

# BIOETHICS SYLLABUS/ SUMMER 2018



## BIOETHICS SYLLABUS

### ***Instructor Information***

Dr. Mark Smillie, Professor of Philosophy

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### ***Communications and availability***

For the summer, I don't post office hours, but I am typically available to meet with students before class, starting at 900am; please feel welcome to just come by my office or to make an appointment for another time, if the morning doesn't work for you. Please contact me by phone or by email (preferred); I will respond to email and phone inquiries within one business day (Saturdays and Sundays are not business days). I will post notifications when necessary in the Moodle News Forum.

### ***Course Information***

PHIL208, Bioethics, Meets: MTWThF, 10:30AM-12:45PM, 212 Simperman Hall; 3 credit hours

### ***Reading materials***

*Please obtain copies of these texts for class:*

Deni Elliot. *Ethical Challenges: Building an Ethics Toolkit* Authorhouse: 2008. ISBN: 1-4343-8802-6. New \$21.20 @ Saints Shoppe. Required text. *Interactive introduction to ethics, focusing on the principle of non-maleficence. Includes twenty activities applying ideas to situations. Students enjoy the "workbook" style of its approach.*

Thomas A. Shannon and Nicholas J. Kockler, *An Introduction to Bioethics*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Paulist Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-8091-4623-9. New \$22.95 (13.95 used) @ Saints Shoppe. Required Text. *This is short overview of main topics in bioethics, which seeks to identify relevant ethical issues associated with main areas. It also includes references to the Catholic bioethical tradition, which is relevant and appropriate for Carroll students.*

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*Carroll students have told me that they find this book easy to read and understand.*

*The above texts are supplemented with other materials throughout the semester—available electronically on Moodle.*

## **Course Description**

Bioethics studies our moral obligations with respect to using technology (particularly *medical technology*) to control our health and lives. This course will introduce the main concepts and theories of ethics, and practice ethical decision-making procedures used to discern and morally defend courses of action. The chief among these concepts is our obligations to *beneficence* and *non-maleficence*. The course is divided into considerations about life's beginnings (reproductive ethics) and those about life's end. These discussions will be relevant to all thinking people on a practical level; most of us will face them in some form in our individual lives, and all of us face them socially. This course should be especially relevant to those who plan medical careers.

## **Course procedure**

Philosophers analyze concepts and study arguments. Since they are philosophers, ethicists analyze ethical concepts and study ethical arguments. Students can expect to develop their skills in analysis of concepts and arguments, to clarify their own ideas about what is right and wrong, and become develop their awareness and conviction about topics they haven't thought much about before. The course will have a healthy respect for argument and for well supported differing views.

## **Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course. I assume students have a general knowledge about ethical action shared by all members of our society and the desire to act ethically, but no technical training or experience with ethical reasoning. We shall begin with an overview of ethics itself before moving into a more focused consideration of bioethics. Previous classes in ethics (or other applied ethics courses) will be beneficial for students, but are not assumed or required.

## **Course Elements and Goals**

### **Learning Objectives**

Course texts and class activities will inform students about relevant ethical principles and reputable ethical positions on bioethical topics, and develop student abilities to analyze and formulate ethical arguments about what is morally right and wrong. The instructor hopes that students will formulate and strengthen their own moral positions, become conscious of the power and limits of ethical argumentation, and develop tolerance of legitimate ethical disagreement.

Specific Learning Objectives are:

### **Readings**

Readings will inform students about ethics relevant to bioethics and raise their awareness of goals and limits of ethical discussion and analysis.

### **Activities**

After studying assigned readings, students will identify main points and issues by completing online Moodle activities.

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## **Written analyses**

Having studied techniques of ethical argumentation and reviewed scenarios, students will analyze and defend ethical positions in written argumentative essays.

## **Research Presentation**

Having become informed about ethical and bioethical analysis, and researched particular views on an pre-assigned topic, students will present the findings of their research and their own conclusions about those findings, in an oral report presented to the entire class.

