CARLETON UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

SOCI 4050 / ANTH 4050 / SOCI 5805/ HLTH 5702

Ethical Issues in Health and Healthcare

FALL 2025

Method of Delivery: In-Person

Class Time: Monday 2:35-5:25pm

Instructor: Dr. Carlos Novas

E-mail: carlos.novas@carleton.ca

Office hours: By appointment or drop in

Please send me an email and we can arrange to meet in-person or over Zoom. I'm in my office (Loeb C779) on campus daily – please feel free to drop by.

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

Course Description:

This course explores the intersection between ethics, healthcare, biomedicine, and Science and Technology Studies (STS). In this course we will explore a range of topics from the ethics of human enhancement, organ transplantation to environmental ethics. This course aims to explore through a range of interdisciplinary perspectives how advances in science, technology and biomedicine pose a range of challenging ethical and social issues.

Learning objectives:

- 1) Critically analyze advances in biomedicine from a sociological, anthropological, or STS perspective
- 2) Ability to critically review and comment on course texts and literature
- 3) Formulate an independent research project
- 4) Conduct research related to independent research project
- 5) Ability to communicate and present ideas to other class members

Required Texts:

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings will be provided for this course through links to essential course texts on Brightspace.

Assignments:

Seminar participation: 20%

To ensure the success of the seminar, students should attend every class and actively contribute to seminar discussions. Students should come prepared to each seminar by reading all the required texts prior to attending class.

As part of seminar participation, students will be required to read the weekly reading reports prepared by other members of the class. You should be prepared to discuss your weekly reading report and to discuss topics or issues raised in reading reports of fellow classmates. Attendance will be taken each class.

Weekly Reading Reports: 30% (5 x 6%)

N.B. If you do not attend class for the week in which you submit a reading report, your reading report will not be graded

For each class, students will be required to prepare a brief reading report (approximately 1 page) on the week's set of readings (i.e., you are NOT expected to write a report for each article). Out of ten (10) possible weeks, you must submit a minimum of five (5 reports. The top five 5 grades will count towards your final grade.

The reading reports should be posted on Brightspace the **SUNDAY** before the seminar since they will form the basis of our weekly discussion and debate. A bulletin board on Brightspace will be set up to facilitate this exchange of ideas. You should read the reports of your fellow classmates and be prepared for comment/critique.

One of the key learning objectives of the reading reports is to discuss the required texts in relation to one another. You should aim to identify themes that run throughout all the required texts and organize your reading report thematically. A key thing to avoid is discussing the required texts sequentially or in isolation from one another. The reading report assignment is intended to help develop your literature review skills. You should write your reading report in paragraph style, and it should be conversational in tone. To refer to the required texts in your reading report, just use in-text citations i.e. (Latour 2005). Do not include the titles on the articles in the body of your reading report. You do need to provide a bibliography.

When reading the articles, you can use the following prompts to help you reflect on the required readings. These are prompts, do not use these as sub-headings in your reading report!

One to two 'reactions' – What did you think of the articles? What struck you the most about the readings?

One to two 'keepers' – What were the key ideas worth remembering and making note of? What did you take away the most from the readings?

One to two 'questions' – What quibbles, questions or criticisms did you have for the author(s)?

One 'so what' – Why does the topic matter? How does it contribute to our understanding of ethical and social issues related to biomedicine?

What is your position in relation to some of the issues, topics or debates mentioned in the articles?

Research Proposal: 15%

In preparation for the final research project students are required to submit a proposal (no more than 1,000-1250 words, (1500-1800 words MA students) not including bibliography) related to their research project. The project proposal should provide a brief description of a biomedical issue that the student wishes to study. The proposal should then go on to explain the sociological or anthropological significance of the topic selected to be examined. Lastly, the proposal should describe some of the resources the student will use to conduct research on their chosen topic.

