

**PHIL 2408 Bioethics**  
**Winter 2025**

**Class schedule:** Tues/Thurs 8:35-9:55pm

**Room:** See on Carleton Central

**Instructor:** Dr. Marie-Pier Lemay

Department of Philosophy Paterson Hall

Office: 3A45 Paterson Hall

**Office Hours:** TBD

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**Teaching Assistant Information:** TBD

## **I. Course description**

### **Calendar Course Description**

Ethical and political issues in medicine, public health, biotechnology, and the life sciences. Topics may include reproductive ethics, research on human subjects, animal research and treatment, justice and health care, physician-patient relationships, death and the end of life, and genetic engineering.

### **Course Description**

This course will introduce you to key contemporary questions in bioethics. To do so, we will first look over the classical concepts and principles used in bioethics (e.g., autonomy, paternalism, personhood, informed consent, and consequentialism). We will use these conceptual tools to analyze important debates, including medical assistance in dying (MaiD) or reproductive ethics. We will also cover questions of gender-affirming care and body image. This course contains a Canadian perspective: we will contextualize these questions in the society we live in. You will develop the tools to read and communicate across disciplines, and to evaluate conflicting positions on complex issues in bioethics.

## **II. Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this class, you will (1) identify and describe key concepts and theories in bioethics, (2) engage with debates and disagreements in the field, (3) articulate your thoughts on these key debates, (4) critically apply the theories seen in the class in order to understand important questions in bioethics.

### III. Texts

Required Textbook: Miles, J.K. (2023). *Practical Bioethics: Ethics for Patients and Providers*. Broadview Press. ISBN: 9781554813711 / 1554813719 (PB in schedule)

Cost: CA \$59.95 for paperback version and CA \$43.17 for eBook.

The rest of the required readings will be electronically available on the course website.

### IV. Course calendar

Note that these readings may be subject to minor changes.

Week and Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments due
1: Course Introduction	Tue., Jan. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the syllabus!</li> </ul>	Not Applicable (NA)
1: Ethics 101	Thu., Jan. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 17-22.</li> <li><i>If you have never taken a philosophy or ethics class, I would recommend you had a look at the introduction of this free textbook in ethics: Maynell and Paron, <a href="#">Applied Ethics Primer</a>, Introduction. <a href="https://caul-cbua.pressbooks.pub/aep/">https://caul-cbua.pressbooks.pub/aep/</a> (AEP) pp. 1-2</i></li> </ul>	NA
2: Ethical Dilemmas in Medicine	Tue., Jan. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 23-33</li> </ul>	NA
2: Ethical Dilemmas in Medicine	Thu., Jan. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, 34-44, (Ross, “What Makes Right Actions Right?”).</li> <li>PB, 44-49, (John Stuart Mill, from <i>Utilitarianism</i>).</li> </ul>	Quiz #1
3: Ethical Principles for Resolving Dilemmas	Tue., Jan. 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 61-80.</li> </ul>	NA
3: Ethical Principles for Resolving Dilemmas	Thu., Jan. 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 81-86, (Ruth Macklin, “Applying the Four Principles”).</li> <li>PB, pp. 87- 102, (E. Arries, “Virtue Ethics: An Approach to Moral Dilemmas in Nursing”).</li> </ul>	Quiz #2
4: Dilemmas in the Patient-Provider Relationship	Tue., Jan. 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 107-117.</li> <li>PB, pp. 117-135, (Gerald Dworkin, “Paternalism”).</li> </ul>	NA

