PHIL 305: Biomedical Ethics
Spring 2005
Syllabus

MWF 1:15 – 2:30
OU 112

Instructor: Dr. Ashley McDowell
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Office hours: Mondays and Fridays 10-11 in Humphrey House 202;
Tuesdays and Wednesdays 11-12 at Ravenwood Coffee Shop;
and by appointment, except on Thursdays (unless there is an emergency)
BME coffee hour: 4:00 – 5:15 Wednesdays, weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 (odd weeks) at Ravenwood

Texts and readings
Tom Beauchamp & LeRoy Walters, Contemporary Issues in Bioethics, 6th ed. (“B&W”)
Anthony Weston, A 21st Century Ethical Toolbox (“Weston”)  
Readings on reserve as announced

What this course is about

This is a course in applied ethics, which is the study of how ethical thinking can be used in real-life situations and issues. In this case, we will be exploring the ethics of biomedical issues. Those issues could include euthanasia, abortion, informed consent, allocating medical resources, and treating impaired infants. What is the morally right thing to do in various biomedical contexts? What are good reasons for answers to that question and others like it? What kinds of things should we take into consideration when making difficult moral decisions about these topics? What role should rights play? What about overall happiness? Are there certain rules of moral conduct that should never be broken?

The Weston book focuses on ethical tools: identifying, weighing, and integrating values; critical thinking; and creativity. We will first learn about, discuss, and work on applying those tools in general, and then we will turn to specific applications in biomedical ethics. The selections in the Beauchamp & Walters text are mostly academic philosophical articles, along with some legal decisions and policy papers. For our in-class discussions and readings, we will focus on three main topics: end-of-life decision-making (including the right to die and assisted suicide), justice and access (especially on the right to health care and issues of AIDS and public policy), and reproductive technology (in particular, issues of cloning and stem cell research). In addition, you and a classmate will explore an additional biomedical ethical issue (chosen from among the other issues in the Beauchamp & Walters book) in the form of a presentation.

Throughout this course, you will be learning how to think for yourself – open-mindedly but critically – about the application of ethical values and thinking. To do this, you will learn about specific strategies, theories, concepts, and methods that are the special emphasis of philosophy and ethics. You may not have come to final conclusions about ethics or particular issues by the end of this course, or by the end of your life, for that matter. But you will almost certainly have made progress in thinking well about ethics and its applications.

Those applications will include both decisions about right and wrong actions and decisions about policy or law. We might think it’s wrong to smoke cigarettes if you’re pregnant, but not think there should be a law against it – rather, we might think about constructive ways to encourage right behavior short of enforcement. The important thing for purposes of this course is that you become adept at looking at as many relevant aspects of moral issues as clear-headedly and constructively as possible; and that you learn to present your views and the reasons for them in the form of logically-constructed arguments.

What you can learn about and gain from this course

Unless you have plans to become a professional philosopher, which I expect few of you do, the most important things you will gain from this course will not be detailed retention of specific philosophical positions. Rather, you should hope and strive to gain abilities in three main areas:

Theoretical learning:
- appreciation of applied ethics issues and their importance, and the ability to recognize ethical problems and considerations in many contexts.
- the ability to recall, articulate and apply various approaches to moral problems, particularly in biomedical contexts, and to appraise for yourself the routes for dealing with important moral issues

Practical learning:
- the ability to reproduce and compare various approaches to solving common human problems that have ethical dimensions (particularly those in biomedical contexts).
- applying ethical thinking to the “real world” – to everyday living, to specific problems and puzzles, to social issues, to challenges in your career, and so forth.
- constructing a personal methodology based on discoveries made during this class.

Philosophical methodology: These skills fall into three main sub-areas:
Critical thinking and problem solving
- extracting the main points from difficult material, following and reconstructing arguments, and thinking questions through.
- learning to analyze and solve problems, considering them from many points of view and assessing the pros and cons of different proposals.

Communication
- learning to express yourself clearly and persuasively.
- skills in making decisions and then justifying your position in a clear, logical, and compelling way.

