

2015

## PHIL 329-10 Bioethics

Daniel Dwyer  
dwyerd@xavier.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/philosophy\\_syllabi\\_summer\\_2015](http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/philosophy_syllabi_summer_2015)

---

### Recommended Citation

Dwyer, Daniel, "PHIL 329-10 Bioethics" (2015). *Philosophy Syllabi Summer 2015*. Paper 3.  
[http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/philosophy\\_syllabi\\_summer\\_2015/3](http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/philosophy_syllabi_summer_2015/3)

This Restricted-Access Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Philosophy Syllabi 2015 at Exhibit. It has been accepted for inclusion in Philosophy Syllabi Summer 2015 by an authorized administrator of Exhibit. For more information, please contact [exhibit@xavier.edu](mailto:exhibit@xavier.edu).

## PHIL 329-10: Bioethics Intersession 2015

### Course Syllabus

Instructor: Daniel Dwyer, Ph.D.

Office: 220 Hinkle

Office hours: by appointment (before or after class)

Class Times: 8:30-12:15 MTWRF

Room: Cintas 204

Email: [dwyerd@xavier.edu](mailto:dwyerd@xavier.edu)

Cell Phone (before 6pm): 513-325-7031

**Course Goals:** This Bioethics course will lead you to:

- 1) grasp various moral theories and their application to bioethical issues
- 2) reflect upon cutting-edge medical practices such as: embryonic stem-cell research, cloning, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, artificial reproductive techniques (ART), genetic enhancement, psychopharmacology, etc.
- 3) consider the meaning of human dignity, especially as articulated by the Roman Catholic church, in accordance with the Catholic and Jesuit mission of Xavier University
- 4) approach bioethical reflection in a unique way, through literature, poems, and essays

By the end of the course, you should be able to make informed decisions and carry out critical deliberations, based on adequate philosophical reflection, about a wide variety of bioethical issues.

#### **Required Books:**

- J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Hackett, 2001
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Bartlett and Collins, U. of Chicago Press, 2012 (THIS EDITION ONLY)
- Allen Frances, *Saving Normal*, HarperCollins, 2014
- Michael Sandel, *The Case against Perfection*, Harvard UP, 2007
- Leon Kass (ed.), *Being Human*, Norton, 2004

#### **Course Requirements**

**1. Class Participation:** Class participation is essential in a course where students are expected to think critically for themselves and come to *their own conclusions* on arguments from philosophers and bioethicists. But students are often confused about what exactly counts as participation. There are various ways to participate:

- A. By asking or answering a question in class **spontaneously**, without prompting by the professor. This is the *traditional* style of participation, and one for which you will receive the highest participation grade.
- B. By answering a question in class, **Socratic-style**: A student will be posed a question without having volunteered. You may either answer to the best of your knowledge or simply "Pass" with no shame

whatsoever. If, however, you “pass,” it would be good for you to rejoin the class conversation at a later point. This way you will not feel alienated from class participation, i.e., passed over and then forgotten for the rest of the class period. The Socratic style of education minimizes stress and maximizes participation from all students in the class.

- C. **Write down a question or comment** *during or after class* and give it to the professor at the end of the class. Such questions will help the instructor assess the learning process in the class (e.g., if the class is going too fast, too slow, using unfamiliar vocabulary, etc.). Responses to these handwritten questions and comments will often be the first item on the next class’ agenda.
- D. Visiting **office hours**. These are especially useful to get to know each other and get individual attention about questions about the material *at your own pace*. Thus, be sure to stop by office hours as often as needed. This professor is well-known to encourage office hours as much as possible. He understands that philosophy is not everybody’s “thing” and that it often requires a one-on-one low-key meeting for you to understand the material *on your own terms*.

2. There will be announced **written exercises (quizzes)** at the beginning of many classes that check for reading comprehension. These exercises will usually take the form of a one- to two-page answer to (a) question(s) about the previous day’s reading. *Quizzes cannot be made up for any reason other than a critical physical or mental health issue or family emergency—in this case a request for documentation may be made.*

3. Use of **cell phones, texting, surfing, and the eating of food** are strictly prohibited in the classroom—infractions will affect the participation grade. Drinking beverages is perfectly fine, but restrict eating for the breaks. *Your cell phone must be turned off, not just on silence or vibrate.*

4. **Class attendance:** For every unexcused absence there will be a 7-point deduction from the final 100 point grade. Lateness to class or early departures may count as a fraction of this 7-point rule. Missing **two** full classes will constitute a **failure** for the course.

5. **Papers:** There are 2 papers in the class. The question prompts, due dates, and expectations will be distributed in advance. **Late papers** *will go down a full grade (e.g. a B will turn into a C) for every day (not class day) they are late.* First, Turn-it-in, then hand in a hard copy in class.

6. **Individual Presentations:** You will be responsible for one morning of presenting the material (or a substantive introduction to the material) read for that class. A roughly 400-word essay is expected. You should call our attention to specific passages in the text that you think are worthy of class discussion. Footnotes or endnotes are required; the main text must be cited a minimum of 5 times. Please photocopy for all members of the class before presenting.

7. **Group Presentations:** You will work with another student on either a pre-given topic or a topic of your own choice (subject to instructor’s approval). Normally the presentation will take the format of a PowerPoint presentation or a copy of your outline and notes to your fellow students. The presentation will usually take roughly 20-25 minutes, with at least 10 minutes to follow for Q & A from your fellow students. N.B. All students are expected to participate in the Q & A following each presentation. *For all presentations, you need only consult those books/articles which I will recommend and loan to you, and possibly an Internet search for current events.*

8. **Reading:** Read the assigned daily readings before coming to each class, marking up in *pencil* passages you think are important or difficult. Before the following class, *re-read* the text more slowly with a view to deeper understanding. "You haven't read a text once unless you've read it twice."

Class Participation 25% / Quizzes 15% / Individual Presentation 10% / Group Presentation 10%

Paper 1 15% / Paper 2 25%

Cheating, **plagiarism**, and any other dishonest conduct will be dealt with according to Xavier University's honor code. This states: "All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. [...] The direct and un-attributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: A 'zero' for that assignment or test, an 'F' in the course, and expulsion from the University" (*Xavier University Catalog*, 52). If you have any questions about this policy, or questions about what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to ask the professor before your papers are due.

-