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## PHIL 361 Biomedical Ethics

CRN 20429 • Section 1 • Spring 2019 • WEB • 3 Hours

### Prerequisites

There are no pre-requisites for this course. The successful completion of PHIL 101 is recommended, but not required.

### Instructor

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### Course Description

This course explores the debates on current issues in the field of biomedical ethics. These include abortion, assisted reproduction, genetic engineering, euthanasia, resource allocation, human and non-human animal experimentation, confidentiality, consent, and public policy. We will discuss the arguments in the debate on each topic in the context of real-life case studies, so you will be able to formulate your own, well-informed conclusions.

### Course Management System and Hardware/Software Requirements

This course utilizes the [Blackboard Course Management System](#). You will also need access to Word, Pages, or other word processing software that enables you to submit your work in a Portable Document Format (PDF) and Microsoft Power Point or other presentation software that allows you to view Power Point Files.

### Required Texts

The required text for this course: R. M. Veatch, A. M. Haddad, and D. C. English, *Case Studies in Biomedical Ethics: Decision Making, Principles, and Cases*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford, 2014).

### Concord University Educational Goals

This course addresses the following university educational goals:

1. Effective inter-communication skills and literacy adapted as needed for the demands of various kinds of discourse.
2. An ability to analyze, synthesize, and integrate elements, information and ideas
3. An ability to evaluate elements, information, and ideas on the basis of appropriate criteria
4. An ability to interpret events and trends within historical contexts

5. Respectful attentiveness to differing perspectives and willingness to engage in dialogue across differences in order to seek mutual understanding and equitable conflict resolution

### National Standards

This course conforms to the standards of the American Philosophical Association listed in their Statements, Policies, and Reports (<https://www.apaonline.org/page/statements>).

### Course Learning Outcomes

The successful completion of this course will enable you to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles and methods of biomedical ethics;
2. Apply those principles and methods to (a) summarize, analyze, and evaluate the arguments in the debate on particular topics in biomedical ethics, (b) in the context of particular case studies, (c) with the proper attitude of respect for the persons, cultures, and civilizations involved in those studies;
3. Develop your own well-informed, effective solutions to current problems in biomedical ethics.

### Preparation

The course consists of fifteen modules, one for each week of the semester. You must complete the reading assignment for each module and then post a significant question, comment, or criticism of the reading to the discussion forums on Blackboard by the end of the week. (See the course schedule below for more information on the discussion forums.)

### Participation

I require your regular participation in the weekly discussion forums: regular, active participation is the single most effective thing you can do to improve your performance. If you fail to actively participate in more than three forums you must provide a satisfactory explanation. If you fail to do so, I will withdraw you from the course in conformity with the Academic Policies and Procedures in the current edition of the Academic Catalogue (<http://catalog.concord.edu/>).

### Assessment

I will assess your performance on the basis of the following assignments: (1) a series of fifteen posts to the online discussion forums in Blackboard (6% each for a total of 90%) and (2) a final paper (10%).

### Grading Policy, Scale, Late Work, and Corrections

I grade all assignments on a standard scale: A (90-99/100), B (80-89), C, (70-79), D (60-69), and F (0-59). If you miss the deadline for a graded assignment, you must provide a satisfactory explanation for missing the deadline to reschedule. You may correct any of the graded assignments scheduled prior to the week of final exams; the deadline for all corrections is the last day of regularly scheduled classes for the semester. (Note: I grade late work as time permits; so, I may not grade late work in time for you to meet the deadline for corrections.)

### Communication

I will maintain a professional line of communication through your university email account, not your personal email account, social media, or texts. You are solely responsible for checking your university email on a regular basis; failure to do so is not a legitimate excuse for missing deadlines.

### Professional Conduct

Concord University requires its students to conform to the standards of professional conduct published in the Academic Policies and Procedures in the current edition of the Academic Catalogue (<http://catalog.concord.edu>). If you violate these standards, I will issue a warning. If you violate them a second time, I will withdraw you from the course and inform the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who may review your case for further discipline.