Creativity, research, and investigation
- proficiency at conducting investigations - learning to ask the right questions, and to develop and assess methods and standards for answering those questions.
- solving problems using careful but innovative techniques and basing your conclusions on reliable evidence.

What I expect you to achieve
As the course goes on, I will expect different things out of you in terms of mastery and achievement. At first, assignments will be designed to help you gain skills in understanding basic ethical concepts and their significance. You will learn about various ethical theories, principles, and tools, and learn how to apply all those things for yourself on cases and issues. I will expect you to be able to identify morally relevant factual, linguistic, and inferential aspects of problems and situations. I will guide you to being able to deploy specific tools for exploring issues, getting unstuck, making a case, and deciding for yourself on moral issues.

As we move into studying the specific biomedical issues, I will expect you not just to understand the tools, but see how ethical thinking plays out in rigorous argumentation on particular issues of importance. I will assess your achievements in grasping the issues the philosophers are trying to resolve, and comprehending the differences between approaches and the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches. By the end of the course, I will expect you to be pulling everything together - in particular, using the tools to become enabled to participate in ethical debates and decision-making processes. You will be able to evaluate others’ positions and arguments, assess their strengths, and select a reasoned response, whether that involves formulating an original position, reaching compromise, or reaching a deeper understanding. You will be able to distinguish different legitimate legitimate stances on the topics we'll cover, compare and contrast the arguments and principles underlying them, and be prepared to defend your choice of the most reasonable positions and views.

By the end of this course, I will expect you to locate yourself in the world of biomedical ethical concerns, becoming a participant, assessor and defender rather than a passive regurgitator. In other words, the assignments and my assessment criteria in this course will incrementally guide you to become not a student of ethics but a practitioner.

Structure of class
Classes will consist of a mixture of lecture, discussion, and in-class work, either individual or in groups. You will learn what others have said on these issues as well as developing your own views.

It will be expected that you will have done the reading, thoroughly, before class (see the section on “recommendations for gaining the most you can from this course” below for more on what this means). I will also expect you to have looked over any study guides I might have given you, when that occurs. Class time will not be spent merely repeating in lecture format what the readings have already said. Of course it’s to be expected that there will be aspects of the readings that you will need guidance with after the fact; for that reason, it’s best to read the material carefully so that you know what to ask for more explanation about. Lectures, discussion, groupwork, and in-class work will be done under the assumption that everyone has made a sincere effort to understand the reading, so doing so will make these activities much more fruitful for you and your classmates.

You must bring with you to class whatever text we are working on for that day, as well as a copy of any assignment you are to have completed for that day.

Interaction outside of class
Office hours: My office hours are posted above. They will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis, and by appointment, with appointments taking precedence. You should feel absolutely free to come to them and discuss the course, the material, the assignments, or philosophy.

I request that each of you take a few minutes to visit me during my office hours sometime in the first week or two of classes. It will be an opportunity for us to chat one-on-one for the first time, and to get to know each other a bit more. I’ll have a sign-up sheet available in class for you to choose a time slot for this.

Coffee hour: Odd week Wednesdays after class, I’ll walk down to Ravenwood Coffee Shop after my class that ends at 3:55 to hang out and talk philosophy with whichever members of the class feel like joining me. This is an informal way to do more philosophy, in a more relaxed setting, than we can do in class. These get-togethers are strictly voluntary, and guaranteed to have no impact on your grade either way.

Email: This can be a great way to get a question answered or run something by me. Feel free to email me with questions; be aware I am less likely to answer email on the weekend than during the week.

Assignments
(for policies on all assignments and on specific assignments, see “Policies” section below)

Participation, conduct, and low-intensity assignments: 15%
Exam on the ethical toolbox: 15%
Two papers: 15% each
Pair presentation: 10%
Toolbox application to cloning: 10%
Final exam: 20%

Participation, conduct, and low-intensity assignments: 15%

Participation is expected. In a philosophy class of this kind, discussion is absolutely essential, and may be the way you learn most about the material. I know that participation is difficult for some people, but you can consider this a safe place to practice contributing to a group discussion, which you will surely need to do throughout your life. The rules for classroom civility and discourse (see below) will help make this an inviting place to contribute your voice.

