

PHIL 217A Biology, Society and Values

3 Credits, 3 hours lecture

This course focuses on the philosophical and social impact of historical and contemporary topics in the biological sciences. Topics include human and animal experimentation, genetic engineering, human cloning, stem cell research, and prenatal selection.

Instructor

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Office Hours

Mondays 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Thursdays 9:00am-10:00am
Fridays 1:00pm – 3:00pm
(or by appointment)

Hours of Instruction

Mondays 1:00pm-2:00pm
Thursdays 2:00pm-4:00pm

Required Resources

A course package has been designed specifically for this course and is available in the campus bookstore.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between the main ethical theories.
- Apply ethical theories to contemporary issues in the biological sciences.
- Demonstrate the ability to write an argumentative term paper which includes scholarly academic research and properly adopts APA or MLA referencing.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on the completion of four assignments. These assignments include: a mid-term exam, term paper, a final exam and on-line discussion topics. Below is a brief description of each assignment, as well as relevant due dates.

On-line Discussions	TBA	15%
First Exam	13 October	25%
Term Paper	28 November	25%
Final Exam	TBA	35%
Total		100%

A grade of C- is required for progression or transfer.

On-line Discussions

At five points throughout the term I will post discussion topics for students to comment on. The total value of the assignment is 15%, and therefore 3% for every post. Responses are assessed based on accuracy of explanation, clarity of presentation and quality of critical reflections. Each topic will be available for only a limited time – typically a week – so late submissions will not be accepted.

First Exam

The first exam will include multiple choice questions, short-answer questions and an essay question. The essay question will be provided before the exam, and it will follow the same format as the term paper. Students will be given a specific outline of the exam, including mark distribution, before the exam occurs. The value of this exam is 25% of the total grade.

Term Paper

The term paper should be between 8-10 pages (or 2400-3000 words), contain two references from the course package and one external source. The external source must be a peer reviewed academic source. A topics list will be provided for the term paper. Students must pick their term paper topic from this topic list or otherwise suffer a significant penalty. A basic format for the term paper, that also indicates the method evaluation, will be provided early in the term. The value of the term paper is 25% of the total grade.

Final Exam

The final exam will cover material considered after the first exam. This exam will include short answer questions and likely two essay questions. More details will be offered concerning this exam as it approaches. The value of the final exam is 30% of the total grade.

Grading System

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	4.0 Scale	Percent	Rubric for Letter Grades
Excellent	A+	4.0	> 92.9	Work shows in-depth and critical analysis, well developed ideas, creativity, excellent writing, clarity and proper format.
	A	4.0	85 – 92.9	
	A-	3.7	80 – 84.9	
Good	B+	3.3	77 – 79.9	Work is generally of high quality, well developed, well written, has clarity, and uses proper format.
	B	3.0	74 – 76.9	
	B-	2.7	70 – 73.9	
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	67 – 69.9	Work has some developed ideas but needs more attention to clarity, style and formatting.
	C	2.0	64 – 66.9	
	Progression	C-	1.7	
Poor	D+	1.3	55 – 59.9	Work is completed in a general way with minimal support, or is poorly written or did not use proper format.
Minimum Pass	D	1.0	50 – 54.9	

Failure	F	0.0	< 50	Responses fail to demonstrate appropriate understanding or are fundamentally incomplete.
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Proposed Schedule of Topics

1. Ethical Theories and Principles

Readings: Beauchamp and Walters, "Contemporary Issues in Bioethics, Sixth Edition," pp.12-18.
Beauchamp and Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics, Fourth Edition*," pp.120-128.

2. Research on Human Subjects

Readings: Beecher, "Ethics and Clinical Research," pp.505-512.
Hellman, "The Patient and the Public Good," pp.520-524.

3. Research on Non-human Animals

Readings: Singer, "All Animals are Equal," pp.568-577.
Singer, "Animal Experimentation," pp.531-538.
Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research," pp.538-544.

4. Cloning

Readings: Annas, "Why We Should Ban Human Cloning," pp.210-216.
Tooley, "The Moral Status of the Cloning of Humans," pp.162-177.

5. Genetic Engineering

Readings: Glover, "Questions about Some Uses of Genetic Engineering," pp.187-197.
Goering, "Gene Therapies and the Pursuit of a Better Human," pp.330-341.

6. Stem Cell Research

Readings: *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, pp.431-448.
Steinbock, "What Does "Respect for Embryos" Mean in the Context of Stem Cell Research?" pp.521-524.
Devolder, "Creating and Sacrificing Embryos for Stem Cells," pp.312-319.

7. Prenatal Selection

Readings: Kass, "Implications of Prenatal Diagnosis for the Human Right to Life," pp.480-484.
McMahan, "The Morality of Screening for Disability," pp.491-494.

Please Note:

Date and time allotted to each topic is subject to change

Performance Requirements

A late penalty of 3 marks per day, on a scale of 100, will apply to all late assignments, but will be waived for legitimate reasons if supporting documentation is provided. If an assignment is late, and not handed-in during class time, arrangements must be made with the instructor to hand-in the assignment. Late penalties do not apply to on-line discussions, as they cannot be submitted late. No term papers are accepted after the last day of classes. Should an assignment go missing, and the student is unable to produce another copy, the assignment will be considered not submitted. Likewise, if a grade is not recorded for an assignment the onus is on the student to demonstrate that the assignment was completed and graded. No changes can be made to the class schedule.

Student Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as a student to contact the Office of the Registrar to complete the forms for Withdrawal or Change of Registration, and any other forms. Please refer to the list of important dates as noted in the Academic Schedule in the Keyano College credit calendar.

More specific details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Student Attendance

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a students' learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating to the administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and / or notes that may be due.

Academic Misconduct

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating)
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work
- The deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications
- The willful distortion of results or data
- Substitution in an examination by another person
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College 2015-2016 credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

In order to ensure your understanding of the concept of plagiarism, you must successfully complete the online tutorial found on ilearn.keyano.ca. Then print the certificate, sign it, and show it to each of your instructors. Your course work will not be graded until you show this signed certificate.

Specialized Supports**Counselling and Disability Services**

Counselling Services provides a wide range of specialized counselling services to prospective and registered students, including personal, career and academic counselling.

SKILL Centre

The SKILL Centre is a learning space in the Clearwater Campus at Keyano College where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff.

The SKILL Centre, through a variety of delivery methods, provides assistance in skill development to Keyano students. Assistance is provided by instructors, staff and student tutors. Individuals wishing to improve their mathematics, writing, grammar, study, or other skills, can take advantage of this unique service.

Authorization

This course outline has been reviewed and approved by the Program Chair.

Mark Young, Instructor

Louis Dingley, Chair

Date Authorized

Guy Harmer, Dean

Date Authorized

Signed copies to be delivered to:

Instructor

Registrar's Office