## **Tests**

After participating in class discussions, reading assigned texts and completing course activities, students will synthesize and express their understanding of ethical principles and practices of argumentation by completing tests consisting of matching, true/false, and essay questions.

*Disclaimer regarding these objectives:*

- 1) Students may vary in their competency levels on these abilities.
- 2) Students can expect to acquire these abilities only if they honor all course policies, attend class regularly, complete all assigned work on time and in good faith, and meet all other course requirements and expectations.

## **Fulfillment and Assessment of the Learning Objectives**

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### **Course Activities 10%**

Students will receive credit for these activities based on their responses to the particular questions and assignments. These will include reading summaries, reflective questions, quizzes. Two lowest scores will be dropped prior to calculation of the final grade.

### **Written Analyses 30%**

There are two—an analysis and a case study, due at the beginning of the second and third weeks of the course. Students will receive a grade using rubrics that will be made available in advance of the assignment.

### **Tests 30%**

There are three session tests, scheduled for each Friday during our session. Students will receive credit for correct answers on “objective” questions (questions with predetermined answers (matching and multiple-choice questions) and credit on written (essay) questions based on a rubric made available in advance of the test.

### **Research Presentation 15%**

Students will receive a grade using rubrics that will be made available in advance of the assignment.

### **Final Exam 15%**

A final comprehensive exam is scheduled for Friday, July 6. The final consists of 25 T/F questions and case studies with questions. The case studies are drawn from all the material we have studied in the course.

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## Final grade calculation:

Course letter grades assigned as follows. (Grades recorded in the Moodle gradebook.)

<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Gr</u>	<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Gr</u>	<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Grade</u>
93-100.....	A	80-82 .....	B-	60-69 .....	D
90-92.....	A-	77-79 .....	C+	Below 60 .....	F
87-89.....	B+	73-76 .....	C	P/F Grade .....	D (60)
83-86.....	B	70-72 .....	C-		

## Course Routine and Participant Expectations

This class works on a one-week cycle. There are four iterations of this cycle during this summer session. Each week we will read and discuss relevant course material and practice ethical reasoning skills, culminating in a test on the material and skills at the end of the week, and a written paper due by the following Sunday night.

DATE	TOPIC
<b>M</b>	Attend Class Complete Reading and Activities by 9:30am Tuesday
<b>T</b>	Attend Class Complete Reading and Activities by 9:30am Wednesday
<b>W</b>	Attend Class Complete Reading and Activities by 9:30am Thursday View Writing assignment by 11:59PM
<b>Th</b>	Attend Class Prepare for test and study material for writing assignment
<b>F</b>	Attend Class; First hour = test In Cycles 2 and 3: Complete writing assignment by Sunday, 11:59PM Complete reading and activities by 9:00am Monday

This cycle will be modified for the week of July 4, as the Independence Day Holiday falls in Wednesday.

## Planned Course Calendar

DATE	TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<b>Jun11</b>	<b>Introduction to the class. Syllabus. What is worse activity. Nature of ethics and ethical action.</b>
<b>Jun12</b>	<b>Ethical excellence and Ethical responsibility.</b> Reading: Ethical Challenges (EC), Introduction (pgs vii-viii) and Ch 1, pgs 1-17. <i>Activity #1.1 due before class</i>
<b>Jun13</b>	<b>More on ethics and ethical action.</b> Reading: EC, "What Ethics Is; What Ethics is Not" Ch 2 pgs 19- 33. <b>Justification and unjustified action: systematic analysis.</b> Reading: EC, "Systematic Moral Analysis." Chapter 3, pgs 35-44. <i>Activity #1.2 due before class</i>
<b>Jun14</b>	<b>Justification and unjustified action: systematic analysis.</b> Reading: EC, "Systematic Moral Analysis." Chapter 3, pgs 35-44. <b>Handling unethical action.</b> Reading EC, Ch 4, pgs 45-49. <i>Activity #1.3 due before class</i>