I will keep general track of your contributions in class. Keep in mind that contributions can take various forms, including asking for clarification, participation in group work, and giving helpful examples. Keep in mind also that more does not necessarily mean better: those who excessively dominate discussions, speak disrespectfully, or otherwise use their voices in a negative way may be penalized for doing so. If you are in doubt, or if you are interested in advice about how to participate more effectively or more easily, ask me.

Your conduct in this class includes improvement and effort. It also includes issues of respectful behavior, such as tardiness, distracting behavior, or disrespectful behavior towards members of the class. See the “policies” section below for more information.

The majority of this portion of your grade will be determined by your completion of various low-intensity assignments. You should expect one or two of these a week. These assignments will take various forms, with different purposes and grading criteria.

Graded homework assignments may include 1- to 2-page “response papers” on a specific topic relating to recent readings. The purpose of these is to integrate your academic learning of the material into your personal life and thinking, and to have the experience of constructing statements of your own reactions to the topics studied. They are meant to help you see the material as relevant to your life, and to see yourself as able to take a place in the ongoing debate about philosophical issues. I will grade these on the basis of how well I see you trying to do those things, not on the basis of your ability to regurgitate facts from the readings, or parrot back to me thoughts I or the philosophers studied have expressed.

Ungraded but required homework assignments may include things like an answer to a study question for a reading, a short “free writing” assignment responding to a reading, a brainstorming session for an upcoming paper or exam, some of your notes on the reading, one or more question on the reading, or outside material illustrating an important point in the readings or an application of them. These assignments serve a couple of purposes. Most importantly, they are designed to help you get more out of the material and progress more easily toward the course goals. For instance, “free writing” for a few minutes on a text you’ve just read can be a great way to absorb what you’ve read and become aware of your reaction to it (and what you did and didn’t get in it). This, in turn, can give the class great material to begin discussion of the reading during the next class. That leads to the second purpose ungraded assignments serve, which is to help me. They help me guide you, give the class something in common to use in our meetings, and help me see what you are understanding, thinking, focusing on, and wondering about. The assignments I will designate as ungraded are those I think it would be unfair and unhelpful to assign a grade to.

Graded and ungraded in-class assignments may include things like the above homework assignments, as well as one-minute papers, reading response mini-essays, summaries, concept maps, oral presentations such as summaries of the last class’s main points or presentations of homework, or speaking-intensive activities like role-plays or debates. These serve the same purposes as homework assignments, for you as individuals and as a class and for me. Again, I will decide which to grade based on fairness and helpfulness. Graded assignments will be graded based on criteria drawn from the expectations outlined above, in “What you can learn about and gain from this course” and “What I expect you to achieve.”

I will assign homework in class, and will send out the assignment over email as well. In rare cases I may assign a minimal homework project after the class before the project is due, in which case I will email you. For instance, I may email you asking you to send me a copy of one of your answers to the study questions for the next day’s readings. Please check your email 24 hours before each class meeting just in case. For all homework assignments, you must email a copy to me before class as well as bringing a hard copy with you to class.

Although ungraded assignments are ungraded, missing them has an adverse effect on your grade. For every two ungraded assignments missed, your “Participation, conduct, and miscellaneous assignments” grade will be reduced by half a grade (e.g., 85 to 80).

I will always let you know whether an assignment is a graded or ungraded one. If you are unclear on this, do not hesitate to ask!

Homework assignments must be emailed to me before the beginning of class on the day they are due; in addition, a hard copy must be brought to class (if a hard copy must also be turned in, I will let you know). See “Policies” section below for the penalties for late assignments. I strongly encourage you to do homework assignments on time, since their main purpose is strongly tied to engaging with material in a precise way at a precise time.

In-class assignments missed because of a legitimate excuse (for instance, an official sports event) can be made up; it is your responsibility to see me and find out what you may have missed and arrange a make-up assignment.