### Course Schedule

The course schedule includes the list of the course modules, the topics for each day the course meets, the assignments, and due dates. Changes to the schedule are rare; but if there are changes, then I will inform you of

them through Blackboard. You are solely responsible for checking this schedule, as well as for checking Blackboard for any changes, to prepare for class each day the course meets.

Week 1 Four Questions

Instructions

Each week of the course requires you to complete two assignments: the reading assignment and the discussion assignment. The first, the reading assignment, introduces the principles and methods of biomedical ethics and then asks you to apply them to solve current problems. I will provide a summary of the reading on Blackboard. But the summary does not substitute for the reading; most students find it difficult to do well in this course without close attention to the reading. The second, the discussion, provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the problems introduced in the reading and refine your solution to those problems in discussion with one another. I will provide a brief comment to start each discussion and respond to the class as a whole to encourage further reflection.

Reading: R. M. Veatch, A. M. Haddad, and D. C. English, *Case Studies in Biomedical Ethics: Decision Making, Principles, and Cases*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford, 2014), pages 1-16.

Discussion Assignment no. 1

This, the first discussion assignment, requires you to (1) introduce yourselves to one another and (2) post a significant question, comment, or criticism in response to each of the four questions in this week's reading and reflect on the implications of your question, comment, or criticism in discussion with one another in a post of 100-300 words for each question.

**Deadline: You must submit your posts to this and all the discussion forums for this course no later than 11:59 PM on Friday of each week of the semester.**

A Statement on Netiquette

Your conduct online must conform to the same standards as the traditional classroom: you must engage one another in a polite, respectful, and professional discussion as stated in the Policies and Procedures of the Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.concord.edu>). If you fail to do so, I will issue a warning. If you fail to do so a second time, I will withdraw you from the course in conformity with those Policies and Procedures.

Criteria and Rubric

1. Clarity of expression  
You must express yourself in a polite, respectful, and professional manner, without significant errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. Your prose does not need to be as professional as it does for other, more formal assignments; nevertheless, if your prose is not clear, your grade will naturally suffer.
2. Quality of information  
Your post must be relevant, accurate, and properly detailed.
3. Depth of critical thought  
You must provide an insightful response to the reading in the form of a question, comment, or criticism, not merely a summary of the reading.

Rubric	
A (90-99/100)	Satisfies the conditions for three of the criteria
B (80-89)	Satisfies the conditions for two
C (70-79)	Satisfies the conditions for one
D (60-69)	Fails to satisfy the conditions
F (0)	Fails to indicate sufficient familiarity with the specific details of the reading assignment

Reading: Veatch, 17-62

**Discussion Assignment no. 2**

For this and the rest of the discussion assignments for the semester, post a significant question, comment, or criticism in response *to five of the case studies in each week's reading* and reflect on the implications of your question, comment, or criticism in discussion with one another in a post of 100-300 words *for each case study*.

