**GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Fall 2021**

**BIOS 4651-A BIOETHICS**

M, W, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM Cherry Emerson 320

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**Learning outcomes**: After completing this class, you will be able to: (1) Describe basic ethical theories and principles. (2) Apply ethical thinking to issues in biology and medicine. (3) Describe and evaluate the ethical challenges and complexity of issues involved in medicine, biological research, and public policy, and environmental concerns. (4) Synthesize reading, discussion, and writing skills in order to assess bioethical issues. (5) Recognize the ways that culture shapes ethical views and critically evaluate those views. (6) Analyze a bioethical issue and engage in solving current ethical problems in the research or health professions.

**Class organization**: This is a three-credit course intended for advanced undergraduates. Introduction BIOL/BIOS are prerequisites. This course includes reading assignments, exams, group activities, class discussion, written reports, and a service-learning project. Reading, attending, and participating in class are fundamental to this course. We expect you to be courteous to your fellow students and do not disrupt class by entering and leaving the room, reading, talking, allowing cell phones to ring, etc.

**Required textbook**: Lewis Vaughn, “Bioethics: Principles, Issues and Cases” 4th Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2019

**SLS Affiliation**: This course is part of Georgia Tech’s Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS) initiative, which provides students with opportunities to combine their academic and career interests with their desire to make worthwhile contributions to the world and build sustainable communities where people and nature thrive, in Georgia, the United States, and around the globe. More information about SLS can be found at [www.serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu.](http://www.serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu/) Visit the website to sign up for the [SLS Email](https://www.contact.gatech.edu/sls/subscribe) List and view the full list of [affiliated courses and projects.](http://serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu/courses-20162017)

**Attendance & participation**: Attendance and class participation either virtual or in the classroom, are required for success in this course. *Arriving late will affect your participation score*. Communicate with the course instructor as soon as possible if you have to miss a class for any reason; written confirmation of a legitimate excuse, such as a severe illness, will be required for excused absences. If you miss any part of a class without legitimate excuse, then you will receive no credit for that day’s assignments and participation credits. There are no make-up assignments. If your absence is excused, your grade will be calculated from the remaining graded assignments.

Class participation in the form of discussing issues, asking questions, and respectful listening will make up a substantial portion of your grade. *You will not be graded, nor will you be judged, on your specific beliefs*. Bioethical discussions often involve questions of values; such discussions can become personal, subjective, and emotional. However, it is essential to understand and develop skills in making rational decisions and arguments, and to remain respectful of others when they speak. ***Bioethical discussions in this course are not meant to lead to decisions regarding particular issues. Rather, they should result in understanding and evaluating the perspectives, ideas, and arguments both for and against different viewpoints.***

You will receive participation credit if it is clear that you have thought carefully about the subject matter, applied moral reasoning to the topic at hand, and contributed to the class in a respectful manner. A quality comment possesses one or more of the following properties:

* Offers a different, but relevant, perspective
* Contributes to moving the discussion and analysis forward
* Builds on other comments
* Considers evidence-based arguments rather than relying on “I feel” statements
* Demonstrates reflective thinking

In-class participation score will be assessed according to the following scale:

* 1 point (half credit): present but made no contribution or meaningful comment in discussion
* 2 points (full credit): offered appropriate, considered comment during discussion that met one or all of the criteria noted above
* 3 points (rare; extra credit): offered exceptional, highly insightful or otherwise noteworthy comment; this is the type of comment that others will remember after class is over

**Team activities:** Students will work in small groups to use moral theories, principles, and arguments to assess and evaluate case studies on bioethical topics. Group activities will be turned in at the end of class. Groups will change during the semester.

**Co-facilitation:** Students will cofacilitate peer discussion with another student at least once during the semester. Discussion facilitators are responsible for organizing a 5-minute presentation and a 15–25-minute discussion around the assigned reading for that day. Facilitators should seek instructor approval for their class plan before they lead class.

