

## PHIL 165: Bioethics

An examination of ethical issues in the life sciences and technologies, medicine, public health, and/or human interaction with nonhuman animals or the living environment.

Honors version available.

IDEAs in Action Gen Ed: FC-VALUES.

Making Connections Gen Ed: PH.

### Course Overview

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Number              | PHIL165.001 (.002)   |
| Title               | Bioethics  |
| Credit hours        | 3  |
| Course Description  | <p>In this course, we'll focus on a range of ethical problems related to biomedical research and technological advancements, the practice of medicine and doctor-patient relation, and healthcare regulations and policy making. We will pay particular attention to issues of personal autonomy, consent, dignity, justice and equality in resource allocation, and the conflicts of individual and societal perspectives. We'll discuss questions such as: Should vaccinations be mandatory? Is there a right to healthcare? Should younger people have priority in accessing life-saving treatment over older people in a pandemic? Is it ever permissible for doctors to lie to their patients? Do transgender adolescents have a right to puberty-blocking treatments, even in the absence of parental consent? We will learn how to identify the ethically relevant features of applied cases, and how to employ different ethical frameworks to tackle complex, applied ethical issues. We will engage with the authors of our readings critically, and we will learn how to construct sound and convincing ethical arguments and communicate them effectively.</p> |
| Prerequisites       | None   |
| Target Audience     | Undergraduates   |
| Instructor          | M. Giulia Napolitano<br><a href="mailto:mgnapoli@unc.edu">mgnapoli@unc.edu</a><br>Office: Caldwell Hall 202A   |
| Teaching Assistants | —  |
| Course Website      | <a href="https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/phil165.001">https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/phil165.001</a><br>( <a href="https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/phil165.002">https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/phil165.002</a> )   |

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| <b>Class Days, Times, Location</b> | Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12.20-1.10, <u>FH104</u> (1.25-2.15, <u>AR218</u> )   |
| <b>Office Hours</b>                | Office hours are from 11.00 to 12.00 on Mondays and Wednesdays, by appointment, in person or on Zoom. I am always happy to meet with you for clarifications on the course material, for guidance on the written assignments, for discussing your progress in the course, or anything else you might want to talk about related to the course. Just schedule an appointment with me via email.                       |
| <b>Communication</b>               | During the week, I typically reply to emails within 24 hours, but please allow up to 48 hours before reaching out again. Keep in mind that I don't typically check my inbox after 5pm and during weekends and holidays.   |
| <b>Course Texts</b>                | All required reading for the course will be linked in Sakai.  |
| <b>Course Format</b>               | Mondays and Wednesdays will be primarily dedicated to understanding the readings. You are expected to have carefully read the papers before class and to participate actively. I would like these sessions to be more like conversations and less like lectures. On Fridays we'll engage with the week's material more critically, and discuss case studies, both in smaller groups, and in class-wide discussions. |

## Course Goals and Learning Objectives

All our philosophy courses aim at the acquisition and nurturing of basic philosophic skills. One of the main goals of our philosophy curriculum is to instill and enable the development of skills that are distinct to philosophy, but which are foundational to all forms of knowledge.

These **basic philosophical skills** involve being able to:

- Think critically;
- Deploy philosophical concepts and terminology correctly, in either a historical or contemporary setting;
- Represent clearly and accurately the views or argument of particular philosophers, in either a historical or contemporary setting;
- Identify the premises and conclusion(s) of a philosophical argument and assess both its validity and soundness;
- Apply a philosophical theory or argument to a new topic, and being able to draw and defend reasonable conclusions about that topic;
- Develop an argument for a particular solution to a philosophical problem in either a historical or contemporary setting;
- Write clearly, precisely, and persuasively in defense of a philosophical thesis;

- Participate in respectful, critical, and reflexive dialogues about difficult philosophical positions;
- Read, interpret, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different philosophical texts and the philosophical positions presented them.

In addition, PHIL165 satisfies our **value theory** requirement in the philosophy major and minor, and as such aims at developing the following learning outcomes:

- being familiar with some of the leading normative theories in philosophy, such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics;
- being able to identify and explain the various contexts in which philosophical questions of justification arise;
- being able to assess ethical values in terms of the philosophical and non-philosophical reasons offered;
- being able to recognize different ethical perspectives and the distinctive approaches these perspectives bring to questions of value,
- being able to evaluate ethical justifications for different ways of organizing civic and political communities;
- being able to analyze and evaluate the differences between personal ethical decisions and those bearing on the public and civic domains.

