



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 313 Lec 01**

**Bioethics**

Summer 2020

Online

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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**COURSE INFORMATION**

This is a course in applied ethics. That means that it looks at how to apply various ethical principles to analyse situations rather than trying to evaluate the validity of those principles. In this course, we try to understand how to balance concerns regarding, for example, respecting a patient's autonomy and concern for their well-being. Or whether we should consider age as a deciding factor when we have a limited number of ventilators to use. For a complete list of the topics we will discuss, see the schedule below.

This is also a philosophy course, and the kinds of skills that are developed in philosophy are argument comprehension and evaluation—important critical thinking skills. That means that you will spend your time reading (contemporary) primary sources, expressing those arguments, and formulating your own arguments. Put another way, you will practice articulating your comprehension of the readings, analysing the arguments presented, and, finally, doing the same for your own views.

The class will be conducted through the assignment of readings and recorded lecture videos. You will be evaluated on your discussion in D2L, weekly quizzes, and writing assignments. I will post videos weekly discussing the course material.

**PREREQUISITE(S)**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Broad knowledge of philosophical issues in biomedicine
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex sources
- Ability to write a convincing argument that takes adequate account of alternative positions
- Ability to engage in constructive, respectful, oral and written argumentation

## REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS, READINGS AND MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course. All of the required course readings will be linked to on D2L, or else will be freely accessible from the UCalgary Library website: [library.ucalgary.ca](http://library.ucalgary.ca)

Here is a list of the readings we will discuss in the course:

- Pratt, Bridget, and Adnan A Hyder. "Priority Setting Is More Than Resource Allocation: Reflecting on the Content of Funders' Duties and Their Implications for Current Practice." *The American Journal of Bioethics* 18.11 (2018): 27-30. Web.
- Selgelid, Michael J. (2008). Ethics, tuberculosis and globalization. *Public Health Ethics* 1 (1):10-20.
- Kirby, Jeffrey Conyers (2009). Organ donation: Who should decide?—A canadian perspective. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 6 (1):123-128.
- Spital, Aaron, and James Stacey Taylor. "Routine Recovery of Cadaveric Organs for Transplantation: Consistent, Fair, and Life-saving." *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology : CJASN* 2.2 (2007): 300-03. Web.
- Persad, Govind (2019). Authority without identity: defending advance directives via posthumous rights over one's body. *Journal of Medical Ethics* 45 (4):249-256.
- Callahan, Daniel (1992). When Self-Determination Runs Amok. *Hastings Center Report* 22 (2):52-55.
- Schüklenk, Udo ; van Delden, Johannes J. M. ; Downie, Jocelyn ; Mclean, Sheila A. M. ; Upshur, Ross & Weinstock, Daniel (2011). End-of-Life Decision-Making in Canada: The Report by the Royal Society of Canada Expert Panel on End-of-Life Decision-Making. *Bioethics* 25 (s1):1-73.
- Little, Margaret Olivia (2014). The Moral Permissibility of Abortion. In Andrew I. Cohen & Christopher Wellman (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics*. Chichester: Wiley & Sons.. pp. 51-62.
- Asch A, Barlevy D, Disability and Genetics: A Disability Critique of Pre-natal Testing and Pre-implantation Genetic Diagnosis. eLS. Wiley: Chichester, 2012

## COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assignment	Due Date	Total % of Grade
Discussion on D2L	Every Saturday @ 11:59pm	10
Weekly Quizzes (6 total)	August 14	40
Writing Assignment 1	July 24	20
Writing Assignment 2	August 7 or 14	30

### Discussion on D2L:

The discussion on D2L is a required component of your overall grade. In the D2L discussion section, you will notice that I've started a thread for each of the week's course content. Before the end of the week in which we discuss that content, I would like you to post a comment (either a question, comment, response, or criticism) in response to either the reading or someone else's post. The intention is to discuss the central ideas from the readings.

Grading for the discussions is quite simple: in order to receive a grade for your contribution, your post must be made during the week that we are discussing the content. You are welcome to post thoughts and comments after the week (and I encourage you to do so) but it won't count towards your grade. You can receive up to 3 marks per week for your comments, and a total of 10 marks throughout the term (meaning you must participate for at least 4 of the weeks in order to get full marks).