**Writing assignments:** Students will engage in various written activities which will include weekly Reading Responses and may include in-class short papers, and out-of-class short reports. Unless otherwise specified, all out-of-class writing assignments will be submitted via Canvas:

* Reading responses will be due via Canvas by noon the day of each class. The reading response should be a brief (~300-500 word) discussion of topics in the reading that you found interesting, confusing, or otherwise noteworthy. The reading response should *not* be simply a summary of the reading, but rather evidence of your critical thinking about the ideas discussed in the reading.
* In-class short papers may ask you to consider and evaluate ethical positions related to class discussions or readings.
* Short reports will typically include comments on topics explored outside of class or as individual follow-up discussions on topics discussed in class.

**Exams:** There will be three midterm exams. Exams will be based on the assigned readings and application of ethics principles and theories to bioethical case study analyses and are meant to test if you have thoroughly understood and followed the subject matter. The exams will also ask you to synthesize materials and test your ability to make coherent bioethical arguments. Exams will typically consist of short answer questions and free response.

**Bioethical Reflective Service Project**: As part of this SLS-affiliated course, you will engage in a semester-long Reflective Journaling project in the context of the SLS mission and goals. This project is meant to be an application of theories from the book to a special case study chosen and conducted by students through service outside the class, as bioethics is best understood in an experiential learning setting. The project will include individual volunteer hours with an SLS affiliated or other service organization of your choice and interviewing a professional in a health-related field in your home community regarding course-relevant topics. Previous students have volunteered at Zoo Atlanta, Georgia Aquarium, Grady Memorial Hospital, Atlanta-area medical clinics, veterinary clinics, an animal research facility, the Humane Society, and the campus food bank. Full project details will be posted to Canvas. The project is due in entirety on the final instructional day of the class, but individual components should be turned in at the time they are completed throughout the semester.

**Late Assignments:** In-class group activities are due at the end of class and will not be accepted late. Late assignments will be accepted with a one-letter-grade penalty per day late. Assignments more than 7 days late will not be accepted. Extensions are typically not permitted but will be considered on a case-by-case basis for exceptional circumstances. Please discuss such circumstances with the instructor outside of class as soon as possible.

**Technology Usage Policy**: Laptop and cell phone use will not be permitted unless necessary for a planned class activity.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. This includes cheating, lying about course matters, plagiarism, stealing classroom materials, or helping others commit a violation of the Honor Code. Students are reminded of the obligations and expectations associated with the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct, available online at www.honor.gatech.edu. Plagiarizing is defined by Webster’s as “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; use (another's production) without crediting the source.” Plagiarism and other academic integrity violations will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. Unless specifically identified as group work, all assignments are to be completed alone. Please ask for help if any part of this policy is unclear.

**Learning Accommodations:** If needed, we will make classroom accommodations for students with disabilities. These accommodations must be arranged in advance and in accordance with the Office of Disability Services (http://www.disabilityservices.gatech.edu).

**Additional academic support:** Georgia Tech offers a variety of free learning and communications support options. Learn about free tutoring resources at www.success.gatech.edu or at the Center for Academic Success’s tutoring desk in Clough Commons 273. For assistance with revising written assignments, consult the Communications Center (Clough Commons 447 or commlab.gatech.edu).

* Communication Center: http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu o Individualized help with writing and multimedia projects

**Information Related to Covid-19:**

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Institute guidelines, information, and updates related to Covid-19. Find campus operational updates, Frequently Asked Questions, and details on campus surveillance testing and vaccine appointments on the [**Tech Moving Forward site**](https://health.gatech.edu/tech-moving-forward)**.**

Classes may not be recorded by students without the express consent of the instructor unless it is pursuant to an accommodation granted by the Office of Disability services. Class recordings, lectures, presentations, and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole purpose of educating the students currently enrolled in the course.

Students may not record or share the materials or recordings, including screen capturing or automated bots, unless the instructor gives permission. Digitally proctored exams may require students to engage the video camera, but those recordings will not be shared with or disclosed to others without consent unless legally permitted.

**Personal Support:**  In your time at Georgia Tech, you may find yourself in need of support.

Below are some resources available on campus.

* The Office of the Dean of Students: http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/services; 404-

894-6367; Smithgall Student Services Building 2nd floor o You also may request assistance at  https://gatech-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report/index.php/pid383662?

* Counseling Center: http://counseling.gatech.edu; 404-894-2575; Smithgall Student

Services Building 2nd floor. Services include short-term individual counseling, group counseling, couples counseling, testing and assessment, referral services, and crisis intervention.