3 Benefitting the Patient and Others

Reading: Veatch, 65-88

**Discussion Assignment no. 3**

4 Justice

Reading: Veatch, 89-104

**Discussion Assignment no. 4**

5 Autonomy

Reading: Veatch, 105-124

**Discussion Assignment no. 5**

6 Veracity

Reading: Veatch, 125-145

**Discussion Assignment no. 6**

7 Fidelity

Reading: Veatch, 146-163

**Discussion Assignment no. 7**

8 Avoidance of Killing

Reading: Veatch, 164-197

**Discussion Assignment no. 8**

9 Abortion, Sterilization, and Contraception

Reading: Veatch, 201-224

**Discussion Assignment no. 9**

10 Genetics, Birth, and the Biological Revolution

Reading: Veatch, 225-247

**Discussion Assignment no. 10**

11 Mental Health and Behavior Control

Reading: Veatch, 248-275

**Discussion Assignment no. 11**

12 Organ Transplants

Reading: Veatch, 293-327

**Discussion Assignment no. 12**

13 Experimentation on Human Subjects

Reading: Veatch, 349-379

**Discussion Assignment no. 13**

14 Consent and the Right to Refuse Treatment

Reading: Veatch, 380-400

**Discussion Assignment no. 14**

15 Death and Dying

Reading: Veatch, 401-426

**Discussion Assignment no. 15**

*Nota bene: If you submit a rough draft of your final paper via Blackboard no later than 11:59 PM on the last day of classes for the semester, I will provide a brief comment on your draft on Monday of finals week; I will not respond to drafts submitted after the last day of classes.*

16 **The Final Paper**

*Nota bene: There is no final exam for this course; the final paper replaces the final exam.*

Instructions

Select a case study reported in the popular media on a topic we've discussed this semester; summarize the details of the case; and apply the principles of biomedical ethics relevant to the particular case you've chosen to answer the questions: what could the participants in the case have done better and why would it have been better for them to do so?

Length

Your paper should be a minimum of a thousand words, approximately five to seven pages—not counting quotations, charts, tables, and so on. If less, you will not satisfy the condition for adequate detail. It does not need to be more than two or, at most, three thousand words.

Sources

You must cite two or, at most, three sources to gather the relevant facts for the case. Pay particular attention to discrepancies in the media, particularly from those outlets across the political spectrum, e.g., MSNBC, CNN, and Fox News.

Submission

Submit your paper in a Portable Document Format (PDF) on Blackboard **no later than 11:59 PM on Thursday of finals week.**

**The Turnitin Similarity Report**

Your paper must not exceed a score of more than 24% on the Turnitin similarity report. If it does, you will receive a grade of an F, a 0/100. You will be able to access Turnitin directly through Blackboard; you do not need to register for a Turnitin account.

**Criteria**

1. **Clarity of expression**  
You must express yourself in a polite, respectful, and professional manner, without significant errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.
2. **Thesis statement and structure of argument**  
You must present a clear thesis statement and a well-structured argument in support of your thesis.
3. **Style, format, and citation**  
You must conform to the standards for style, format, and citation in the current MLA Style Manual (<https://style.mla.org>).
4. **Quality of information**  
You must provide relevant, accurate, and detailed information in support of your thesis.
5. **Depth of critical thought and reflection**  
You must provide critical reflection on the information you provide in support of your thesis throughout your paper; not merely a summary of the information.

Rubric					
	4 points	3	2	1	0
1. Clarity expression	Demonstrates the highest degree of clarity of expression	Demonstrates a high degree of clarity	Demonstrates a moderate degree of clarity	Demonstrates a minimal degree of clarity	Fails to demonstrate a minimal degree of clarity
2. Thesis statement and structure of argument	Demonstrates an exceptionally clear thesis statement and a well-structured argument in support of the thesis	Demonstrates a very clear thesis statement and well-structured argument	Demonstrates a moderately clear thesis statement and well-structured argument	Demonstrates a minimally clear thesis statement and well-structured argument	Fails to demonstrate a clear thesis statement
3. Style, format, and citation	Demonstrates the highest degree of conformity to the standards for style, format, and citation	Demonstrates a high degree of conformity to the standards	Demonstrates a moderate degree of conformity to the standards	Demonstrates a minimal degree of conformity to the standards	Fails to demonstrate the minimal degree of conformity to the standards
4. Quality of information	Demonstrates an exceptionally high degree of relevance, accuracy, and detail	Demonstrates a high degree of relevance, accuracy, and detail	Demonstrates a moderate degree of relevance, accuracy, and detail	Demonstrates a minimal degree of relevance, accuracy, and detail	Fails to demonstrate a minimal degree of relevance, accuracy, and detail

5. Critical thinking	Demonstrates an exceptionally high degree of critical thinking	Demonstrates a high degree of critical thinking	Demonstrates a moderate degree of critical thinking	Demonstrates a minimal degree of critical thinking	Fails to demonstrate a minimal degree of critical thinking
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## University Policies and Procedures