Toolbox exam: 15%

In class, Wednesday of 4th week (4/20)

This exam will cover the material in Weston Chs. 1-15 and associated readings. The purpose is to demonstrate your understanding of the components and underlying framework of the ethical toolbox, your grasp of the significance of these things, and your ability to apply the toolbox tools for yourself. Without a proficiency in these areas, you wouldn’t be able to go on to gain the skills and abilities this course ultimately aims to give you, since you would lack the necessary framework, recognition of motivations, and basic ethical tools.

The exam will be a combination of “objective” questions (true/false, multiple choice, identification, mapping, short answer, and so on). I will give you a study guide ahead of time, and conduct a study session outside of class. I will be grading this exam primarily...
on the basis of whether you have accurately, clearly, and thoroughly performed tasks such as recognition, classification, illustration, and application of terms, concepts, and tools studied.

Long papers: 15% each

You will be writing two relatively long (about 6-page) papers for this course. They will be on topics relating to the first two main biomedical topics (end-of-life decision-making and justice and access). These papers will be on assigned topics, although I will be open to papers on alternative topics if approved by me in advance.

The point of these papers is to construct and present a philosophical argument for an ethical thesis regarding a particular biomedical issue. One goal is to apply for yourself the principles of reasoning, insight, philosophical writing, and argumentation modeled and taught in this class. The other goal is to craft a carefully considered position on an issue, grappling with fundamental problems in your own way.

I will be able to look at rough drafts, either turned in or during office hours; I will let you know details as the time gets nearer. I also encourage you to run rough drafts by each other or your peers at the Writing Center, even if I do not require you to do so. Whether I look at them or not, rough drafts and outlines of each of your papers will be due along with the final drafts.

I will grade this paper based on several main areas of assessment. The most important thing is that it perform the goals it's meant to perform adequately, but there are various aspects of a paper that make that happen. These include organization, accuracy, thoroughness, clarity, accessibility, depth of interpretation, success of illustration by example, and strength of reasons presented.

Presentation: 10%

In weeks 6, 8, and 10, time will be set aside for presentations by pairs of students on sets of topics from the Beauchamp & Walters text other than those we'll be studying as a class. You will choose your topic from a sign-up sheet that I will bring to each class. In the presentation, your pair will present the major issue and concern of your chosen topic and use tools from the ethical toolbox to explore the issue and discuss how we might either "get unstuck" or decide for ourselves (your pair will choose). These sessions will last about 15 minutes each (depending on the number of groups). Each group will read, in advance, one extra chapter or chapter section that will not be read by the rest of the class.

These presentations will function to help you explore a biomedical issue more independently, and work with it on your own. Presenting your thoughts to the class will let you have the experience of constructing a thought process that is coherent and engaging, and they have the experience of learning more about a topic they otherwise would not be studying. Your ideas on "getting unstuck" or deciding about the issue should be designed to be truly helpful to both yourselves and your classmates. Participating in and watching panel discussions like these can be truly broadening – oh, yeah, and fun, too.

Team members will evaluate their own and each other's performance on the following dimensions: organization, acceptance of responsibility, initiative/motivation, creativity, task completion, attendance, collaboration, participation, attitude, independence, communication, and responsiveness. I will evaluate the discussions based on the following dimensions: appropriate incorporation of reading material or outside information (if warranted), presentation of values, principles, or case studies (if warranted), breadth (didn't try to do too much or too little), accuracy of representation of others' views, clarity, quality of presentation of arguments, helpfulness of examples or illustrations (if any), overall mastery of the subject, depth of discussion, cooperation among team members, engagement of presentation, success in getting the "audience" on board, organization, effectiveness, thoroughness, (appropriate) creativity or imagination, choice of most important aspects to focus on, incorporation of appropriate toolbox tools, handling of discussion, division of labor.

Be aware that I may choose to videotape these panel discussions, for grading purposes only.

Toolbox application to cloning: 10%

Due in 10th week will be an exercise in which you apply toolbox tools to our last issue, that of cloning. This will be a final chance for you to really engage with a biomedical ethical issue using the methods ethics provides, and engaging your own opinions and argumentation. This will not be a paper, but a step-by-step process with some essays in it. I will grade this exercise on how well you have comprehended the material on cloning and how well you have completed the toolbox tasks I will ask you to do.