Their website also includes links to state and national resources.

Students in crisis may walk in during business hours (8am-5pm, Monday through Friday) or contact the counselor on call after hours at 404-894-2204. • Students’ Temporary Assistance and Resources (STAR):

http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/need-help o Can assist with interview clothing, food, and housing needs.

* Stamps Health Services: https://health.gatech.edu; 404-894-1420 o Primary care, pharmacy, women’s health, psychiatry, immunization and allergy, health promotion, and nutrition
* OMED: Educational Services: http://www.omed.gatech.edu
* Women’s Resource Center: http://www.womenscenter.gatech.edu; 404-385-0230
* LGBTQIA Resource Center: http://lgbtqia.gatech.edu/; 404-385-2679
* Veteran’s Resource Center: http://veterans.gatech.edu/; 404-385-2067
* Georgia Tech Police: 404-894-2500

**Final Grade Calculation:**

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| Assessment | Value |
| Co-facilitation | 15% |
| Writing assignments (reading responses, short reports, and in-class short papers) | 15% |
| Midterm exams (equally weighted) | 45% |
| Reflective SLS project (including all project components) | 20% |
| Participation | 5% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

The most stringent scale used will be 90-100% an A, 80-89% a B, 70-79% a C, 60-69% a D, 59 or less and F.

**Tentative Schedule** This schedule on the next few pages is subject to change. We will have more specific segments of the readings, announced two-tree weeks ahead. In addition to the assigned readings given below, some weeks will also include additional short readings on current case studies and other relevant topics.

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| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Assigned Readings** |
| 1 | Aug 23 | Brief class meeting: Introduction and syllabus overview | N/A |
|  | Aug 25 | Moral reasoning in bioethics  Introduction to principles in bioethics | Ch. 1  *Reading response 1* |
| 2 | Aug 30 | Bioethics and Moral Theories Part I | Ch. 2 |
|  | Sep 1 | Bioethics and Moral Theories cases | Ch. 2  *Reading response 2* |
| 3 | Sep 6 | **Labor Day no classes** |  |
|  | Sep 8 | Paternalism and Patient Autonomy | Ch. 3  *Reading Response 3* |
| 4 | Sep 13 | Paternalism and Patient Autonomy  Case studies | Ch. 3 |
|  | Sep 15 | Truth telling and Patient Confidentiality | Ch. 4  *Reading Response 4* |
| 5 | Sep 20 | Truth telling and Patient Confidentiality I  Case studies | Ch. 4 |
|  | Sep 22 | **Exam 1 (Ch. 1-4)** |  |
| 6 | Sep 27 | Informed Consent | Ch. 5  *Reading response 5* |
|  | Sep 29 | Informed Consent case studies | Ch. 5 |
| 7 | Oct 4 | Human Research Part I | Ch. 6  *Reading Response 6* |
|  | Oct 5 | Human Research Part II | Ch. 6 |
| 8 | Oct 11 | **Fall break no class** |  |
|  | Oct 13 | Abortion | Ch. 7  *Reading response 7* |
| 9 | Oct 18 | Reproductive Technology  In vitro fertilization | Ch 8 |
|  | Oct 20 | Surrogacy and Cloning | Ch. 8  *Reading response 8* |

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| 10 Oct 25 | **Exam 2 (Ch. 5-8)** | |
| Oct 27 | Genetic choices part I Ch. 9 | |
| 11 Nov 1 | Gene editing *Reading Response 8* | |
| Nov 3 | Euthanasia and physician assisted suicide Ch.10 | |
| 12 Nov 8 | Euthanasia and physician assisted suicide | *Reading response 9* |
| Nov 10 | Dividing up Health care resources (part I) | Ch. 11 |
| 13 Nov 15 | Dividing up Health care resources (part II) | *Reading response 10* |
| Nov 17 | **Exam 3 (Ch.9-11)** | N/A |
| 14 Nov 22 | Guest lecture |  |
| 15 Nov 29 | Student presentations on Service learning I |  |
| Dec 1 | Student presentations on Service learning II |  |
| 16 Dec 6 | Last Day of Classes (student choice of topics) |  |

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