### Accessibility/Accommodations

Concord University is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please inform your instructor at the beginning of the class semester if you have a disability and are requesting accommodations. It is your responsibility to self-disclose that you are requesting accommodations. The University and instructor will provide you with a reasonable accommodation. You should register with CU's Disability Services Office, located in the Athens campus Jerry and Jean Beasley Student Center, Bottom Floor, across from the Campus Post Office. The Disability Services Office phone is 304-384-6086 or you can email the Director, Nancy Ellison, at [nellsion@concord.edu](mailto:nellsion@concord.edu) for assistance.

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is morally unacceptable as well as destructive to the learning and teaching atmosphere. Academic dishonesty includes the giving or receiving of improper help on examinations or assignments, falsifying documents, and plagiarism (the act of stealing and using, as one's own, the ideas or the expression of the ideas of another). Such dishonesty can lead to a variety of penalties — including but not limited to failure of assignment, failure of course, loss of institutional privileges, or dismissal from the University. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

### Concord University Honor Code

A Concord University Honor Code was approved by students, staff, faculty, administration, and the CU Board of Governors. The Code states: *"As a member of the Concord University Community I will act with honesty and integrity in accordance with our fundamental principles and I will respect myself and others while challenging them to do the same."* The Honor Code is intended to unite the Concord community behind a culture of honesty, integrity, and civility.

### Class/Online Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is part of a student's academic obligation at Concord. Irregular attendance may affect academic performance adversely and is detrimental to the atmosphere of a class. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

### Emergency Alert System

In an effort to increase safety and security on our campus, Concord University encourages everyone to register for instant text message alerts. Alerts will only be used for security and safety notices. All students, faculty, and staff are eligible to receive text message alerts on their cell phones or email alerts. Please contact the IT Help Desk for further assistance (304-384-5291).

### Emergency Information

Emergency/courtesy telephones are located at the main entrance of each residence hall and at various other locations on campus. Emergency telephones can be identified by the flashing blue light and will provide the user with a direct link to Public Safety at the press of a button. To report an on-campus emergency, call 304-384-5357 or 911. The Office of Public Safety is located on the bottom floor of the Rahall Technology Center. For further emergency information: <http://www.concord.edu/administration/office-public-safety>.

### Inclement Weather Policy

As a general policy, the University will remain in normal operations during adverse weather conditions. In the event of severe weather conditions, the following may occur:

- University Closure: No students or employees are to report.
- Classes Cancelled: Students do NOT report BUT employees are expected to report to work at their normal time.
- Inclement Weather Delay: Under this schedule, all 8 a.m. classes will start at 10 a.m. Students and faculty will follow the Inclement Weather Schedule. (See <http://www.concord.edu/emergency-alerts> for Athens/Beckley Inclement Weather Schedules.)  
Announcements invoking the late schedule or other options referenced above are aired on area radio and television stations and are sent as text and email messages to those enrolled for this service.

### Student Conduct

In classrooms, online, laboratories, and during any activities that are part of course requirements, students are expected to observe reasonable rules of conduct.

### Sexual Harassment and Assault

Federal law, Title IX, and Concord University policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and violence based on sex and gender (Including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can receive confidential counseling support through the Concord University Counseling Center (304-384- 5290). Alleged Violations can be reported non-confidentially to the Concord University Title IX Coordinator at 304-384-6327 or [titleix@concord.edu](mailto:titleix@concord.edu). Reports to Campus Security can be made at (304- 384-5357). As an employee at Concord University, I am a mandatory reporter which means I must report any sexual misconduct I am made aware of. This includes verbal or written (such as in an assignment) disclosures of sexual harassment or sexual assault.

### Technology Services

Contact the CU Help Desk at extension 5291 from campus or 304-384-5291 off campus. You may also e-mail [cuhelpdesk@concord.edu](mailto:cuhelpdesk@concord.edu).

### Syllabus Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. Please check it regularly.