Final exam: 20%

Monday June 6, 1:00 – 4:00

This will be a comprehensive examination, pulling together everything we will have done throughout the quarter. It will be an essay exam, with the tasks going deeper and involving more mastery than any of the assignments before. The questions will not merely ask you to present views or define terms. Rather, they will ask you to really show off the skills and abilities you’ve gained, as described above in “What you can learn about and gain from this course” and “What I expect you to achieve.” I may ask you to compare various approaches to solving biomedical ethical problems; predict how one view would respond to another; or integrate topics, theories, or problems. And I may have you do deeply engaged and personal type of things such as applying ethical thinking to your own life, describing your own personal ethical methodology, or appraising and criticizing views definitively. These tasks are not necessarily more difficult than earlier tasks, but they engage your deeper understanding and absorption of the material. They are tasks that could only be performed by someone from the confident and competent position of having worked their way up to earning the privilege of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating.

I will give you study materials before the exam, and hold a separate exam review session.

Policies
Attendance policy: Attendance is expected: three or more unexcused absences will result in a full grade reduction for the course. Absences will only be excused for required sports activities or practices or for a dire personal circumstance. Two late arrivals to class will be considered equivalent to one absence.

Assignment responsibilities:
- It is your responsibility to retain copies of all assignments you turn in, in a reliable format.
- You must turn in every assignment to me by email before class. The “subject” line must include your name and a unique name for the assignment (e.g., “May16 homework”) – I’ll probably tell you the name for each assignment as I give it. You can either attach the file or cut-and-paste it into the body of your email. If you use anything other than Microsoft Word, please submit by cut-and-paste rather than attachment. If you want to say anything else to me or ask me anything, send me a separate email with a different subject line!
- You must turn in every graded assignment to me in class, with your name on the back, written legibly. This is so no biases of mine interfere with my grading of your work.
- You must bring a hard copy of every ungraded assignment with you to class the day it is due. We may go over it in class, or I may have people read theirs, or other things might happen that you'll want to have it for.
- Although ungraded assignments are ungraded, missing them has an adverse effect on your grade. For every two ungraded assignments missed, your “Participation, conduct, and miscellaneous assignments” grade will be reduced by half a grade (e.g., 85 to 80).
- In-class assignments missed because of a legitimate excuse (for instance, an official sports event) can be made up; it is your responsibility to see me and find out what you may have missed and arrange a make-up assignment.
- When you turn in your two papers, you must turn in a copy of a rough draft and an outline of the paper (with your name written on the back of each). I cannot recommend outlining and revising philosophy papers enough, and so I want to make absolutely sure you're doing both. An outline also sometimes helps me understand the intentions of your paper better.
- Your papers will be subject to the following policy regarding Edited Standard Written English (ESWE). Your final draft must have no more than an average of two departures from ESWE per page, in any combination of various areas to be delineated beforehand (e.g., nontrivial grammatical errors, punctuation errors, misuse of apostrophes or quotation marks, misspellings or typos). I will provide you with a list of resources for working on ESWE as I will for working on the content of your paper. I also encourage you to visit the Writing Center to review your paper. Any paper that fails this ESWE gateway criteria policy will be assessed a grade of F. If this happens to you, you will have an opportunity to revise the paper for resubmission with a penalty of half a grade (e.g., 90 to 85).

Late assignment policy: A copy of each of your assignments is due by email before class on the day that it is due. For papers and graded assignments, a hard copy must also be turned in during class (you must bring hard copies of ungraded assignments with you to class also; I may ask for them as well).

An assignment that is between one hour and 24 hours late will receive a ½ grade reduction. An assignment that is between one day and two weeks late will receive a full grade reduction. Assignments will not be accepted more than two weeks late.

You will be permitted one “freebie”: an assignment turned in as much as two days late, no questions asked, as long as you let me know you're taking your freebie. Be mindful not to use it lightly. When you turn in your “freebie,” have me mark it as such. If you are turning it in at my office, write “freebie” conspicuously on it.