Week and Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments due
4: Dilemmas in the Patient-Provider Relationship	Thu., Jan. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 135-143, (Aanand D. Naik et al., “Patient Autonomy for the Management of Chronic Conditions: A Two-Component Re-Conceptualization”).</li> <li>• PB, 143-147, (Camilla Scanlan and Ian H. Kerridge, “Autonomy and Chronic Illness: Not Two Components but Many”).</li> </ul>	Quiz #3
5: Ethics of Medical Research	Tue., Feb. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 149-162.</li> <li>• PB, pp. 162-167, (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, “The Belmont Report”).</li> </ul>	
5: Ethics of Medical Research	Thu., Feb. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 180-185, (Marcia Angell, “The Ethics of Clinical Research in the Third World”).</li> <li>• PB, pp. 186-190, (Baruch A. Brody, “Ethical Issues in Clinical Trials in Developing Countries”).</li> <li>• PB, pp. 190-199, (Christine Grady, “Money for Research Participation: Does It Jeopardize Informed Consent?”).</li> <li>• PB, pp. 199-203, (Mark Kuczewski, “Is Informed Consent Enough? Monetary Incentives for Research Participation and the Integrity of Biomedicine”).</li> </ul>	Quiz #4
6: Pandemic Ethics	Tue., Feb. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 247-252.</li> <li>• PB, pp. 270-280, (Ezekiel J. Emanuel et al., “Fair Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources in the Time of COVID-19”).</li> <li>• PB, pp. 280-291, (Lynette Reid, “Triage of Critical Care Resources in COVID-19: A Stronger Role for Justice”).</li> </ul>	
Midterm Exam	Thu., Feb. 13	Midterm exam	Midterm and Quiz #5
Winter Break	Tue., Feb. 18	No class	NA
Winter Break	Thu., Feb. 20	No class	
8: MaiD	Tue., Feb. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 205-214.</li> </ul>	NA

Week and Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 214-222, (James Rachels, “Active and Passive Euthanasia”).</li> <li>• PB, pp. 221-230, (Daniel Callahan, “When Self-Determination Runs Amok”).</li> </ul>	
8: MAiD	Thu., Feb. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB, pp. 230-245, (J. McMahan, “Killing, Letting Die, and Withdrawing Aid”).</li> <li>• Braswell, H. (2022). <a href="#">Between “Aid in Dying” and “Assisted Suicide.”</a> In J. M. Reynolds &amp; C. Wieseler, <i>The Disability Bioethics Reader</i> (1st ed., pp. 212–220). Routledge. <a href="https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003289487-27">https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003289487-27</a></li> </ul>	Quiz #6
9: MAiD in Canada	Tue., Mar. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government of Canada:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-services-benefits/medical-assistance-dying.html">Medical assistance in dying: Overview</a> (https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-services-benefits/medical-assistance-dying.html)</li> <li>b) <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2023/03/eligibility-for-medical-assistance-in-dying-for-persons-suffering-solely-from-mental-illness-extended-to-march-17-2024.html">Eligibility for medical assistance in dying for persons suffering solely from mental illness extended to March 17, 2024</a> (https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2023/03/eligibility-for-medical-assistance-in-dying-for-persons-suffering-solely-from-mental-illness-extended-to-march-17-2024.html)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Wiebe, K., &amp; Mullin, A. (2023). <a href="#">Choosing death in unjust conditions: Hope, autonomy and harm reduction.</a> <i>Journal of Medical Ethics</i>, jme-2022-108871. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1136/jme-2022-108871">https://doi.org/10.1136/jme-2022-108871</a></li> </ul>	NA
9: MaiD in Canada	Thu., Mar. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braswell, H. (2021, February 19). Perspective   <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/canada-is-heading-toward-a-human-rights-disaster-for-disabled-people/2021/02/19/01cbfca4-7232-11eb-85fa-e0ccb3660358_story.html">Canada is plunging toward a human rights disaster for disabled people.</a> <i>Washington Post.</i> (https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/canada-is-heading-toward-a-human-rights-disaster-for-disabled-people/2021/02/19/01cbfca4-7232-11eb-85fa-e0ccb3660358_story.html)</li> </ul>	Quiz #7

