

PHIL 2408 – Bioethics  
Fall 2021

Instructor: Dr. Kerry O’Neill

Email: [Kerry.oneill@carleton.ca](mailto:Kerry.oneill@carleton.ca)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00pm – 2:00pm (please email to make an appointment)

**Course Description:**

This course examines issues related to bioethics. Students will be introduced to some of the central debates in medical ethics. Topics to be covered may include health care provisioning, medical assistance in dying, reproductive ethics, and genetic enhancement.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students should possess a basic familiarity with issues related to bioethics. Students will have developed an ability to:

- Read and understand difficult and challenging texts
- Critically assess the strengths and weakness of arguments
- Appreciate unfamiliar ideas and points of view
- Articulate their views in oral discussions
- Write clearly, concisely, and effectively in defense of their position

**Course Structure:**

This is an online course with asynchronous and synchronous components. All lectures will be virtual and posted 24 hours before the official assigned class time of Tuesdays 2:35 – 4:25pm). The lecture videos will not exceed the length of our class time slot. This means our class **will not** meet on Tuesday afternoons.

Tutorials will take place weekly via Zoom beginning the *week of September 20<sup>th</sup> and concluding the week of December 6<sup>th</sup>*. Tutorials are run in real time and virtual attendance is mandatory. Case study assignments will pertain to material covered exclusively in tutorial, and these assignments will only be discussed further by your Teaching Assistant (TA).

Tutorials:

A01 – Monday 13:35-14:25

A02 – Monday 16:35-17:25

A03 – Monday 14:35-15:25

A04 – Tuesday 16:35 -17:25

**Course Readings**

There is one textbook for this course. The reading on September 21 as well as all case studies come from *Well and Good, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*, by Thomas, Waluchow, & Gedge. You can purchase this book from Broadview Press as an e-book or in-print at

<https://broadviewpress.com/product/well-and-good-fourth-edition/#tab-description>

All other readings will be posted as PDFs or weblinks on Brightspace.

## **Assignments:**

### **1. Case Study Commentaries**

Students will write 3 case study commentaries over the course of the term. Each commentary should be between 3-4 pages in length (double-spaced, 12pt font, regular margins). For each assignment, you will be asked to select one of the case studies discussed in tutorial in the weeks preceding the deadline. Students will outline the case study of their choosing and then offer their own critical assessment of the case. Students should defend a particular resolution to the case and offer argument(s) in support of their position. The purpose of these assignments is to allow students to think deeply about the case studies and offer them the opportunity to critically reflect on their own position with regards to it. More information will be provided in lecture and posted to Brightspace.

### **2. Attendance and Participation**

Students are expected to virtually attend their weekly tutorials. Students should come to tutorial having completed the readings and lecture videos, and prepared to discuss the assigned case studies.

### **3. Final Take-Home Exam**

The Take-Home Exam will be assigned in the last week of class and is due electronically on the last day of the fall exam period (December 23, 2021). The exam will be essay-based and will require a careful analysis of the readings assigned for lectures. More information will be made available closer to the end of term.

## **Assignment Weighting:**

<b><u>Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Due Date</u></b>	<b><u>Weight</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
<b>Case Study Comm. 1</b>	11:59pm Oct. 8	15%	Case Study Options: 2.2; 2.3; or 8.1
<b>Case Study Comm. 2</b>	11:59pm Nov. 12	15%	Case Study Options: 6.1b; 6.2; 4.1; 4.5; 5.2; or 5.3
<b>Case Study Comm. 3</b>	11:59pm Dec. 3	15%	Case Study Options: 5.5; 9.2; 2.4; 8.3; or 3.4
<b>Attendance &amp; Participation</b>	Ongoing	15%	
<b>Take-Home Exam</b>	4:00pm Dec. 23	40%	

### Extensions and Late Term Work:

All written assignments must be submitted on Brightspace. All extension requests must be communicated to **your TA at least 1 (ONE) day prior to the due date**. TAs are able to provide short extensions (up to 3 days). You do not need to explain to your TA the reasons you require an extension - it is sufficient for you to email asking if you may have an extension. *It is your responsibility to let your TA know if you require an extension ahead of due dates.*

If you do not let your TA know that you require an extension before the assignment is due, your assignment will be subject to late penalties. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of **3% per day or part day late** (including weekend days). Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted (i.e., will receive a grade of zero), except with special permission from the course instructor where there are legitimate medical or personal grounds.