Research paper: 35%

As part of the course requirements, students are required to submit a research paper. This paper should focus on a biomedical issue from a sociological/anthropological perspective. Students should choose topics related to course themes and that are relevant to their current and future research interests. The research paper should be around 3000 to 3500 words in length, not including bibliography and references. MA students 4000-4500 words

DEADLINES AND RETURN OF STUDENT'S WORK

Seminar Participation N/A

Weekly Reading Reports Sunday before midnight

Proposal November 5, 2025
Research paper: December 5, 2025

All deadlines are firm and are included in the course schedule below. **Written work is to be submitted on Brightspace.**

Late submissions will be penalized 3% every day. No submissions will be accepted or graded after the last day of term, December 5, 2025.

Citation Style

The Chicago author-date citation style (17th edition) is to be used in the assignments and papers of this course. For more information, please see:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar Regulations, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A + = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50	WDN = Withdrawn from the course		DEF = Deferred

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: September 8, 2025

Course Introduction

Sayers, Joey Alison. 2019. "Cause and Neglect." *The Nib*, July. https://thenib.com/cause-and-neglect/

Week 2: September 15, 2025

Sociology, Bioethics and STS

De Vries, Raymond. 2004. "How Can We Help? From 'Sociology in' to 'Sociology of' Bioethics." *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 32(2):279–92. doi: 10.1111/j.1748-720x.2004.tb00475.x

Gordon, Elisa J. 2004. "Bioethics: Contemporary Anthropological Approaches." *Encyclopedia of Medical Anthropology* 20:73–86. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/0-387-29905-X 9.pdf

Latour, Bruno. 2004. "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern." *Critical Inquiry* 30(2):225–48. doi: 10.1086/421123.

Week 3: September 22, 2025

Troubling Informed Consent

Hoeyer, Klaus, and Linda F. Hogle. 2014. "Informed Consent: The Politics of Intent and Practice in Medical Research Ethics*." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43(Volume 43, 2014):347–62. doi: 10.1146/annurev-anthro-102313-030413.

Benjamin, Ruha. 2016. "Informed Refusal: Toward a Justice-Based Bioethics." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 41(6):967–90. doi: 10.1177/0162243916656059.

Reardon, Jenny, and Kim TallBear. 2012. "'Your DNA Is Our History': Genomics, Anthropology, and the Construction of Whiteness as Property." *Current Anthropology* 53(S5): S233–45. doi: 10.1086/662629.

Week 4: September 29, 2025

Ethics of Care

Martin, Aryn, Natasha Myers, and Ana Viseu. 2015. "The Politics of Care in Technoscience." *Social Studies of Science* 45(5):625–41. doi: 10.1177/0306312715602073.

de la Bellacasa, Maria Puig. 2011. "Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things." *Social Studies of Science* 41(1):85–106. doi: 10.1177/0306312710380301.

Krzywoszynska, Anna. 2019. "Caring for Soil Life in the Anthropocene: The Role of Attentiveness in More-than-Human Ethics." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 44(4):661–75. doi: 10.1111/tran.12293.

Week 5: October 6, 2024

Therapy or Enhancement?

Kass LR. Ageless bodies, happy souls: biotechnology and the pursuit of perfection. New Atlantis. 2003 Spring;(1):9-28. PMID: 15584192. (https://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/ageless-bodies-happy-souls)

Bostrom, Nick. 2005. "In Defense of Posthuman Dignity." *Bioethics* 19 (3): 202–14. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8519.2005.00437.x.

Petersen, Margit Anne, Lotte Stig Nørgaard, and Janine M. Traulsen. 2015. "Pursuing Pleasures of Productivity: University Students' Use of Prescription Stimulants for Enhancement and the Moral Uncertainty of Making Work Fun." *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 39 (4): 665–79. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11013-015-9457-4.

Edmonds, Alexander, and Emilia Sanabria. 2014. "Medical Borderlands: Engineering the Body with Plastic Surgery and Hormonal Therapies in Brazil." *Anthropology & Medicine* 21(2):202–16. doi: 10.1080/13648470.2014.918933.

October 13, 2025

Thanksgiving: No Class

October 20, 2025

Reading Week: No Class

Week 6: October 27, 2025

The Quantified Self

Schüll, Natasha Dow. 2016. "Data for Life: Wearable Technology and the Design of Self-Care." *BioSocieties* 11 (3): 317–33. https://doi.org/10.1057/biosoc.2015.47.