Week and Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson, R. &amp; Matthew Barkers. (2021). <a href="https://dailynous.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/wilson-barker-senate-committee-29-jan-2021-bill-c-7.pdf">Letter to the Senate</a>. (<a href="https://dailynous.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/wilson-barker-senate-committee-29-jan-2021-bill-c-7.pdf">https://dailynous.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/wilson-barker-senate-committee-29-jan-2021-bill-c-7.pdf</a>)</li> <li>Schuklenk, U. (2020, February 18). Opinion: <a href="https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-why-mentally-ill-people-should-of-course-be-eligible-for-assisted/">Why mentally-ill people should, of course, be eligible for assisted dying</a>. The Globe and Mail. (<a href="https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-why-mentally-ill-people-should-of-course-be-eligible-for-assisted/">https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-why-mentally-ill-people-should-of-course-be-eligible-for-assisted/</a>)</li> </ul>	
10: Reproductive Ethics	Tue., Mar. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 293-301.</li> <li>PB, pp. 301-311, (Julian Savulescu, “Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children”).</li> </ul>	
10: Reproductive Ethics	Thu., Mar. 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 311-321, (Sarah E. Stoller, “Why We Are Not Morally Required to Select the Best Children: A Response to Savulescu”).</li> <li>Sandel, M. (2004). <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/04/the-case-against-perfection/302927/">“The Case Against Perfection”</a> In <i>The Atlantic</i>. (<a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/04/the-case-against-perfection/302927/">https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/04/the-case-against-perfection/302927/</a>)</li> </ul>	Quiz #8
11: Abortion and Miscarriage	Tue., Mar. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PB, pp. 383-387.</li> <li>PB, pp. 387-403, (Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion”).</li> </ul>	NA
11: Abortion and Miscarriage	Thu., Mar. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reiheld, A. (2015). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/josp.12084">“The Event That Was sNothing”: Miscarriage as a Liminal Event</a>. <i>Journal of Social Philosophy</i>, 46(1), 9–26. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/josp.12084">https://doi.org/10.1111/josp.12084</a></li> <li>Dietz, E. (2022). <a href="https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003289487-14">Abortion, Disability Rights, and Reproductive Justice</a>. In J. M. Reynolds &amp; C. Wieseler, <i>The Disability Bioethics Reader</i> (1st ed., pp. 95–102). Routledge. <a href="https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003289487-14">https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003289487-14</a></li> </ul>	Quiz #9
12: Gender-affirming Care and Bioethics	Tue., Mar. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ashley, F. (2022). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/jme.2022.85">Transporting the Burden of Justification: The Unethicality of Transgender Conversion Practices</a>. <i>Journal of Law, Medicine &amp; Ethics</i>, 50(3), 425–442. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/jme.2022.85">https://doi.org/10.1017/jme.2022.85</a></li> </ul>	

Week and Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hann, M., Ivester, R., &amp; Denton, G. D. (2017). Bioethics in Practice: Ethical Issues in the Care of Transgender Patients. <i>The Ochsner Journal</i>, 17(2), 144–145.</li> </ul>	
12: Gender-affirming Care and Bioethics	Thu., Mar. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kimberly, L. L., Folkers, K. M., Friesen, P., Sultan, D., Quinn, G. P., Bateman-House, A., Parent, B., Konnoth, C., Janssen, A., Shah, L. D., Bluebond-Langner, R., &amp; Salas-Humara, C. (2018). <a href="#">Ethical Issues in Gender-Affirming Care for Youth</a>. <i>Pediatrics</i>, 142(6), e20181537. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-1537">https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-1537</a></li> <li>Schall, T. E., &amp; Moses, J. D. (2023). <a href="#">Gender-Affirming Care for Cisgender People</a>. <i>Hastings Center Report</i>, 53(3), 15–24. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/hast.1486">https://doi.org/10.1002/hast.1486</a></li> </ul>	Quiz #10
13: Body Image	Tue., Apr. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>	
13: Body Image	Thu., Apr. 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>	
14: Class revision	Tue., Apr. 8	No readings!	
Final exam	TBD		Date: to be announced.

## V. Evaluation

Students will be assessed on components: (1) quizzes, (2) participation grade, and (3) midterm and final exam. See them in more detail below. Their descriptions will be posted to Brightspace.