Changing grades: if you feel you have been assigned a grade unfairly or inaccurately, you should by all means talk to me about it. My only requirement is that you prepare an argument (a set of reasons and facts) before you do so.

Rules of civility and discourse
In this course, you will be expected to behave like what I'm sure you are – a civil person interested in entering into an atmosphere that is maintained to be courteous and respectful. Just so that my expectations are clear, let me express some specific guidelines. In order to create a smooth and harmonious learning community,
- take care not to disrupt class; please
  - wait until class is over to pack up
  - turn off cell phones
  - do not look at any material other than class material
  - stay awake during class
  - arrive on time
    § if you must arrive late, please
      · take a seat quietly near the door
      · see me after class to record your lateness, so I do not record you absent
    § Note: two late arrivals to class will be considered the equivalent of one absence.
- to allow everyone to stay focused on the class lecture or discussion,
  - only one person at a time in the class should be speaking. Side conversations are distracting for surrounding students and for me.
- to ensure the best possible environment for discussion, please
  - no “hogging the floor”
- no blaming or shaming
- no personal attacks
- always respect the confidentiality of the classroom
- keep your contributions aimed at our common goals: discovery, progress, and learning, not winning, making the “other side” look bad, or getting attention.

§ If you violate one of these discussion rules, I will likely point it out to you in class or afterwards.
§ If you think someone else is violating one of these discussion rules, I encourage you to raise the issue (without blaming, shaming, or personal attack)

Academic Integrity

“It is always important to think of the intellectual world as a community of mutual dependence, mutual helpfulness, mutual protectiveness, and common delight. We take ideas from others and we give them to others. We are indebted to others, and others are indebted to us. In sharing and acknowledging the community, we define ourselves more certainly as individuals. The ability to describe our sources is also an ability to define our own originality and our own selves. All communities depend on generosity, trust, definition, and the proper use of sources is part of the mortar that holds the community of the mind together.”

- Richard Marius, Expository Writing Program, Harvard University

In this class, as in all classes at Kalamazoo College, we will be operating under the Honor System. It is important that you familiarize yourself with that system. You should also familiarize yourself with proper procedures for collaborating, doing research, and citing sources. I expect each of you to visit my webpage and read the essay there called “Plagiarism and How to Avoid It” (http://kzoo.edu/~mcdowell/Academic_integrity_and_plagiarism.htm). Should you have any questions about citations, plagiarism, or honor system issues, please visit or contact me.

Any assignment you turn in that I find to violate academic integrity, either through dishonesty, plagiarism, lack of appropriate citations, or unauthorized collaboration, will receive a grade of 0. Any further instance of a violation of academic integrity will be punished by a failing grade in the class as a minimum sanction.

Recommendations for gaining the most you can from this course

A note on reading: don’t succumb to the misconception that in order to read something you only have to move your eyes over the lines, or “read it out loud in your head,” so to speak. What I expect is that you will read the material in a more sophisticated way, thinking as you go. You should be asking yourself the main points, making sure you understand the structure of the reading, thinking about how this reading relates to others you’ve done, and otherwise working to comprehend the material, not just to complete a technical “reading” of it. You might try highlighting, underlining, making marginal notes, or outlining – whatever helps you focus and understand. For many people, reading both before and after the lecture makes it much easier to understand the material. If you don’t want to read the whole selection again, at least skim it after you’ve heard about it; it will help it sink in. It probably saves time over trying to understand it weeks later before the exam if you didn’t do enough to really comprehend it at the time it was being taught.

Reading tips: When I construct study questions for readings, here are some of the questions I’m always tempted to include. Ask them of yourself when you do readings (especially academic papers).

1. What was the main thing the author wanted me to walk away with in this reading?
2. How does this reading fit in with the ones just before it?
3. How does this reading fit in with the class as a whole?
4. Can I understand this author’s points using examples from my own experience?
5. What’s motivating this author to think or reason as she does?
6. What did I find especially cool, admirable, or smart in this reading?
7. What did I find confusing or hard to get in this reading?
8. What struck me as right, wise, or reasonable in this reading?
9. What struck me as wrong, misguided, or unreasonable in this reading?

