

ISSUES IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

BMD 493

-Fall Semester 2006-

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 8:00 to 10:00 or by appointment.
Time: Monday and Wednesday, 15:30 to 16:20
Place: UCOM ANNEX

Objective:

This course is designed to provide students with the tools needed to discuss and evaluate controversial issues, both openly and objectively. We will specifically concentrate on topics concerning research integrity as well as current bioethical problems.

Grading Policy

The highest possible grade is 300 points, distributed as follows:

- 120 points from 6 biweekly short reports (20 points each)
- 100 points result from a final paper from a topic of the student's choice
- 30 points from 10 random quizzes
- 50 points for participation in class (**including emailed questions and student presentations**).

Other:

- **Students are expected to actively and freely participate in all discussions. The opinions expressed during discussions are confidential and will not affect the student's grade.**
- **Every student is responsible for his/her own work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will be reported and dealt with as described in the USA Student Academic Conduct Policy (<http://www.southalabama.edu/arts&sci/conductpolicy.pdf>).**
- **Failure to meet a deadline for a biweekly paper will result in a loss of 2 points/day.**
- **The BMD department has established an email account (BMDdept@usouthal.edu) for the purpose of anonymous student feedback. The departmental secretary will be checking this email and will forward student comments to appropriate faculty without any identifiers.**
- **The use of beepers, portable phones and any other device that could distract the class is forbidden.**
- **Attendance is mandatory. Students should contact the course director in advance if they cannot attend a session or bring a medical certificate in case of sickness. In addition, students missing a meeting must write a 1-2 pages long summary of the topic covered in that session.**

Course grades:

A > 90 %

B > 80 %

C > 70 %

D > 60 %

F < 59 %

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTS/PAPER WRITING

In the biweekly reports students are expected to **elaborate** on a particular topic discussed in class. On the other hand, the goal of the final paper is to allow students to **investigate** and write about a topic in which they are particularly interested.

- 1) Biweekly reports should be about 2 pages long (about 650 words), **typed**, double spaced, 12 Pt, 14-15 characters/inch (i.e., Times Roman), and 1 inch margins. The **biweekly reports are due on Mondays 9/11, 9/25, 10/9, 10/23, 11/6 and 11/20**. For these reports, students must choose any topic from the areas covered during the two weeks prior to the report.
- 2) The **term paper** should be 6-8 pages long, on **any** topic selected by the student and approved by the course director. **A typed outline of the paper (1 or 2 pages) is due by Monday, October 16th. The term paper is due by Wednesday, December 6.**
- 3) Citations of papers and other references may follow any standard format.
- 4) Papers will be graded based on **organization** (see below), **clarity, spelling and content**. The opinions expressed in these reports will have no effect on the grade. However, students are expected to back their opinions with proper arguments.

Organization:

- 1) Introduce the topic (i.e., ethical theory, movie, student presentation).
- 2) Describe the pros and cons of the problem/theory discussed
- 3) Propose, when possible, solutions and possible problems arising from those solutions
- 4) If there are two sides to the problem, as is the case in most bioethical issues, (i.e., student presentations, movies) present first your side **and then identify two positive aspects of the opposing view**, backing them with valid points.
- 5) References should be listed at the end of the report.
- 6) Copies of the original materials should be included with the paper.

Required texts and reading materials:

- *The elements of Moral Philosophy*, 5th edition, by James and Stuart Rachels (McGraw-Hill)
- *Taking Sides: Current issues in Bioethics*, 11th edition by Carol Levine (McGraw-Hill)
- *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code*, by Annas and Grodin (Oxford University Press).
- Handout with Articles from newspapers and scientific journals.

