Final Exams:*** The midterm and final exams will be take-home, open-book, open-note, essay exams. The exam questions will require you to synthesize the material of the course, explain clearly and precisely some of the central arguments of the course, to evaluate these arguments, and so on. I will provide more detail about the exams as we approach them.

***Student-Faculty Expectations***: General student-faculty expectations for all students and faculty at Georgia Tech can be found at: <<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22.php>>. It is expected that students have read, and understood, these expectations.

***Plagiarism:*** Don’t do it. The work that you do in this class should be your own, and when you do borrow an idea from someone else, you should cite that person or persons accordingly. Prior to the essay exams, we will discuss in more detail what does, and does not, count as plagiarism. It is also assumed that all students have read, and understood, the GT Honor Code <<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9)>> and the Georgia Tech Student Code of Conduct <<http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/code-conduct>>.

***Cell Phones and Computers:*** Please turn off all cell phones prior to the start of class. Additionally, please do not leave your laptop computers open on your desk during class. If you need to look up a piece of information briefly during the course of a class discussion, you may do so, but close your computer immediately afterwards.

***Schedule of Readings***

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| *Date* | *Topic* | *Readings* |
| 11 Jan | Course Introduction |  |
| 13 Jan | **Introduction to Ethical Reasoning** | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 1: Ethical Reasoning, Moral Theories, Principles, and Bioethics* |
| 18 Jan | NO CLASS – OFFICIAL SCHOOL HOLIDAY |  |
| 20 Jan | **Reproduction** | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 5: Abortion: The Trial of Kenneth Edelin* |
| 25 Jan |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 6: Assisted Reproduction, Multiple Births, and Elderly Patients* |
| 27 Jan |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 7: Embryos, Stem Cells, and Cloning* |
| 1 Feb |  | Mary Anne Warren, *On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion* |
| 3 Feb |  | Don Marquis, *Why Abortion is Immoral*; Gary Gutting, *Can We Stop Fighting about Abortion?* |
| 8 Feb | NO CLASS |  |
| 10 Feb | **Health Care Systems and Resource Allocation** | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 18: Ethical Issues of the Affordable Care Act* |
| 15 Feb |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 12: Just Distribution of Organs: The God Committee and Personal Responsibility* |
| 17 Feb |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 17: Ethical Issues in Stopping the Global Spread of AIDS* |
| 22 Feb |  | Justin Biddle, *Intellectual Property in the Biomedical Sciences* |
| 24 Feb | **Doctor-Patient Relationships and Clinical Ethics** | Joseph Collins, *Should Doctors Tell the Truth?*; Roger Higgs, *On Telling Patients the Truth* |
| 29 Feb |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 15: Involuntary Psychiatric Commitment: The Case of Joyce Brown* |
| 2 March |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 14: Ethical Issues of Intersex and Transgender Persons* |
| 7 March |  | Carl Elliott, *Amputees by Choice* |
| 9 March |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 16: Ethical Issues in Testing for Genetic Disease* |
| 14 March | **Medical Experiments and Research Ethics** | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 9: Medical Research on Animals* |
| 16 March | MIDTERM EXAM |  |
| 21 March | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK |  |
| 23 March | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK |  |
| 28 March |  | Henry Beecher, “Ethics and Clinical Research”; Benjamin Freedman, “Equipoise and the Ethics of Clinical Research” |
| 30 March |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 10: Medical Research on Vulnerable Human Subjects* |
| 4 April | **Death and End of Life Care** | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 2: Requests to Die: Non-Terminal Patients* |
| 6 April |  | Gregory Pence, *Chapter 3: Requests to Die: Terminal Patients* |
| 11 April |  | Ron Amundson and Gayle Taira, *Our Lives and Ideologies*; Gregory Pence, *Chapter 8: The Ethics of Treating Impaired Babies* |
| 13 April | **Ethics and the Commercialization of Medical Research** | Jerome Kassirer, *On the Take*, Chapters 1-3 |
| 18 April |  | Jerome Kassirer, *On the Take*, Chapters 4-6 |
| 20 April |  | Jerome Kassirer, *On the Take*, Chapters 7-8 |
| 25 April |  | Rebecca Kukla, *Medicalization, “Normal Function,” and the Definition of Health*; Ian Hacking, *Making Up People*; Joel Lexchin; *Bigger and Better: How Pfizer Redefined Erectile Dysfunction* |
| 27 April |  | Jerome Kassirer, *On the Take*, Chapters 9-10 |
| 28 April – 5 May | FINAL EXAMS PERIOD |  |