***Specifically, through this course students will gain:***

1. A working understanding of core bioethics methods. Included in this understanding will be appreciation for the strengths, weaknesses, similarities and differences between these perspectives.
2. An appreciation for the underlying ethical concepts and issues relevant to many different research and clinical endeavors and practices such as notions of moral status, rights, and social justice.
3. Argument building skills in addressing specific practical moral problems in bioethics and analytic capacity in approaching bioethics texts.
4. Critical leadership skills including the development of peer feedback and session design.
5. Facility in identifying the ethically salient impact of social, historical, and cultural factors in health and health care with a particular focus on the ways in which power, differences, and inequalities have shaped biomedicine.
6. Ability to recognize the relationship between inequality and social, economic, and political power and to evaluate the dynamics of these kinds of inequality in medical contexts.

**This course is part of the IDEAs in Action General Education curriculum:  
Ethical and Civic Values**

Students develop their capacity to think carefully and critically about how to make and justify private and public decisions.

**Questions for Students**

1. How can people think fruitfully (individually and together) about how they should live their lives?
2. What is required to judge a standard or value as worthy of support?
3. How should we distinguish between prejudices and reasonable grounds for value judgments?
4. What considerations – stories, reasons, testimony, documents, data, etc. – can justify our values and commitments, whether personal or social?

### Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the contexts in which questions of justification arise.
2. Assess ethical values in terms of reasons offered
3. Recognize different ethical perspectives and the distinctive approaches these perspectives bring to questions of value, evaluating ethical justifications for different ways of organizing civic and political communities.
4. Analyze the differences between personal ethical decisions and those bearing on the public and civic spheres.

### Course Assignments and Assessments

| Assignments                     | Percentages |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Weekly comments (2 pages total) | 15%         |
| Participation                   | 20%         |
| Paper 1 (4-5 pages)             | 20%         |
| Paper 2 (4-5 pages)             | 25%         |
| Final exam                      | 20%         |

### Grading Scale

*Converting your final average to a letter grade:*

- 94 or above: A
- 90 to 93: A-
- 87 to 89: B+
- 83 to 86: B
- 80 to 82: B-
- 77 to 79: C+
- 73 to 76: C
- 70 to 72: C-
- 67 to 69: D+
- 60 to 66: D
- Below 60: E

## Assignment Descriptions

### **Weekly comments:**

Every week (starting on week 2), in preparation to the weekly discussion, you will submit a short paragraph on the week's readings (available under 'assignments' in Sakai). Your comment should be developed enough to show that you have carefully read the material and thought about it. Comments contain either a question about one or more of the papers assigned that week, or a criticism/objection, or something that you found particularly interesting and an explanation of why you did. I will use your comments as a guide to plan discussions. Weekly comments are due on Thursday by 5pm (unless otherwise noted on the class schedule below). Comments are graded on a scale from 0 to 2. Late comments receive 0 points. I will drop your two lowest grades at the end. The weekly comments taken together will amount to 2 pages of written work.

### **Participation:**

Your participation grade will be based both on attendance (including punctuality) and on active participation to the discussions and the other in-class activities which will include peer collaboration activities, team discussions in smaller groups and presentations by each group to the class, weekly 'expert groups', where groups of students will be responsible each during one week of the semester for assisting with leading class, by being prepared to answer questions on the material (groups assignments and guidance will be provided during the first week of classes).

The 'active participation' portion of the grade will reflect your involvement in the different group activities, the frequency of your contributions, and whether you make a genuine effort to contribute to a constructive and respectful in-class discussion. Your grade will not be based on the philosophical quality of your contributions or their correctness: you should always feel free to contribute your thoughts without fearing judgment, to ask clarificatory questions, to express doubts or misunderstandings. All these different kinds of contributions will count positively towards your participation grade.

I will give you two participation grades throughout the semester, each worth 10% of the final grade, in order for you to have a sense of how you are doing, and to give you a chance to improve as we continue on with the course.

Perfect attendance without any contributions to the discussion will be graded maximum as a C (7.5/10). We will implement different strategies to make discussions as inclusive and accessible as possible. If you are finding it difficult to participate to the discussion please get in touch with me as soon as possible and we can find a solution together.

### **Papers:**

You will write two papers (4-5 pages). I will provide a list of prompts to choose from about two weeks before each assignment is due. Further instructions on these assignments, including the grading rubric that will be used, will be provided closer to the date.

Late papers will result in a 1 point (out of 20) deduction for each day or part of a day that they are late.

**Final Exam:**

There will be a final written exam for the course covering key course readings, themes and concepts. It will consist of a choice of open questions. More information will be distributed closer to the date.

