

Liberal Studies Degree Program
Course Syllabus LSHV 414

Global Bioethics

Fall Semester, 2016, 6:30-9:30 PM
Thursdays, September 1-December 1, 2016

Instructor: Gladys B. White, Ph.D.
Gladys.White@comcast.net

Course Description

The birth of bioethics as a field of study is generally identified as a mid 20th century phenomenon that occurred largely within the United States. But important issues of moral concern regarding the interface of humanity and technology can only be meaningfully understood in a global context. The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is to conduct ethical analyses of a cluster of cutting edge issues in order to understand the human values and policy issues at stake. Key topics will include: international exchanges of human tissues, organs and body parts, whole genome sequencing and the personal genome map, public health ethics including management of communicable disease, cross border reproductive care, pharmaceuticals and the developing world, nanotechnology, synthetic life, human subjects' research, animal research and sports ethics. Each class or two will be based on at least one important controversy and debate will be encouraged.

Course Outline

September 1, 2016 Introduction, brief history of bioethics and basic schemes of ethical reasoning

Beauchamp, Walters et al. pp. 1-35.

September 8, 2016 Justice and Health Care

Beauchamp, Walters et al., pp. 598-666.

September 15, 2016 International Exchanges of Tissues, Organs and
Body Parts

Beauchamp, Walters et al., pp. 471-505.

September 22, 2016 Whole Genome Sequencing.

Beauchamp, Walters et al., pp. 201-222.

Go to www.bioethics.gov to read *Privacy and Progress
in Whole Genome Sequencing*, selected sections.

Paper 1 is due.

September 29, 2016 Cross Border Reproductive Care

Beauchamp. Walters et al. pp. 234-272

October 6, 2016 Public Health Ethics: Management of Communicable
Diseases

Beauchamp, Walters et al. pp. 669-698, pp. 699-719, pp.
720-733.

October 13, 2016 Pharmaceuticals and the Developing World

Readings TBA

October 20, 2016 Nanotechnology: Ethical, Legal and Social Implications

Go to www.bioethics.gov to read the transcript of the
meeting of the former President's Council on Bioethics,
September 7, 2007, Session 5: Nanotechnologies and
Ethics: European and Global Perspectives.

October 27, 2016 Synthetic Life

Go to www.bioethics.gov and read the report “Synthetic Biology.”

Beauchamp, Walters et al. pp. 573-578.

Nov. 3, 2016 Sports Ethics: International Competition and Enhancements

Bioethics Briefing Book, #33, Sports Enhancement

Paper 2 is due.

Nov. 10, 2016 Research Using Human Subjects

Beauchamp, Walters et al. pp. 535-569.

The Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues, *Moral Science, Protecting Participants in Human Subject Research*, 2012.

Nov, 17, 2016 Research Using Animal Subjects

Beauchamp, Walters et al. pp 514-534.

Dec. 1, 2016 International Voices in Bioethics: What Organizations Are Most Active? Plus course wrap-up.

Paper 3 is due.

Required Texts

Beauchamp, T.L., Walters, LeRoy, Kahn, J.P., Mastrionni, A.C. *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, Eighth edition, US: Wadsworth, 2014. ISBN-13:978-1-133-31554-4.

U.S. Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues, selected reports available online at www.bioethics.gov

The Hastings Center, *Bioethics Briefing Book*, www.thehastingscenter.org (available for free online!)

Optional Text

Church, George, Regis, Ed *Regenesis, How Synthetic Biology Will Reinvent Nature and Ourselves*, New York: Basic Books, 2012. ISBN-978-0-02175-8

Course Requirements

Students will be required to submit three short papers of approximately 5 pages each. One paper should consist of a newspaper-type article, similar to those that appear for example in the *International Herald Tribune*, intended to acquaint the public with a recent scientific advance and its associated ethical issues (4-5 pages). The second paper should consist of a short briefing paper that a staff member might prepare to acquaint an ambassador or other public official in the U.S. about a current bioethics issue and its global implications (4-5 pages). The third paper should consist of a draft policy document that is intended to promote some international cooperation related to one of the issues that we have considered in the course (2-3 pages). Papers should convey original work prepared by the student for this class alone. In addition to preparing these papers, students are expected to **complete the required readings**, attend class and actively participate in class discussions. (Papers = 60% of grade, i.e. 20% each; Class participation = 40% of grade). Points will be deducted for work that is submitted late. The general grading rubric will be: A = 93-100, A- = 89-92, B+ = 87-88, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 74-76, C- = 70-73, 69 and below = unsatisfactory.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

Identify and describe some of the major issues in global bioethics,

Analyze the ethical dimensions and human values implications of these problems,

Synthesize relevant information across disciplines of philosophy, ethics and science in order to demonstrate an understanding of the relevant issues,

Compare and contrast the national versus international/global implications of these important problems, and

Anticipate future developments in global bioethics both in relation to topics and the most meaningful forms of ethical analysis.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at the first class meeting is mandatory. Students may miss **no more than one class session** in order to remain in the course and more than one excused absence may result in the withdrawal of the student from the course. More than two absences usually results in withdrawal from the course as sufficient contact hours would not be met to warrant the award of the credit or grade.

Honor Code

MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor-Code Pledge stated below:

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor system: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Disability Notice

Please note: If you believe that you have a disability, then you should contact the academic Resource center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey center, suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining

reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.