

Course Syllabus

Philosophy 265 – Biomedical Ethics

Summer 2011

Online Course – No prerequisites and no meeting times.

Dates of Instruction: 27 Jun 2011 - 11 Aug 2011

Instructor: Jason Benchimol

Contact: Please use the Vista email tool for all electronic correspondence.

Course Description:

This course uses the tools of moral philosophy to investigate the ethical, social, and political dimensions of biomedicine. Topics may include euthanasia and physician assisted suicide, new reproductive technologies, medical conscientious objection, justice in health care, definitions of health, disability, and disease, human reproductive cloning, the right to refuse treatment, and disability issues in medicine. We will begin with a primer on arguments and philosophical reasoning and a brief exploration of influential moral theories. Then, we will dedicate most of our time and attention to analysis of arguments pertaining to particular issues in bioethics. The focus is on understanding and evaluating arguments, on challenging ourselves to think more carefully about bioethics, learning to express our views more clearly, and not simply asserting our opinions without argument or simply accepting others' opinions without argument.

This course has no prerequisites. It is suitable for both veterans and newcomers to philosophy. That is, background in philosophy or medicine, while helpful, is neither assumed nor required. But please be advised: the course material is challenging by nature, and will present special challenges that are unique to the philosophical discipline. Bellevue College estimates that, during a normal 10-week quarter, students should plan to spend approximately 15 hours a week doing class-related work for 5-credit online course. You are hereby advised that success in this course will likely require – and is surely not guaranteed by – spending at least this much time working on this course. Success in this course requires a willingness to patiently read, re-read, and digest quite a lot of rather dense material, a personal schedule that allows one to devote significant time to thinking independently about this material, and a readiness to spend a good amount of time sharpening one's argumentative skills.

Texts:

There is no required textbook for the course. All readings are electronic and provided on the Vista site. Readings can be accessed via the Blackboard/Vista site under the corresponding module heading in which they are assigned.

ASSESSMENT:

Final grades will be calculated based on grade credits earned in the following categories of assessment:

- Exams (Midterm and Final) – 30% of final grade (Midterm exam must be completed by 20 Jul, 23.59 PDT; Final exam must be completed by 11 Aug, 23.59 PDT)
- Discussion – 20% of final grade
- Assignments (5) – 30% of final grade
- Reading Questions – 20% of final grade

More comments:

All information pertinent to the course, and to course assessment can be found on the “Getting Started” section of the Vista site. You are advised to read the document titled “Categories of Assessment” *very thoroughly*. You are responsible for all the information contained therein. You should also navigate to the Schedule of Due Dates. It is your responsibility to know when all work is due.

- Hardship withdraws and incompletes will be granted only in the most serious of circumstances and only if the student has contacted the instructor with such a request in a timely manner.
- Don’t cheat. If you do not understand what constitutes plagiarism or academic misconduct, you should seek BC policy guides on these matters as soon as possible. I have a moral obligation to report all instances of cheating that I discover. You are encouraged to read widely and to discuss ideas and problems with others, but you must credit your sources.

OTHER CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is **your responsibility to ensure that you have regular access** to the Vista site, and that you are able to complete all grade evaluable work in the time frames allotted. Although you are not required to be logged on to the Vista site for any specific period of time, or at any specific time, you should make an attempt to log in at least once every 48 hours. Otherwise, you may miss important announcements or other information.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The Bellevue College Library Media Center has extensive resources available online for all Distance Education students. Become acquainted with the LMC homepage: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/>. By clicking on the Research Help link you will find copies of handouts as well as tutorial help, including the LMC Guide for BAS Students. The BCC Catalog will tell you which books and films the library owns. Full-text journal articles can be found by searching the EBSCOhost and Proquest databases, located under Periodicals / Databases.

Online access to the library is available 24 x 7, but personal help is available via telephone only when the library is open. Those hours are posted under Library Information on the homepage. The Reference Desk phone number is (425) 564-6161. At other times, you may e-mail bccref@bellevuecollege.edu. You will receive an answer as soon as the library opens again.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Bellevue Community College provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students who need course accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, should notify the instructor as soon as possible. The responsibility for determining a student's eligibility for accommodations rests with Disability Resource Center. For more information, visit the Disability Resource Center in room B132, call (425) 564-2498 (TTY line (425) 564- 4110), or go to bellevuecollege.edu/drc.

AFFIRMATION OF INCLUSION

Bellevue Community College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at BCC, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

For further information regarding the Bachelor of Applied science program and policies, see the BAS student handbook. For further information regarding BCC policies, programs and services, review the BCC student handbook at bellevuecollege.edu/stupro/handbook_cd2008/programs/default.html.

CHEATING POLICY

Upon demonstrable evidence of cheating and/or plagiarism, students will be subject to the following penalties:

1st offense: a score of '0' for the assignment itself.

2nd offense: a score of '0' for the entire category of assessment in which the offense was detected.

3rd offense: class failure.