**Course Policies and Resources**

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| <b>Accessibility Resources</b> | UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <a href="https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us">https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us</a><br>Please discuss any individual needs with your instructor within the first two weeks of the class so that reasonable accommodation can be made in a timely manner.   |
| <b>Class Attendance Policy</b> | Attendance is mandatory (see University policy below) and is reflected in your participation grade. You are allowed to miss up to two classes (no questions asked) throughout the semester without this impacting your grade. If you need to miss more than two classes, for reasons other than those stated below, get in touch with me as early as possible to arrange a make-up assignment. If you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not come to class, even if you feel well enough to. We can arrange your attendance to the meeting via Zoom, or a make-up assignment.<br><br>University attendance policy:<br>No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:<br><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Authorized University activities</li><li>2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by <a href="#">Accessibility Resources and Service</a> and/or the <a href="#">Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office</a> (EOC)</li><li>3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the <a href="#">Office of the Dean of Students</a>, <a href="#">Gender Violence Service Coordinators</a>, and/or the <a href="#">Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office</a> (EOC).</li></ol> |

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| <p><b>University Testing Center</b></p>             | <p>The College of Arts and Sciences provides a secure, proctored environment in which exams can be taken. The center works with instructors to proctor exams for their undergraduate students who are not registered with ARS and who do not need testing accommodations as provided by ARS. In other words, the Center provides a proctored testing environment for students who are unable to take an exam at the normally scheduled time (with pre-arrangement by your instructor). For more information, visit <a href="http://testingcenter.web.unc.edu/">http://testingcenter.web.unc.edu/</a>.</p>  |
| <p><b>Title IX Resources</b></p>                    | <p>Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <a href="https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/">https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/</a>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – <a href="mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu">titleixcoordinator@unc.edu</a>), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (<a href="mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu">reportandresponse@unc.edu</a>), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (<a href="mailto:gvsc@unc.edu">gvsc@unc.edu</a>; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at <a href="http://safe.unc.edu">safe.unc.edu</a>.</p> |
| <p><b>Counseling and Psychological Services</b></p> | <p>CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <a href="https://caps.unc.edu/">https://caps.unc.edu/</a> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.</p>  |
| <p><b>Classroom climate</b></p>                     | <p>In this class, we will be touching upon controversial issues, about which we might have strong feelings. Some of us might be particularly sensitive to some of these issues due to personal experience. Please, always keep in mind different people when contributing to the discussion, and always be respectful of others when stating your opinion. Each of us comes into the classroom with valuable insights and perspectives. I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students, where diverse perspectives are recognized, respected, and seen as a source of</p>   |

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| <b>Honor Code Statement</b> | I expect all students to follow the guidelines of the UNC Honor Code. In particular, students are expected to refrain from “lying, cheating, or stealing” in the academic context. You can read more about the honor code at <a href="http://studentconduct.unc.edu">studentconduct.unc.edu</a> . In any course, including mine, what constitutes cheating can change from one activity to another. For example, collaboration may be encouraged for an assignment but qualify as cheating during an exam. Please see my guidelines for each activity, and if you are unsure, please ask me to clarify. |
| <b>Extensions</b>           | Extensions on assignments will be granted to any student who asks, as long as they are requested <b>at least 24h</b> before the assignment’s deadline. No need to provide a reason when asking.   |
| <b>Grade Appeal Process</b> | If you feel you have been awarded an incorrect grade, please discuss with me. If we cannot resolve the issue, you may talk to our departmental director of undergraduate studies or appeal the grade through a formal university process based on arithmetic/clerical error, arbitrariness, discrimination, harassment, or personal malice. To learn more, go to the <a href="#">Academic Advising Program</a> website.   |
| <b>Technology Use</b>       | Laptops may be used for taking notes, but they should not be used during discussions, unless needed for accessibility reasons.  |
| <b>Optional Mask Use</b>    | UNC-Chapel Hill is committed to the well-being of our community – not just physically, but emotionally. The indoor mask requirement was lifted for most of campus on March 7, 2022. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask, you are free to do so. There are many reasons why a person may decide to continue to wear a mask, and we respect that choice.  |