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<b>Jun15</b>	<b>Test 1. Arguments and the features of good arguments.</b> Read: "Writing Philosophical Arguments."
<b>Jun18</b>	<b>Technology; Medical Values; Applying Ethical theory.</b> Reading: Introduction to Bioethics (IB) Chs 1-3, the Hippocratic Oath, and the AMA Code of Ethics. <i>Activity #2.1 due before class</i>
<b>Jun19</b>	<b>Medical Beneficence, Obligations to Beneficence, paternalism, human dignity.</b> Reading: IB, Chs 3-4. <i>Activity #2.2 due before class</i>
<b>Jun20</b>	<b>Medical Beneficence, rights and informed consent, Rights.</b> Reading: IB, Chs 3-4. <i>Activity #2.3 due before class</i>
<b>Jun21</b>	<b>Informed Consent (conclusion)/ Abortion: Sanctity of Life arguments; Personhood of the Fetus.</b> Reading: IB, Chapter 5, "When does Human Life Begin" by Jerome LeJeune (on Moodle) Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral," (on moodle) <i>Activity #2.4 due before class</i>
<b>Jun22</b>	<b>Test 2. Abortion: Beneficence versus non-maleficence.</b> Reading: IB. Chapter 5, and Thompson: "A Defense of Abortion" (on moodle). <i>Activity #2.4 due before class. Paper #1 due by Sunday Night.</i>
<b>Jun25</b>	<b>Abortion/Artificial Reproductive Technologies: Benefits and Harms; Commodification and Commercialization problems.</b> Reading: IB, Ch 6, "Dehumanization in ART" (on Moodle) and "Children's Rights, or Rights to Children?" (on Moodle) and "Synthetic Children." <i>Activity #3.1 due before class</i>
<b>Jun26</b>	<b>Abortion/Artificial Reproductive Technologies: Benefits and Harms; Commodification and Commercialization problems.</b> Reading: IB, Ch 6, "Dehumanization in ART" (on Moodle) and "Children's Rights, or Rights to Children?" (on Moodle) and "Synthetic Children." <i>Activity #3.2 due before class</i>
<b>Jun27</b>	<b>Brain Death.</b> Reading: IB, Ch 8, "When we Die" and "Brain Death is not Death." Optional reading: "President's Council on Bioethics White Paper, "Brain Death" (available on moodle). <i>Activity #3.3 due before class</i>
<b>Jun28</b>	<b>Forgoing Life-Sustaining Treatment.</b> Reading: IB, Ch 9; "Ordinary and Extraordinary Treatment Readings" (on moodle); "Direct Killing as Intentional Killing," "Principle of Double Effect reasoning." <i>Activity #3.4 due before class</i>
<b>Jun29</b>	<b>Test 3. PVS and Forgoing Nutritional and Hydration. Video: "To Live... or Let Die"</b> Removing Nutrition and Hydration from PVS patients: Case of Terri Schiavo
<b>Jul2</b>	<b>Decision making for others at the end of life, Advanced Directives.</b> IB, Ch 9 pages 154-163. <b>Euthanasia.</b> Reading: IB, Chs 10. <i>Activity #4.1 due</i>
<b>Jul3</b>	<b>Euthanasia.</b> Reading: IB, Chs 10. Tony Hope, "Euthanasia: good medical practice, or murder?" and Janet Smith and Christopher Kaczor, "End of Life Issues," (On moodle). <b>Physician Assisted Suicide.</b> Reading: IB, Chs 11. Hume and St. Thomas Aquinas on Suicide. <i>Activity #4.2 due</i>
<b>Jul4</b>	<i>No Class: Independence Day Holiday</i>
<b>Jul5</b>	<b>CLASS PRESENTATIONS</b>
<b>Jul6</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>

## COURSE POLICIES

### **WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT IN THIS COURSE? HOW SHOULD YOU STUDY FOR THIS CLASS?**

Philosophers examine concepts and study arguments. In class and the assignments, you will examine fundamental concepts, and study the arguments we and philosophers have presented to defend various positions.