Ruckenstein, M. Visualized and Interacted Life: Personal Analytics and Engagements with Data Doubles. *Societies* **2014**, *4*, 68-84. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc4010068

Lupton, D. (2014). Quantified sex: a critical analysis of sexual and reproductive self-tracking using apps. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, *17*(4), 440–453. https://doi-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1080/13691058.2014.920528

Week 7: November 3, 2025

Disability and Technoscience

Hamraie, Aimi, and Kelly Fritsch. 2019. "Crip Technoscience Manifesto." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 5(1):1–33. doi: 10.28968/cftt.v5i1.29607.

Horrocks, Stephen. 2019. "Materializing Datafied Body Doubles: Insulin Pumps, Blood Glucose Testing, and the Production of Usable Bodies." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 5 (1): 1. https://doi.org/10.28968/cftt.v5i1.29613.

Blume, Stuart. 2012. "What Can the Study of Science and Technology Tell Us about Disability?" In *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies*, edited by Carol Thomas, Alan Roulston, and Nick Watson, 358–69. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203144114-35.

Week 8: November 10, 2025

A Brave New World of Reproductive Choices...

Ginsburg, Faye, and Rayna Rapp. 2023. "Cripping Reproduction: The Intersections of Pregnancy and Disability." In *A Companion to the Anthropology of Reproductive Medicine and Technology*, edited by Cecilia Coale Van Hollen and Nayantara Appleton, 282–97.

https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119845379.ch16.

Martin, Lauren Jade. 2018. "They Don't Just Take a Random Egg: Egg Selection in the United States." In *Selective Reproduction in the 21st Century*, edited by Ayo Wahlberg and Tine M. Gammeltoft. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58220-7 7.

Rapp, Rayna. 1998. "Refusing Prenatal Diagnosis: The Meanings of Bioscience in a Multicultural World." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 23 (1): 45–70. https://doi.org/10.1177/016224399802300103.

Week 9: November 17, 2025

Transplanting human and animal body parts

Shildrick, Margrit. 2015. "Staying Alive: Affect, Identity and Anxiety in Organ Transplantation." *Body & Society* 21(3):20–41. doi: 10.1177/1357034X15585886.

Guntram, Lisa. 2021. "May I Have Your Uterus? The Contribution of Considering Complexities Preceding Live Uterus Transplantation." *Medical Humanities* 47 (4): 425–37. https://doi.org/10.1136/medhum-2020-011864.

Whitney, Kaitlin Stack. 2024. "Thinking with Termites about Fractious Futures for Fecal Microbiota Transplantation in the United States." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 10 (2). https://doi.org/10.28968/cftt.v10i1.41952.

Week 10: November 24, 2025

Ethics, Health and the Environment

Murphy, Michelle. 2017. "Alterlife and Decolonial Chemical Relations." *Cultural Anthropology* 32(4):494–503. doi: 10.14506/ca32.4.02.

Frank, David M. 2021. "What Is the Environment in Environmental Health Research? Perspectives from the Ethics of Science." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 88 (August): 172–80. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsa.2021.05.018.

Davis, Heather. 2015. "Toxic Progeny: The Plastisphere and Other Queer Futures." *philoSOPHIA* 5(2):231–50.

Week 11: December 1, 2025

Al and Healthcare

Ostherr, Kirsten. 2022. "Artificial Intelligence and Medical Humanities." *Journal of Medical Humanities* 43(2):211–32. doi: 10.1007/s10912-020-09636-4.

Banner, Olivia. 2018. "Disability Studies, Big Data and Algorithmic Culture." Pp. 45–58 in *Interdisciplinary Approaches to Disability*. Routledge.

Week 12: December 5, 2025

Course Review

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here: https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/). For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC: https://carleton.ca/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 mmc@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 scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

*The deadline for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for October/November examinations is **October 1, 2025** and **November 15, 2025** for December examinations.

For Religious Obligations:

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. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For Pregnancy:

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. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For 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. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: www.carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

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. https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties.

What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including but not limited to: a grade of zero, a failure or a reduced grade for the piece of

academic work; reduction of final grade in the course; completion of a remediation process; resubmission of academic work; withdrawal from course(s); suspension from a program of study; a letter of reprimand.