## Course at a Glance

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

| <b>Date</b>    | <b>Module</b>                  | <b>Reading</b>                                  | <b>Assignments due</b>              |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| M August 15    | Intro to Ethics                | Syllabus  |                                     |
| W August 17    |                                | Shafer Landau<br><i>Introduction</i>            |                                     |
| F August 19    |                                | Discussion                                      | None                                |
| M August 22    | Intro to Ethics                | Shafer Landau<br><i>Consequentialism</i>        |                                     |
| W August 24    |                                | Shafer Landau<br><i>The Kantian perspective</i> |                                     |
| F August 26    |                                | Discussion                                      | Weekly comments<br>due Thursday 5pm |
| M August 29    | Intro to Ethics                | Shafer Landau<br><i>The Social Contract</i>     |                                     |
| W August 31    |                                | Shafer Landau<br><i>Ethical pluralism</i>       |                                     |
| F September 02 |                                | Discussion                                      | Weekly comments<br>due Thursday 5pm |
| M September 05 | No class - labor day           |   |                                     |
| W September 07 | Autonomy<br>and<br>paternalism | Dworkin<br><i>Paternalism</i>                   |                                     |
|                |                                | Gawande<br><i>Whose body is it anyway?</i>      |                                     |
| F September 09 |                                | Discussion                                      | Weekly comments<br>due Thursday 5pm |

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| M September 12 | Autonomy and paternalism: Vaccinations               | Flanigan<br><i>A defense of compulsory vaccination</i>                   |   |
| W September 14 |  | Diekema<br><i>Physician Dismissal of Families Who Refuse Vaccination</i> |   |
| F September 16 |  | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm  |
| M September 19 | Autonomy and paternalism: Telling patients the truth | Collins<br><i>Should Doctors Tell the Truth</i>                          |   |
|                |  | Kant<br><i>On the supposed duty to lie for altruistic motives</i>        |   |
| W September 21 |  | Grouse<br><i>The Lie</i>   |   |
|                |  | Lamas<br><i>You Are Dying</i>  |   |
| F September 23 |  | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm  |
| M September 26 | No class- well-being days                            |  |   |
| W September 28 | Autonomy and paternalism: Transgender teenagers      | Priest<br><i>Transgender children and the right to transition</i>        |   |
| F September 30 |  | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm<br><br>Paper 1 due Friday 5pm<br><br>Participation grade 1 (10%) |
| M October 3    | Abortion   | Don Marquis<br><i>Why abortion is immoral</i>                            |   |

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| W October 5  |                         | Thomson<br><i>A defense of abortion</i>   |                                      |
| F October 7  |                         | Discussion  | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm     |
| M October 10 | Abortion                | Singer<br><i>Taking a life (123-134)</i>  |                                      |
| W October 12 |                         | Singer<br><i>Taking a life (134-154)</i>  |                                      |
| F October 14 |                         | Discussion  | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm     |
| M October 17 | Conscientious Objection | Wicclair<br><i>Conscientious objection in medicine</i>  |                                      |
| W October 19 |                         | Savulescu<br><i>Conscientious objection in medicine</i><br><br>Pruski<br><i>Conscientious objection and systemic injustice</i>  | Weekly comment due Wednesday by 11am |
| F October 21 | No class - Fall break   |   |                                      |
| M October 24 | A right to healthcare?  | Daniels<br><i>Is there a right to healthcare, and, if so, what does it encompass?</i>   |                                      |
| W October 26 |                         | Savulescu<br><i>Justice and Healthcare: The Right to a Decent Minimum, Not Equality of Opportunity</i><br><br>Lamm<br><i>The case against making healthcare a "right"</i> |                                      |

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| F October 28  |   | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm<br><br>Paper 2 due Friday 5pm |
| M October 31  | Resource allocation                     | Singer<br><i>Why we must ration health Care</i>  |  |
| W November 02 |   | Kamm<br><i>Cost Effectiveness Analysis and Fairness</i>  |  |
| F November 04 | No class - out of town for a conference |  | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm                               |
| M November 07 | Resource allocation                     | Beckstead and Ord<br><i>Bubbles under the wallpaper</i>  |  |
| W November 09 |   | White and Lo<br><i>Mitigating Inequities and Saving Lives with ICU Triage during the COVID-19 Pandemic</i> |  |
| F November 11 |   | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm                               |
| M November 14 | Markets: surrogacy                      | Elizabeth Anderson<br><i>Is Women's Labor a Commodity?</i>   |  |
| W November 16 |   | Brennan Jaworski<br><i>In defense of commodification</i>   |  |
| F November 18 |   | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Thursday 5pm                               |
| M November 21 | Markets: organs                         | Satz<br><i>The moral limits of markets: the case of human kidneys</i>                                      |  |

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| W November 23                  | No class - Thanksgiving break |  |  |
| F November 25                  | No class - Thanksgiving break |  |  |
| M November 28                  |                               | Brennan Jaworski<br><i>Markets without symbolic limits</i> |  |
| W November 30                  |                               | Discussion   | Weekly comments due Tuesday 5pm<br><br>Participation Grade 2 (10%) |
| M December 5<br>(S December 3) | Final exam 12.00pm            |  |  |