Our accreditation organization defines a one college credit as one hour per week (of a semester) spent in class, plus two accompanying hours of outside work. (This is not a weird or atypical definition.) So for workload for a three credit course, you can expect to spend (typically) 3 hours a week in class, and, on average, 9 hours a week of outside work. With seventeen weeks in a typical semester, that is 48 hours of class, and 144 hours of work outside of class. I say “on average 9 hours a week” because this amount of time includes the readings for each class (in preparation and after class), but also the time spent writing the essays for the paper, and studying for exams; so the actual time per week will vary as assignment and test deadlines approach.

A philosophy class is also a humanities class. So you can expect much of the outside work to involve reading and studying texts (as opposed to problems and labs in the sciences). You will often not get immediate feedback about your reading, the effect of reading is often not immediately obvious to you, and, no one will usually know if you do or do not read the course material. However, much of the assessed work in an humanities class is written assignments (not only essays), and, in general, writing is assessed by how informed about the topic the writer appears to be. This is where the cumulative effect your prior reading and study becomes crucial to the grade you will receive in the course. Remember too that because of the nature of being uninformed, uninformed people are usually not even aware how uninformed they are about a topic! So I encourage you keep up with the reading as diligently as possible.

All the advice I’ve ever read for reading philosophy gives very similar advice. These common suggestions are:

- Keep the general problem or issue in your mind
- Identify specific theses or conclusions
- Identify arguments given to support the theses or conclusions
- Philosophers usually consider objections (opposition or challenges to their views and arguments): be conscious of this fact and identify these objections and look for replies offered to them
- Try to keep an inquisitive attitude while you are reading; don’t accept things too easily. Try to work out what convinces you and why, and where you aren’t convinced.

### **BASIC ETIQUETTE**

Please be on time for class! All students should practice good manners in class and show civility to all. A positive attitude is appreciated and a professional demeanor is expected. This includes such things as remaining alert (and awake!) in class, respecting and never interrupting others, limiting private conversations, turning cell phones off, and controlling your urges to text and use the electronic devices. **Please, no eating or using tobacco products in class (a small beverage is allowed).**

In team or group situations, students should cooperate with their team members and obtain their input when working on group exercises and projects. Most group work involves a required peer assessment of each individual’s contribution to the group.

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Absolutely no electronic devices are allowed during exams, and this includes cell phones, laptops, and mp3 players/devices. Laptops are allowed at other times during class, with the expectation that you are using them to participate in the class and not as a distraction.

## **ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS**

“Eighty percent of success is showing up.” Attributed to Woody Allen

Regular attendance is a college policy (see College Catalogue). I keep attendance regularly and expect to be informed if some legitimate excuse keeps you from attending class.

I will not grade assignments of students who do not regularly attend class. You have become such a student once you miss more than four class sessions during this term without informing me of a valid excuse.

Tardiness is disruptive to other members of the class, but I would rather you came to class late than not at all; so please slip into class quietly if you are late!

**Late exams/assignments:** All assignments can be submitted electronically on moodle, observing the deadlines posted there. Students having good reasons for missing a deadline or test should contact me in advance of the deadline. Good reasons include documented medical reasons, documented court obligations, and athletic team commitments, family emergencies. Deadlines will be reset to mutually agreed times in these situations.

I do accept late assignments (turn them in by email or hand if you cannot submit them on moodle); I reserve the right to penalize them one letter grade, more if they are egregiously late (now there's a new word for you!) Missed exams should be retaken at the ARC **within one week** of the exam date (Students must make their own arrangements with the director of the ARC, and then inform me of their scheduled makeup date).

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## **INSTITUTIONAL AND COURSE POLICIES ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Carroll College's policy on Academic Integrity is stated in both the CC Catalogue and in the Student Handbook. The policy reads: “Students at Carroll College are expected to have high standards of integrity. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes on examinations or assignments, falsifies college records, or fails to give requested academic information on admission documents is subject to dismissal or other appropriate disciplinary action by the College.” Students violating the policy will be referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Please see these publications for the correct procedures to follow if you have questions concerning the conduct of this class or the grading procedures (other than a final grade).

