

Syllabus

Biomedical Ethics

Winter 2011

RGST 156 & BE INT 156BE
MW 2-3:15pm
Room: 387 103
4 Units

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This syllabus is subject to change. The latest version can always be found on Gauchospace.

This course is part of the Walter Capps Center's series in applied ethics. It is cross-listed in both Religious Studies and Interdisciplinary Humanities, but it is intended for a general upper division audience interested in applied ethics.

The course explores troubling ethical questions surrounding the practice of medicine, medical research, and developing biotechnologies. Typical topics may include health care rights, patient rights, informed consent, pharmaceutical research, genetic & stem cell research, antibiotic resistance, abortion, and issues surrounding end of life care, including euthanasia and physician assisted suicide. Exact topics will depend in part on student interest.

Prerequisites: Junior standing. No experience in medicine, biology, or ethical theory is required.

Required Texts

- *Intervention & Reflection*, (8th) Ronald Munson
- Supplemental materials found on Gauchospace.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to stimulate deep and careful thinking about our moral, social and political values in the practice of medicine and related fields. Students are expected to become informed about facts surrounding biomedical practice; to identify competing value claims that give rise to controversy; master and criticize leading moral theories and principles in the field; and give defensible resolutions to contemporary issues.

Course Work/Grading:

- Attendance & Participation 10% (see below)
- Quizzes 10%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- 1 Term Paper, or 2 Short Papers 30% total (see below)
- Final Exam (cumulative) 30%
- Capps Forum on Ethics (possible) 3% *extra credit* (see below)

Attendance & Participation Credit: (10%)

Participation credit may come from classroom discussion, GauchoSpace forums, student presentations, or office hour discussion. At least half (5%) of your participation credit must come from weekly GauchoSpace forums. Excessive absences will lead to reduced participation credit. A complete breakdown of participation credit will be provided.

Quizzes: (10%) Multiple-choice quizzes on the readings. They will be designed to be short and quite easy.

Papers (30%)

You may write one term paper, or two short papers. Papers should show proficiency in both value theory and concrete issues, as dictated by the topic. While you may include research in your work, this is NOT a research paper. The papers topics must be primarily about values and their application to concrete issues (“applied ethics”). Paper topics, with detailed descriptions and expectations, will be posted later in the course. You may not hand in a paper used for credit in another course.

Exams (50% total)

Exams will use both short-answer and paragraph-essay techniques. You will be asked about concrete issues and moral principles, and asked to apply these principles to the concrete problems. Study guides will be provided. Makeup for exams must be arranged in advance. Makeup exams will be designed to be more difficult than the original.

Capps Forum The Capps Forum is a lunchtime event with an outside speaker. If there is a Capps Forum this quarter, I will give 3% extra credit for attending it. More information will be available by the start of class.

Academic Integrity

I will not tolerate the submission of materials bought from outside sources, taken from books, or downloaded from the Internet. Submitting anyone else’s work *as your own* — constitutes plagiarism. This includes using anyone else’s words without citing AND proper use of quoting techniques. Please see the standards for academic integrity in the Student Handbook, or at <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/PDF/academicintegflyer.pdf>.