

BIOETHICS SUMMER 2023
ELISA REVERMAN, PHD CANDIDATE

10:50 AM -12:45 PM, MTWR

OVERVIEW

This class is a collection of popular bioethics topics and the intersection of bioethics, medical humanities, and social justice/socio-political philosophy. It will discuss classic topics in bioethics, but also push you to center those conversations in the real, non-abstracted, messy and complicated world.

Throughout the course, we will discuss varied topics within bioethics, and your assignments will prompt you to explicate and reflect on your own thoughts and opinions. With regards to content, I am assigning a lot of readings that offer a particular view of some issue. I, myself, have lots of personal views about these issues. However, it is *not* my intention to dump these views into you and have you simply absorb them. You should always be approaching these topics with an open mind, and maybe with the following questions:

Do I already have gut intuitions about a particular subject? Do I know where those intuitions come from? How does this reading or viewpoint challenge my initial views? Are these challenges compelling or not? What have I learned about my own view after reading someone else's?

I anticipate that during this course, you will develop viewpoints about various topics. It also may be the case that you leave the course completely unsure of what you personally believe, but more knowledgeable about potential stances and other people's beliefs - and that's fine. I am in no way expecting you to believe one particular thing about some topic. I am instead interested in teaching you to develop the skills to recognize a good argument from a bad one, to reflect on your own beliefs, and to take up various perspectives about various topics within bioethics.

The learning goals of this course are to 1) build on your writing skills to produce clear, well-organized writing on various bioethics topics; 2) to regularly collaborate with your peers to produce bite-size presentations and build on your verbal and visual communication skills as a team; 3) to practice the ever-important skill of looking at an idea or challenge from multiple different perspectives; and 4) learn about bioethics.



SCHEDULE AND READINGS

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Moral Theories, Theories in Bioethics</p>	<p>Introductions, to both the class and to each other.</p>	<p>Theme: Moral Theories</p>	<p>Theme: Theories in Bioethics</p> <p>Reading: Vaughn, "Moral Reasoning in Bioethics"</p>	<p>Theme: What are the aims of healthcare? And based on this, is healthcare a human right?</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Disability, Genetic Editing</p>	<p>Theme: Disability, History and Utilitarian views</p> <p>Reading: Ch 1 in Disability Visibility by Harriet McBryde Johnson, required from page 1-8.</p>	<p>Theme: Disability, Social and Medical Models</p> <p>Reading: Ch 1 in What Can a Body Do?</p>	<p>Theme: Genetic editing, slippery slope arguments</p>	<p>Theme: Enhancement and Transhumanism</p> <p>Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fITEtWtgjHg&ab_channel=Vox</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Death and Dying</p>	<p>Theme: What is Death?</p> <p>Reading: Piemonte and Abreu, Death and Dying chapter 1: "Death as Medical Failure"</p>	<p>Theme: What Should Our Options Be Regarding Our End-Of-Life?</p> <p>Reading: Taylor, "On Dying"</p>	<p>Theme: Should we endorse advance EOL planning?</p> <p>Reading: Lamas, When Faced With Death, People Often Change Their Minds</p>	<p>Theme: Ethics of Life Extension</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Reproductive Ethics</p>	<p>Theme: Ethics of Procreation</p> <p>Reading: Kolbert, the case against kids</p>	<p>Theme: Procreative Ethics and Climate Change</p> <p>Reading: NPR, Should We Be Having Kids In The Age Of Climate Change?</p>	<p>Theme: Egg and Sperm donation</p>	<p>Theme: Abortion</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Biomedical Research</p>	<p>Theme: Research Ethics Fundamentals</p> <p>Reading: Emanuel et al, What Makes Clinical Research Ethical?</p>	<p>Theme: Informed Consent</p>	<p>Theme: Refusing Research</p> <p>Reading: Dickinson, Will the Mass Robbery of Native American Graves Ever End?</p>	<p>Theme: Demanding Research</p> <p>Reading: Sarah Schulman podcast on the AIDS epidemic</p>

ASSIGNED READINGS

For the most part, I will be presenting theories and frameworks in class. I will *not* generally ask you to read a paper presenting an *argument* about bioethics, although all references will be posted on Canvas. This is partially to keep your reading burden reasonable and partially to make good use of our class time. The required readings I assign you will largely be *perspectives* on an issue. These are often easily digestible and written from a *first-person perspective*. These will be referred to in class discussions and are **just as important as the lecture content**, they are not optional fluff reading. It is my intention that a combination of theoretical work on an issue combined with first-personal perspectives on the same issue will give you a well-rounded introduction into each topic.

ASSIGNMENTS

There will be two types of assignments in this class. The first is a **weekly report**, for which you will pick one topic from the week, provide a clear and accurate summary of the material (1/3) and a well-reasoned commentary of your own thoughts on said material (2/3). These should be 3 pages long, and can be turned in at any point during the week, but will be due no later than midnight on Sunday. The second will be the final project, detailed below.

FINAL PROJECTS

There will be a final paper due at the end of term. Details will be discussed in class and listed in Canvas.

PARTICIPATION

Participation will be an important part of this discussion-based class. While the class size will be very small, discussions and case studies will be an important part of how you learn and process the material. So long as participation is not an issue in the class, it will not be part of your grade. However, I reserve the right to make participation a part of grades if it does become an issue.

LATENESS AND PLAGIARISM

If you need an accommodation or extension, please just ask! There isn't any reason to plagiarize or suffer because you're pressed on time. Just email me, and we can work something out. The only thing I can't be as flexible on is final project deadlines.

It is *your job* to know what counts as plagiarism. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are expected to fully adhere to the policies and procedures of Georgetown's Honor System and to take the Honor Code Pledge.

All submissions must be your original work. Any submission suspected of plagiarism will be immediately referred to the Honor Council for investigation and possible adjudication.

TITLE XI AND MANDATORY REPORTING

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator, will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. [Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator.].

Please note that University policy requires faculty to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct. Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the Sexual Misconduct Website.

GRADING AND POINTS

Grading rubrics for each type of assignment will be listed on Canvas. If you have further questions about grading, you should email me for clarification. Keep in mind that my grading will never depend on whether or not I agree with your stance on something. Grading will broadly be determined by the *clarity and quality of your reasoning*.

Weekly Report:	5 points each, 25 points total
Final project:	25 points total
Total points:	150 points