

# Bioethics

Spring 2017

## Class Information

Frelinghuysen Hall B4  
Mondays and Wednesdays  
1:10pm – 2:30pm

## Instructor Information

Ben Bronner  
ben.bronner@rutgers.edu  
Office hours by appointment

## Readings

Schedules of assigned readings will be distributed throughout the course. Readings will be made available on the course website. Visit <https://sakai.rutgers.edu> and log in with your NetID and password. Then find the course site for 01:730:249, entitled “BIOETHICS 01 Sp17”. Course readings will be in a folder under the “Resources” tab.

Although subject to change, I currently plan to cover the following topics: euthanasia & physician-assisted suicide, abortion, stem cell research, disability, prenatal screening, healthcare rationing, animal experimentation, drug decriminalization & legalization, prescription drug pricing, and the pharmaceutical industry’s influence on research and care.

## Grading

At the end of the semester, your letter grade will be determined by your numerical grade, as follows.

Letter Grades	Numerical Grades
A	90 – 100
B+	85 – 89.99
B	80 – 84.99
C+	75 – 79.99
C	70 – 74.99
D	60 – 69.99
F	0 – 59.99

Your numerical grade, in turn, will be determined as follows. I will average the grade assigned to your first paper and the grade assigned to your second paper; I will then subtract one percentage point for each class session that you fail to receive credit for. See the following two sections for more details.

## **Homework and Attendance**

In order to get credit for a given class session, you must attend class and turn in a typed (not handwritten) hard copy of your homework.

Homework assignments will consist in answering study questions about the assigned reading, writing a summary or outline of the author's argument, or other similar tasks. Homework is graded credit/no-credit. If you would like individualized feedback on your homework, you must either (i) share what you have written during class discussion, (ii) ask me to email you feedback, or (iii) make an appointment to discuss your homework outside of class.

You are expected to attend every class, barring illness or emergency. If you do not plan on doing so, then you should not take this course. You will be allowed three absences without penalty, on the assumption that you have a legitimate excuse. Additional absences will be excused only if documentation of special circumstances is provided. Homework assignments are due one week after you return to class following your absence.

## **Papers**

Papers must be between 1250 and 1500 words. Before submitting a paper, you must submit a statement of your paper's thesis and a summary of your argument for that thesis (250-500 words). I will give you feedback on your thesis and argument. This will make it much easier to write a paper which receives a good grade.

Papers and outlines should be submitted as word processing documents (not PDFs) to [ben.bronner@rutgers.edu](mailto:ben.bronner@rutgers.edu). Paper topics and expectations will be discussed at a later date.

Papers will be held to a high standard. If you are not satisfied with your grade on a paper, you may rewrite it in light of the comments I provide. You may rewrite each paper once. If you need extra space to respond to my comments, your rewrite can be up to 1750 words. The grade on your original paper will be replaced by the grade on your rewrite (minus any points lost for missing deadlines; see below).

First paper deadlines:

- 11:59pm, March 10. Submit your thesis and summary. Your paper may lose up to one point per day for missing this deadline.
- 11:59pm, March 24. Submit your paper. Your paper may lose up to three points per day for missing this deadline.
- 11:59pm, April 7. Submit any rewrites you wish to make. No rewrites will be accepted after this deadline.

Second paper deadlines:

- 11:59pm, April 7. Submit your thesis and summary. Your paper may lose up to one point per day for missing this deadline.
- 11:59pm, April 21. Submit your paper. Your paper may lose up to three points per day for missing this deadline.
- 11:59pm, May 5. Submit any rewrites you wish to make. No rewrites will be accepted after this deadline.

Note that these are the *latest* dates you should be submitting your summaries or papers. If you submit just prior to a given deadline, you may find it difficult to make the next deadline, especially since it will take me some time to return your assignments with comments. I strongly encourage you to submit assignments at least a few days before the deadline.

### **Laptop/Tablet/Smartphone Policy**

- Laptops, tablets, and smartphones are not to be used in class. I reserve the right to deduct 1% from your final grade each time I see you using such a device in class.
- Research suggests that laptops decrease learning *even when used to take notes*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mueller PA, Oppenheimer DM. 2014. "The pen is mightier than the keyboard," *Psychological Science* 25(6): 1159-68.

- Students who multi-task (rather than just take notes) impair not only their own learning but also that of their peers.<sup>2</sup>
- Students may ask permission to be excepted from this policy — e.g. due to difficulty with taking notes by hand.

## Academic Integrity

- Plagiarism will be taken very seriously, and will likely result in a failing grade for the assignment in question or the course as a whole; and/or report to the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in suspension or expulsion.
- Plagiarism includes not only *word-for-word copying* of others' work without proper attribution, but also *paraphrasing* others' work without proper attribution.
- Proper attribution is required for *all* information and ideas that you derive from other sources — whether written, spoken, freely available on the Internet, etc.
- Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle. If you have any questions, please ask me.
- The university's academic integrity policy can be found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>.

## Learning Goals

Students will be able to employ the critical skills necessary for evaluating ideas and arguments; construct coherent arguments in support of their views; present accurately and fairly views that differ from their own; and write in a clear and organized manner.<sup>3</sup>

## Student-Wellness Services

*Just In Case Web App*

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

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<sup>2</sup> Sana F, Weston T, Cepeda NJ. 2013. "Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers," *Computers & Education* 62: 24-31.

<sup>3</sup> Department goals, found at [http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug\\_current/pg498.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nb-ug_current/pg498.html).

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

*Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)*

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ [rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

*Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)*

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / [vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://vpva.rutgers.edu/)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

*Disability Services*

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

*Scarlet Listeners*

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.