More class tips:

- talk to other people about what you’re studying.
Organize a study group; go to coffee hours; corral your roommate and make him or her hang out and talk some philosophy with you. Doing philosophy out loud helps you learn it much better.
- make good notes.
Not just in class, which is essential, but it can also help to take notes on what you read. If you’re having to sum up what you’ve read in a few phrases, you’re having to pay attention and make yourself get the gist of the reading. Try to take good notes in class – what seems clear at the time can be baffling or fade away after a little time.
- explain philosophical ideas to someone else.
You know that you really understand something if you can explain it to someone else. If you can’t find someone to try to explain an argument or theory to, pretend. Use a dog, mirror or wall and act like it just offered you a million dollars to explain this philosophical concept in your own words (hey, it could happen!).
- on assignments, learn to explain your answers.
The shortest answer is almost never the best one on an essay philosophy test or paper. You will usually be expected to say something about what makes that the right answer, even if it’s a matter of fact. For example, if you’re asked to reconstruct an argument that you’ve studied, remember to define philosophical terms and make sure each point is getting across loud and clear. This may mean saying the same thing in more than one way – that’s okay as long as you’re not just saying it over and over to fill space. Think of yourself as telling the reader why the answer you’ve given is the right answer; what it is about it that makes it right.

- do your best to see what’s good about each view.
Even if your gut is telling you a philosophical theory is dead wrong, you’ll understand it better if you try to figure out why someone might think it’s right. Then you can do a better job of deciding what’s wrong about it. You could pretend that you really want this theory or argument to be right – that it’s your mom’s great idea or if it were right world peace would happen. Whatever – before you knock an idea make sure you’ve tried it out thoroughly.

- try to make it real to yourself.
Think about how a philosophical issue might apply to your interests or your life. Imagine situations where the answer to a philosophical question matters. Make up your own examples to test theories. Use your creative and imaginative abilities to try to engage the topic, and you’ll find it more fun than if you think of it as memorization. And what’s more fun is easier to learn.

A note on criticism and respect
In this class, we will be discussing issues that most people find important, and on which many people have strong opinions. We will not be merely exchanging opinions, but will be seeking the truth. In that spirit, everyone’s contributions will be both respected and open to thoughtful criticism. We will be approaching other views – and our own – with an open-minded but critical eye. The focus will be on providing and assessing arguments for positions, to try to come to the most thoughtful position possible on these questions. Be careful not to take it personally if a view that you put forward is criticized; this is helpful if what we’re after is really solving the problems.

Resources
First, I recommend you visit the library’s philosophy research guide, at http://www.kzoo.edu/is/library/depts/phil/index.html

Some especially recommended links:
A philosophical glossary for beginners: http://www.princeton.edu/%7Ejimpryor/general/vocab/glossary.html
Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy: http://www.rep.routledge.com/ (can reach through library website, “databases and indexes”)
Philosophical dictionary: http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: http://plato.stanford.edu/
Guide to Philosophy on the Internet: http://www.earlham.edu/%7EEpeters/phlinks.htm
Taking Notes on Philosophical Texts: http://www.earlham.edu/~Epeters/courses/notes.htm
Guide to Grammar and Style, with links: http://newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/
National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature: http://www.georgetown.edu/research/nrcbl/
Bioethics.net: http://bioethics.net/

Special needs
If you have any special needs that I can accommodate, please let me know as soon as possible.

Schedule of Readings

This schedule is tentative. Any changes will be announced in class and by email, and most likely on the website as well. The reading assignments listed for each day must be completed before that class. Readings are found in your textbooks as indicated.