- **Short quizzes (30% of final grade):** Every week, you will be required to complete an online quiz composed of multiple-choice and true/false questions on Brightspace. A total of 10 quizzes will be available. I will drop the two lowest scores, and only 8 quizzes will be included for your final grade (each quiz will be worth up to 3% of your final grade).
- **Participation grade (10% of final grade):** Your presence in class is essential. I will not formally take attendance every class. However, thorough the term, I will randomly distribute 12 in-class (individual or collective) short assignments worth 1% each with a pass/fail grade. You are allowed to miss two of these short assignments without providing a reason. I will not accept any late assignment. Please make sure to bring a piece of paper, a pen/pencil, and an electronic device (e.g., phone, a computer, or a tablet) to each class; if either of these is not possible for you, let me know beforehand.
- **Midterm Exam (25% of final grade):** This exam will pertain to the first half of the term.

- **Final exam (35% of final grade):** The cumulative exam will include short answer questions and a long essay where you will analyse a case study. This will take place during the exam period.

## VI. Course Policies (Including late work)

If you **email** me, use your Carleton email address, and write the course code (PHIL2408) in the subject line. If you haven't received a response within 48 hours (excluding weekends), feel free to send me a quick follow up email.

## VII. Statement on Plagiarism

### Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (CHATGPT, ETC.)

We would discuss this more in class together, but I would encourage you to refrain yourself for using these tools for your work submitted for this class. I want to be able to hear your distinctive voice when I read your essay and these tools will not reproduce your voice.

Using AI tools to generate content for assignments, and presenting it as one's own original work, as well as copying or paraphrasing the content produced by AI tools without proper citations or the instructor's consent, are both considered to be in violation of academic integrity.

Note that I can ask you to submit drafts or answer questions on the writing process if I have suspicions that you did not write what you submitted for this course.

## PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

### Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;

- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

## **Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2024-25)**

### **Assignments:**

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically. There will be NO hard copies placed in the essay box this coming year.

### **Evaluation:**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

### **Deferrals for Term Work:**

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

### **Deferrals for Final Exams:**

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further information.

### **Plagiarism:**

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of ‘plagiarism’ as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](#))

### **Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or religious obligation:* write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the [EDC](#) website.
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* The [Paul Menton Centre](#) for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.
- *Survivors of Sexual Violence:* As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per [Carleton’s Sexual Violence Policy](#).
- *Accommodation for [Student Activities](#):* Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

### **Important Dates:**

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Sept. 4  | Classes start.   |
| Sept. 17 | Last day for registration and course changes for fall term and fall/winter (two-term) courses. |

- Sept. 30 Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
- Oct. 14 Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Oct. 21-25 Fall Break – no classes.
- Nov. 22 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, before the official examination period.
- Dec. 6 Last day of fall term classes. ***Classes follow a Monday schedule.*** Last day for academic withdrawal from fall term courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for a fall term course.
- Dec. 9-21 Final examinations for fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
- Dec. 21 All take-home examinations are due.
- Jan. 6 Classes begin.
- Jan. 17 Last day for registration and course changes in the winter term.
- Jan. 31 Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter term courses or from the winter portion of two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
- Feb. 17 Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Feb. 17-21 Winter Break – no classes.
- Mar. 15 Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses.
- Mar. 25 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in winter term or fall/winter courses before the official examination period.
- Apr. 8 Last day of two-term and winter term classes. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for winter term courses.
- Apr. 9-10 No classes or examinations take place.
- Apr. 11-26 Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
- Apr. 18 Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Apr. 26 All take-home examinations are due.

**Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:  
[www.carleton.ca/philosophy](http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy)  
520-2110

Registrar's Office:  
[www.carleton.ca/registrar](http://www.carleton.ca/registrar)  
520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:  
[www.carleton.ca/academicadvising](http://www.carleton.ca/academicadvising)  
520-7850

Writing Services:  
<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>  
520-3822

MacOdrum Library  
<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>  
520-2735