What are the Procedures?

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and departmental chairs. The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism. The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

Assistance for Students:

"As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult https://wellness.carleton.ca/"

Mental Health and Wellbeing: https://carleton.ca/wellness/

Health & Counselling Services: https://carleton.ca/health/

Academic Advising Centre (AAC): https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): https://carleton.ca/csas/

Equity & Inclusive Communities: https://carleton.ca/equity/

Career Services: https://carleton.ca/career/

Important Information:

- Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).
- Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.
- 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.
- · Carleton University is committed to protecting the privacy of those who study or work here (currently and formerly). To that end, Carleton's Privacy Office seeks to encourage the implementation of the privacy provisions of Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) within the university.
- · In accordance with FIPPA, please ensure all communication with staff/faculty is via your Carleton email account. To get your Carleton Email you will need to

activate your MyCarletonOne account through Carleton Central. Once you have activated your MyCarletonOne account, log into the MyCarleton Portal. Please note that you will be able to link your MyCarletonOne account to other non-MyCarletonOne accounts and receive emails from us. However, for us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid MyCarletonOne address. Therefore, it would be easier to respond to your inquiries if you would send all email from your connect account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting https://students.carleton.ca/.

FALL TERM 2025 – Important Dates and Deadlines

Date	Activity
August 27, 2025	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in full fall, early fall, and fall/winter courses.
August 31, 2025	Last day for receipt of applications from potential fall (November) graduates.
September 1, 2025	Statutory holiday. University closed.
September 2, 2025	Academic orientation (undergraduate and graduate students).
	Orientation for new Teaching Assistants.
	All new students are expected to be on campus. Class and laboratory preparations, departmental introductions for students, and other academic preparation activities will be held.
September 3, 2025	Fall term begins. Full fall, early fall, and fall/winter classes begin.
September 9, 2025	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in early fall courses.
September 16, 2025	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in full fall, late fall, and fall/winter courses.

Last day to withdraw from early fall courses with a full fee adjustment.

Date	Activity
	Graduate students who have not electronically submitted their final thesis copy to Graduate Studies will not be eligible to graduate in fall 2025 and must register for the fall 2025 term.
September 19-21, 2025	Full summer and late summer term deferred final examinations will be held.
September 30, 2025	Last day to withdraw from full fall and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
October 1, 2025	Last day for academic withdrawal from early fall courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for Oct/Nov final examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
October 9, 2025	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in early fall term undergraduate courses, before the official Oct/Nov final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
October 10, 2025	December examination schedule (fall term final and fall/winter mid-terms) available online.
October 13, 2025	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 15, 2025	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate degree program for the winter term from applicants whose documents originate from outside Canada or the United States.
October 16, 2025	Last day of early fall classes.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned in early fall courses, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.

Date	Activity
	Last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for early fall courses.
October 20, 2025	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in late fall courses.
October 20-24, 2025	Fall break, no classes.
October 25-26, November 1-2, 2025	Final examinations in early fall undergraduate courses will be held.
October 27, 2025	Late fall classes begin.
November 7, 2025	Last day to withdraw from late fall term courses with a full fee adjustment.
November 14-16, 2025	Early fall undergraduate deferred final examinations will be held.
November 15, 2025	Last day for academic withdrawal from full fall and late fall courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for December full fall and late fall examinations and fall/winter midterm examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate degree program for the winter term.
November 21, 2025	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full fall term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official December final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).

Date	Activity
November 28, 2025	Last day for graduate students to submit their supervisor-approved thesis, in examinable form to the department.
	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in late fall term undergraduate courses, before the official final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
November 30, 2025	Last day for receipt of applications from potential winter (February) graduates.
December 5, 2025	Fall term ends.
	Last day of full fall and late fall classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
	Last day that can be specified by an instructor as a due date for term work for full and late fall courses.
	Last day for receipt of applications for undergraduate degree program transfers for winter term.
December 6-7, 2025	No classes or examinations take place.
December 8-20, 2025	Final examinations in full fall and late fall courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
December 20, 2025	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic

Date	Activity
	Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
December 24, 2025 at noon through January 2, 2026 inclusive	University closed.