

# Phil 340: Bioethics

NOTE THAT TEACHING FOR THIS CLASS IS IN-PERSON ONLY.

**Instructor:** Faik Kurtulmuş

**Office hours:** By appointment (FASS 1063 or Zoom)

**Course Place and Time:** FASS1101, Wednesday 8:40-10:30; Friday 12:40-13:30

**Important Note:** This syllabus may be subject to change. It is your responsibility to follow announcements and e-mails regarding all issues related to this course.

## Course description

An introduction to the ethical issues that arise in the medical sciences and related fields. Topics include, utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, euthanasia, ethical issues regarding genetic enhancements and disabilities, ethics of biomedical research, justice in the distribution of healthcare, and human nature.

This course is among the area electives for the Honors Minor Program in philosophy.

## Course Assessment

### Response papers

You will be required to write four 500-word response papers on the assigned readings for different weeks. You need to submit them *before* the meeting we discuss the text your response paper was on. You will get a pass/fail grade for these summaries. A late submission will automatically receive a fail grade. However, you will be allowed to submit five summaries.

### The final paper

The objective of this course is not only to introduce you various debates in bioethics but also to improve your philosophical skills. I have three particular skills in mind: (i) The ability to comprehend complex arguments; (ii) The ability to critically engage with existing arguments and craft your own arguments; and (iii) The ability to present your arguments clearly and persuasively in writing. These skills are built through practice. For this reason, 50% of your work will be based on a paper that you will be working on for much of the term. The key dates are below.

*26 November*      Paper topic choices due

<i>8 December</i>	Paper proposal due
<i>31 December</i>	Last day for sending draft for comments
<i>14 January</i>	Final draft due

Do not worry if you have little previous experience writing papers. There will be a session during the term on how to write philosophy papers and I will offer guidance in my office hours as well.

Late submissions will be penalized 1/3 letter grades per day. For instance, an A paper that was submitted one day late will receive an A-.

### Grade breakdown

- 10% Attendance and participation
- 40% The four 500-word summaries
- 10% Paper proposal
- 40% Final paper

## About the Readings

You are expected to have done the readings before each meeting.

Keep in mind that it's perfectly natural to have difficulty reading research articles. You will find that it becomes easier as the term progresses. Also, don't be surprised if you have to read an article more than once to fully understand it. I also need to read an article several times before I fully understand it—and I've been doing this for more than ten years.

Jim Pryor's Guidelines on Reading Philosophy contains useful advice.

## Academic Integrity

Familiarise yourself with Sabancı University's Academic Integrity Statement which is binding for all members of the university.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Keep in mind that 'I did not know that this was plagiarism' is not a valid defence. If you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism you can consult me.

## Schedule of Meetings and Readings

### 1 Introduction

### 2 Evaluating arguments and doing moral philosophy

### 3 Two central concepts: Well-being & Informed Consent

Crisp, R. (2017). Well-Being. In Zalta, E. N., editor, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, Fall 2017 edition

Eyal, N. (2019). Informed Consent. In Zalta, E. N., editor, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, Spring 2019 edition.

### 4 Consequentialism and Utilitarianism

Chapter 3 of Bykvist, K. (2010). *Utilitarianism: A Guide for the Perplexed*. Continuum, London.

### 5 Deontology

Thomson, J. J. (1985). The trolley problem. *The Yale Law Journal*, 94(6):1395–1415.

### 6 Virtue ethics

Hursthouse, R. (1991). Virtue theory and abortion. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 20(3):223–246.

### 7 Euthanasia

Rachels, J. (1975). Active and passive euthanasia. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 292(2):78–80.

### 8 Human Nature and Genetic Causation

Sober, E. (2000). The meaning of genetic causation. In Buchanan, A. E., Brock, D. W., Daniels, N., and Wikler, D., editors, *From Chance to Choice: Genetics and Justice*, pages 347–369. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Daniels, N. (2009a). Can anyone really be talking about ethically modifying human nature? In Savulescu, J. and Bostrom, N., editors, *Human Enhancement*, pages 25–42. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

## 9 Meetings for the paper

## 10 Genetic enhancement

Pages 1-100 of Sandel, M. J. (2007). *The Case Against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

## 11 Disabilities

Shakespeare, T. (2013). The Social Model of Disability. In Davis, L. J., editor, *The Disability Studies Reader*, pages 214–221. Routledge, New York, NY, 4th ed. edition

Barnes, E. (2014). Valuing Disability, Causing Disability. *Ethics*, 125(1):88–113.

## 12 Justice in the distribution of healthcare

Daniels, N. (2009b). Is there a right to health care and, if so, what does it encompass? In Kuhse, H. and Singer, P., editors, *A Companion to Bioethics*, pages 362–372. Blackwell, Oxford, 2nd ed edition.

## 13 Organs for sale?

Radcliffe-Richards, J., Daar, A. S., Guttman, R. D., Hoffenberg, R., Kennedy, I., Lock, M., Sells, R. A., and Tilney, N. (1998). The Case for Allowing Kidney Sales. *The Lancet*, 351(9120):1950–1952.

Chapter 9 of Satz, D. (2010). *Why Some Things Should Not Be for Sale: The Moral Limits of Markets*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

## 14 Ethics of research on humans

Luna, F. and Macklin, R. (2006). Research involving human beings. In Kuhse, H. and Singer, P., editors, *A Companion to Bioethics*, pages 457–468. Blackwell, Oxford, 2nd ed edition.

Eyal, N., Lipsitch, M., and Smith, P. G. (2020). Human Challenge Studies to Accelerate Coronavirus Vaccine Licensure. *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 221(11):1752–1756.

Meyer, M. N. and Chabris, C. F. (2015). Please, Corporations, Experiment on Us. *The New York Times*.