Issues in Biomedical Sciences

Reading Assignments:	BK: book chapter	HND: Handout
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_Session	Reading Assignments	Date	Topic
1		M Aug 21	Introduction. Morality and ethics. Student presentations.
2	BK: Rachels, Ch 1	W Aug 23	Ethical dilemmas. Looking at both sides
3	BK: Rachels Ch 2. HND: Newspaper/Internet articles	M Aug 28	Cultural Relativism.
4	BK: Taking sides, Issue 6	W Aug 30	Student presentation: Should truth-telling depend on the patient's culture?
5	BK: Rachels, Ch 3. NPR Morning edition, 06/13/00	W Sep 6	Subjectivism and Emotivism. Listening to the real arguments on a specific issue.
6	HND: Session 6	M Sep 11	Social Darwinism. Papers on eugenics in the US: "Social control of the Congenital defective". "Exoneration of the feeble-minded". California and Canadian Sterilization Laws
7	BK: Annas-Grodin. Ch 2	W Sep 13	The Nuremberg Laws of 1935. "The Slippery-Slope".
8	BK: Annas-Grodin, pp. 67-86 HND: Session 8	M Sep 18	Human experimentation during WW II. Examples from Germany and Japan. Unit 731.
9	HND: Session 9	W Sep 20	The need for rules in clinical studies: the Tuskegee Syphilis study, Human radiation studies in the US, Lobotomy.
10	BK: Annas-Grodin, pp. Annas-Grodin, pp. 149-166 185-194. HND: Session 10	M Sep 25	The Nuremberg Code, the Declaration of Helsinki and the Belmont report. Exceptions to informed consent authorized by FDA. Vaccination for the Gulf War. PolyHeme.
11	HND: Session 11	W Sep 27	Dusty Layton: What is the role of the Institutional Review Boards (IRB)? Problems at different universities.
12	BK: Taking Sides, Issue 15 HND: Session 12. NPR Morning edition, 2/26/99	M Oct 2	Student presentation: Placebos. Recent changes to the Declaration of Helsinki. Arthroscopy. Is Sham Surgery Ethically Acceptable in Clinical Research?
13	HND: Session 13.	W Oct 4	Ethics in Research. Office of Research Integrity. Examples of Scientific Misconduct. USA Policy on misconduct. Ethics in College: Plagiarism. Cheating.
14	BK: Rachels, Chapter 4, Taking Sides: Issue 11 HND: Session 14	M Oct 9	Morality and Religion. Do Parents Harm Their Children When They Refuse Medical Treatment on Religious Grounds?
15	BK: Rachels, Chapter 5	W Oct 11	Psychological Egoism. Ethical Egoism.
16	BK: Rachels, Chapters 6 & 7	M Oct 16	Consequentialist Schools: Utilitarianism. Bentham and Stewart Mill and the pursue of happiness

17	BK: Rachels, Chapters 8 & 9	W Oct 18	Deontological Schools: Kant and the absolute moral rules
18	BK: Rachels, Chapter 10	M Oct 23	The Social Contract
19	BK: Rachels, Chapter 12	W Oct 25	Virtue Ethics
20	BK: Taking sides, Issue 5	M Oct 30	Student presentation: Should Physicians Be Allowed to Assist in Patient Suicide?
21	BK: Taking sides, Issue 9	W Nov 1	Student presentation: Should Pregnant Women Be Punished for Exposing Fetuses to Risk?
22	HND: Session 22	M Nov 6	Kim Bryan: Organ transplantation. International market for body parts. China's death row inmates
23	HND: Session 23. NPR Morning edition, 4/17/00	W Nov 8	Patenting genes. Tac polymerase. Island Genome Project.
24	BK: Taking sides, Issue 13	M Nov 13	Student presentation: Insurance companies and genetic information. Will Genetic Testing Lead to Denial of Insurance and Employment?
25	BK: Taking sides, Issue 21 HND: Session 25	W Nov 15	Student presentation: Designing infective organisms and Bioterrorism. Should public health be given sweeping powers over individual liberty in a bioterrorist threat?
26	BK: Taking sides, Issue 7	M Nov 20	Should Doctors Be Able to Refuse Demands for "Futile" Treatment?
27	HND: Session 27	M Nov 27	In vitro fertilization. Current gaps in legislation.
28	HND: Session 28	W Nov 29	Student presentation: Stem cell research. Should we use frozen embryos?
29	HND: Session 29	M Dec 4	Living wills and politics: Terri Schiavo and other stories