WEEK ONE
M 3/28 Introduction to Class, Ethics, Philosophy, and Biomedical Ethics

PART ONE:
THE ETHICAL TOOLBOX
W 3/30 Weston Intro, pgs. 1-5; Chs. 1 & 2
F 4/1 Weston Chs. 3 & 4

WEEK TWO
M 4/4 Weston Ch. 5, B&W Ch. 1 pgs 1 – 28
W 4/6 Weston Chs. 6 & 7
F 4/8 Weston Chs. 8 - 10

WEEK THREE
M 4/11 Weston Chs. 11 & 12
W 4/13 Weston Ch. 13, B&W pgs. 28 – 33
F 4/15 Weston Chs. 14 & 15
WEEK FOUR
M 4/18 Weston Review
W 4/20 Exam on the ethical toolbox

PART TWO:
END-OF-LIFE DECISION-MAKING
F 4/22 The legal background in the U.S.: B&W pgs. 179 – 185, 201 – 215;
The right to die:
Kamm, “A Right to Choose Death?” (B&W 186)
Kass, “Is There a Right to Die?” (B&W 191)

WEEK FIVE
M 4/25 The moral foundations of public policy on physician-assisted death:
Brock, “Voluntary Active Euthanasia” (B&W 216)
Arras, “Physician-Assisted Suicide: A Tragic View” (B&W 225)
F 4/27 Public policy in the Netherlands on physician-assisted death:
Jochemsen and Keown, “Voluntary Euthanasia under Control? Further Empirical Evidence from the Netherlands” (B&W 235)
Van Delden, “Slippery Slopes in Flat Countries – A Response” (B&W 241)

WEEK SIX
M 5/2 Presentations on topics in B&W Chs. 3 and 5

PART THREE:
JUSTICE AND HEALTH CARE
W 5/4 Just health care and the right to health care:
Daniels, “Is There a Right to Health Care and, If So, What Does It Encompass?” (B&W 46)
Veatch, “Justice, the Basic Social Contract, and Health Care” (B&W 53)
F 5/6 Buchanan, “The Right to a Decent Minimum of Health Care” (B&W 59)
Engelhardt, Jr., “Rights to Health Care, Social Justice, and Fairness in Health Care Allocations” (B&W 64)

WEEK SEVEN
M 5/9 Managed care and access to care:
Gostin, “Securing Health or Just Health Care? The Effect of the Health Care System on the Health of America” (B&W 72)
Powers, “Managed Care: How Economic Incentive Reforms Went Wrong” (B&W 79)
Buchanan, “Managed Care: Rationing without Justice, But Not Unjustly” (B&W 83)
W 5/11 The Global AIDS epidemic:
Intro, B&W 665 – 667
Fauci, “The AIDS Epidemic: Considerations for the 21st Century” (B&W 671)
UNAIDS/WHO, “AIDS Epidemic Update” (B&W) 677
F 5/13 Lamptey, “Reducing Heterosexual Transmission of HIV in Poor Countries” (B&W 685)
Gostin and Webber, “HIV Infection and AIDS in the Public Health and Health Care Systems” (B&W 691)

WEEK EIGHT
M 5/16 AIDS, justice, and public health:
Yamey and Rankin, “AIDS and Global Justice” (B&W 700)
Berwick, “We All Have AIDS” (B&W 702)
F 5/18 Logie and Benatar, “Africa in the 21st Century: Can Despair Be Turned to Hope?” (B&W 704)
W 5/18 Day of Gracious Living? If not, adjust schedule accordingly)
F 5/20 (Presentations on topics in B&W Chs. 6 and 9

PART FOUR:
REPRODUCTIVE CLONING
WEEK NINE
M 5/23 Intro, B&W 563 – 567
Reproductive cloning:
Brock, “Cloning Human Beings: An Assessment of the Ethical Issues Pro and Con” (B&W 593)
W 5/25 Kass, “The Wisdom of Repugnance” (B&W 603)
F 5/27 Cloning human beings:
National Bioethics Advisory Commission (B&W 618)
Gillon, “Human Reproductive Cloning: A Look at the Arguments Against It and a Rejection of Most of Them”
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<th>WEEK TEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>M 5/30</td>
<td>Memorial Day Holiday – no class</td>
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<td>W 6/1</td>
<td>Presentations on topics in B&amp;W Chs. 7 and 8</td>
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<td>F 6/3</td>
<td>Wrapup - TBA</td>
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[III] I owe some of the phrasing in this statement to Prof. Vaughn Maatman