### Course Schedule:

	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
Week 1	Sept. 14	Course Introductions	N/A
Week 2	Sept. 21	Ethical Decision-making	Thomas et al., "Ethical Resources for Decision-Making," 13-42  *Tutorials begin Sept. 20
Week 3	Sept. 28	Health Care	Norman Daniels, "Health Care Needs and Distributive Justice"  Gopal Sreenivasan, "Health Care and Equality of Opportunity"  <i>Tutorial: Case Study 2.2</i>
Week 4	Oct. 5	Health Care & Cost	Joseph Heath, "Health Care as Commodity"  Alexander Cappelin and Ole Norheim, "Responsibility in Health Care"  <i>Tutorial: Case Studies 2.3 &amp; 8.1</i>
Week 5	Oct. 12	Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)	Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Physician Assisted Suicide: Two Arguments"  Dan Brock, "Voluntary Active Euthanasia"  <i>No Tutorial – no case studies assigned</i>
Week 6	Oct. 19	MAiD in Canada	Report of the Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying, "Medical Assistance in Dying: A Patient Centered Approach"

			<p>Jocelyn Downie, “In a Nutshell: The Continuing Saga of Canada’s Medical Assistance in Dying Legislation”</p> <p>Trudo Lemmens, “MAID Bill C-7 Is an Affront to Equality”</p> <p>Stuart Chambers, “It’s Good That Bill C-7 Extends MAID to Chronic Sufferers”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Studies 6.1b &amp; 6.2</i></p>
Week 7	Oct. 26	<b>READING BREAK</b>	
Week 8	Nov. 2	Reproductive Ethics & Abortion	<p>Judith Jarvis Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion”</p> <p>Mary Anne Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Studies 4.1 &amp; 4.5</i></p>
Week 9	Nov. 9	Reproductive Ethics & Abortion	<p>Bonnie Steinbeck, “Disability, Prenatal Testing, and Selective Abortion”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Study 5.2 &amp; 5.3</i></p>
Week 10	Nov. 16	Genetic Enhancement	<p>Michael Sandel, “The Case Against Perfection”</p> <p>Julian Savulescu, “Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Study 5.5 &amp; 9.2</i></p>
Week 11	Nov. 23	Blood and Plasma	<p>Vida Panitch and L. Chad Horne, “Paying for Plasma: Commodification, Exploitation, and Canada’s Plasma Shortage,”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Study 2.4 and 8.3</i></p>
Week 12	Nov. 30	Vaccination	<p>Jason Brennan, “A libertarian case for mandatory vaccination”</p> <p>Euzebiusz Jamrozik et al. “Victims, Vectors, and Villains: Are Those Who Opt Out of Vaccination Morally Responsible for the Deaths of Others?”</p> <p><i>Tutorial: Case Study 3.4</i></p>
Week 13	Dec. 7	Course Review & Exam Instructions	<p><b>**NOTE: although Friday Dec. 10 follows a Monday schedule, there will be no tutorial sessions on this day.</b></p>

## Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2021-22)

### **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](#)
- *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. 8           Classes start.
- Sept. 22          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. 11           Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Oct. 25-29        Fall Break – no classes.
- Nov. 26          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. 10          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. 11-23       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. 23          All take-home examinations are due.
- Jan. 10          Classes begin.
- Jan. 24          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. 21          Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Feb. 22-25        Winter Break – no classes.
- Mar. 29          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. 12          Last day of two-term and winter term classes. *Classes follow a Friday schedule*. Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter 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 two-term and for winter term courses.
- Apr. 13          No classes or examinations take place.
- Apr. 14-28        Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
- Apr. 15          Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Apr. 28          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