I expect all my students to have the high standards of integrity expected by the college. A college classroom is a social environment and honesty, responsibility, respect, and even honor are key components for its success. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, deception, and complicity undermine our ability to enjoy and profit from this class.

Plagiarism is a particular act of fraud that merits more attention. Plagiarism is both *stealing* someone else's work and *lying* about it. It includes the following

- Turning anyone else's work (including other students') as your own
- Copying without giving credit (including copying from the internet)
- Not putting quotations in quotation marks
- Incorrectly identifying the source of a quotation

Plagiarism also includes copying the sentence structure of a source, even if you changed words, and copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

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I will investigate all suspected cases of plagiarism, and will penalize all verified instances; *the penalty can be a severe as immediate failure in the course*. If you are unsure about whether some actions constitute plagiarism, please ask me.

## **RETURNING WORK**

I realize the important of learning the results of submitted work close to the completion of the assignment, and I believe in the value of prompt feedback. My goal is to grade and/or return all assignments within 2 weeks of their due dates, if not sooner.

## **MAKING UP MISSED WORK**

Tests and exams should be taken on the dates and place assigned. Tests missed for legitimate reasons will be retaken at the ARC, within one week of the exam date. Students must make their own arrangements with the director of the ARC, and then inform me of their scheduled makeup date prior to making up the exam. Final exams are scheduled and conducted according to the policies set in the College Catalogue (see pg 24).

Students having good reasons for missing a deadline or test should contact me in advance of the deadline. Good reasons include documented medical reasons, documented court obligations, and athletic team or other Carroll College commitments, family emergencies. Deadlines will be reset to mutually agreed times in these situations.

## **GRADE CHALLENGES AND APPEAL POLICY**

If you do not understand a grade you received, please seek clarification! Under no condition will a grade review result in a lowered grade. If you want to appeal a grade, please submit your appeal first in writing, explaining your question, or if you think your answer was correct, documenting that belief with evidence from the text. In the case where there is a rubric, please identify the assessments of the rubric that you believe are incorrect and why. After receiving your written request, I will review your documentation and the assignment and decide if a grade change is warranted, and return the test with some written comments. If your concern remains after that, then I will meet with you.

## **CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES**

If you believe that you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact Kevin Hadduck, in order to discuss your specific needs and to determine a reasonable accommodation plan. You may contact Kevin Hadduck in the Academic Success and Disability Services Office, Borromeo Hall, Room 118 (phone: x4504; email: khadduck@carroll.edu).

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## **OFFICE HOURS**

In the summer, I do not keep regular office hours, however, please feel free to make an appointment or to drop by my office when you need to see me. I am typically available before class in the morning, and can be available after class. If you have a question or issue that can be solved over email, please email away! Office hours are not just for those in trouble. My office hours are a time for you to come talk to me informally, to ask questions about the material or

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assignments, to review graded work, to get suggestions for further reading, to discuss other topics related to the course. And if you are having trouble with the course work, we can talk about that too, of course.

## ***ABOUT YOUR PROFESSOR***

I am a full professor in the Philosophy Department. I received a B.A. from Thomas Aquinas College (CA) in 1983; a Ph.D. in 1992, from the University of Notre Dame, where I studied Medieval Philosophy and the Philosophy of Human Being. I have taught at over a half-dozen institutions before I came to Carroll College in 1995.

I teach many philosophy courses here at Carroll, and I regularly teach Philosophy of Human Nature, Business Ethics, Bioethics, Environmental Ethics, and Medieval Philosophy. My research interests are in Medieval Philosophy, especially the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and applied ethics. I have given papers/presentations on: Thomas Aquinas, Catholic Identity, God's Omnipotence, End of Life Decision-Making, using technology in the classroom.

I've been married 32 years and have eight kids (one Carroll grad!). I am involved in various community organizations in Helena and enjoy visiting historical sites, hiking, photography, building things from time to time (and even house remodeling).

## ***CONCLUDING DISCLAIMER***

The above schedule, policies, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.