## **Weekly Quizzes:**

The weekly quizzes are meant to assess your understanding of that week's readings. It will consist of approximately 10 multiple choice or true/false questions on D2L, chosen from a bank of questions and appearing in a random order for each student. You will only be allowed 1 attempt at each quiz, and you must complete the quiz within 2 hours of starting, so be sure to have read the appropriate reading(s) before beginning. You must attempt every quiz (6 total), but your lowest score will be dropped from your overall grade.

All of the weekly quizzes only become available after you've accessed that week's content in the Content section on D2L. The idea is this: I want you to attempt each quiz only after you've had a chance to do the assigned readings. However, you will also notice that you are able to access all of the course readings immediately, meaning you can complete all of the quizzes at any time so long as you've done that week's reading. This means that, if you wanted, you could do all of the readings and all of the quizzes in the first week of classes, or wait to do all of them in the last week. Of course, my recommendation is to complete 1 week's readings and 1 quiz per week, but that will not be enforced. Hopefully, this means that, if you need to take a week off for whatever reason, this will allow you the flexibility to do so.

## **Writing Assignment 1:**

In the first writing assignment you will identify and describe the argument from an assigned paper. In no more than 1000 words, you must tell me the point the author is trying to make and what steps they are taking to argue for their point. Identify the author's implicit and explicit premises and how those premises are working together to provide support for the author's conclusion.

## **Writing Assignment 2:**

The second writing assignment will be a short (no more than 4 pages, double spaced) paper discussing the assigned article. Your paper will be assessed primarily on two criteria: i) your understanding of the author's argument, and ii) your ability to think critically about the argument's cogency.

If you would like feedback on your final paper, you must submit your paper to the dropbox by August 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm. If you do not wish to receive feedback, you can submit your paper by August 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm. This gives you an extra week to submit your final paper, if you require it.

## **Policies:**

### **Late Assignments:**

Everything has a hard deadline in the following sense: there is a date after which you will no longer receive a grade for completing the assignment. Posting a discussion question in D2L after we've concluded with that topic, for example, can no longer count towards your Discussion grade. Those dates are described in the table above. The "weekly" quizzes, however, can be completed at any time up to the end of classes.

### **Anonymous Grading:**

All grading will be done anonymously. When submitting to the D2L dropbox, do not put your name anywhere on the assignment. D2L will do the hard work of making sure your assignment receives the grade I assign to it. That being said, you may wish to take a screenshot of your submission confirmation for an added level of security.

**Letter Grades:**

The following is a conversion of percentages to letter grades:

100 ≥ A+ ≥ 95 > A ≥ 85 > A- ≥ 80

80 > B+ ≥ 77 > B ≥ 73 > B- ≥ 70

70 > C+ ≥ 67 > C ≥ 63 > C- ≥ 60

60 > D+ ≥ 57 > D ≥ 50 > F

**Schedule:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
1	June 29 – July 4	Public Health Issues	
2	July 5 – July 11	Obtaining Organs	
3	July 12 – July 18	Advance Directives	
4	July 19 – July 25	Assisted Suicide	Writing Assignment 1
5	July 26 – August 1	Abortion	
6	August 2 – August 8	Prenatal Screening	
7	August 9 – August 12	Wrap Up	Writing Assignment 2

## IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

### Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf](https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf](https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf). Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

### Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see [ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](https://ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html)

### Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at [ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines](https://ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines)

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

### Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](https://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit [phil.ucalgary.ca](https://phil.ucalgary.ca). Further academic guidance is available by contacting David Dick (Undergraduate Program Director [dgdick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dgdick@ucalgary.ca)) or Jeremy Fantl (Honours Advisor [jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)). If you have questions regarding registration, please email Rebecca Lesser (Undergraduate Program Administrator [phildept@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phildept@ucalgary.ca)).

### Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance (one-on-one appointments, drop-in support and writing workshops). For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit [ucalgary.ca/ssc](https://ucalgary.ca/ssc).

### **Online Resources and Electronic Devices**

Important information and communication about this course may be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit [ucalgary.service-now.com/it](http://ucalgary.service-now.com/it) for how-to information and technical assistance.

The instructor reserves the right to establish specific course policies regarding the use of electronic devices. If permitted, the use of devices must be exclusively for instructional purposes, and without disruption to the instructor or fellow students. Devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

### **Academic Misconduct/Honesty**

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at [ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html](http://ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html).

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

### **University Policies**

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf)

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at [ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip](http://ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip). The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright ([ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf)) and requirements of the copyright act ([laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html)).