

**The University of
Arizona** Syllabus for Bioethics
(MCB 404)
Spring 2018

Instructor:	Dr. Angel C. Pimentel
Classroom:	Steward Observatory, Room N210
Class Meeting:	Wednesday 4:30 – 5:45 PM
Office:	Bio Sciences West 234 Office Hours: Monday from 2 to 3 PM at the transfer Student Center, Friday from 10 to 11 at my office and by appointment.
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Description:

Biology is the science that tries to explain the nature of the mechanisms that keep living organisms functioning and their interaction with the environment. Getting to know these mechanisms is not only interesting from the pure sense of knowledge, but this information can be used to manipulate the physiology of the organism as well as its environment. The speed at which many biological discoveries have taken place in the last decades has been extraordinary. Terms like stem cell, gene cloning, and crops bioengineering are commonly used by science students in high school and the general public, and you hear about them in the media frequently. Many of these discoveries have immediate applications while others could (or will) be used in future ones. Many scholars (scientists in general and philosophers in particular) have raised concerns on the moral/ethical implications of several applications of this knowledge. This course is intended to bring these concerns to the consideration of this group. We will present and evaluate a select amount of topics from the following points of view: 1) the science of the issue in question, 2) the significance and application of this scientific knowledge, 3) moral and ethical issues raised by the application of this science, 4) the social impact, and 5) legal consideration that these advances of biology could cause. We will evaluate, analyze, and argue each of these points, and these exercises will help us to develop a more critical analysis of these ethical issues in order to better prepare for real-life application in the healthcare field.

Important Note: In this class we will discuss ethical dilemmas involving race, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual behaviors and social economical issues.

Notification of Objectionable Materials

This course will contain material of mature nature, which may include explicit language, depictions of nudity, sexual situations, and/or violence. The instructor will provide advance notice when such materials will be used. Students are not automatically excused from interacting with such materials, but they are encouraged to speak with the instructor to voice concerns and to provide feedback.

Course objectives. It is expected that once students completed this course they should:

- 1) Understand the scientific application causing the ethical issue.

- 2) Understand the importance of the scientific application to our society.
- 3) Understand and explain the moral and ethical issues being raised by the application of this scientific knowledge.
- 4) Describe the possible social impact of a scientific application.
- 5) Describe the legal considerations that these advances of biology could cause.
- 6) Evaluate, analyze and argue an ethical dilemma in the context of the ethical theories presented in class.

The general objectives of the course listed above are going to be learned using the following three methods:

- 1- Public speaking
- 2- Writing emphasis
- 3- Group collaborations

Public Speaking: College students are expected to clearly organize and articulate verbally their ideas. Regardless of whether or not the student is addressing an audience of one or hundreds, the argument must be expressed persuasively. Public speaking is a skill that needs to be learned, developed and practiced. In this class your public speaking skills will be constantly tested, which means that you will be called to express your stance towards the issue under discussion. You must know how to organize and articulate your ethical position by developing and sharing a clear argument in front of the group. These skills will not only prove useful in this class but they will also help you to succeed in any interview (e.g. medical, dental, vet school, etc.) that you might have in the future. Due to its importance, this course will focus its attention to the development and use of public speaking techniques.

Writing emphasis: This course fulfills the writing requirement that many academic departments require for graduation. It is expected that any college graduate must be able to express their ideas in writing. As in the public speaking method, the ideas that you write must be expressed clearly. In this class, specific instructions will be provided to guide you in the process of writing your research paper. This paper has proven to be challenging for many students in the past, but you will soon find that plenty of help will be provided so that you can write a college-level paper. This is a research paper and not a persuasive paper and the prose must remain scholastic. The first line of help will come from the preceptors of this class, who will guide you in the Wiki assignments as well as the research paper. Their guidance will focus in the selection and direction of the topic that you chose to write about. For students that require help with grammar, this course collaborates with the Writing Center located in the THINK TANK. This program has trained a specific number of their writing tutors to specifically help the students of this class. In summary, you will soon find that the class provides you with the resources you need to succeed in this course.

Group Collaboration: There are three Wiki assignments in this course. In these assignments, each student plays the role of a member in an ethical committee, who is in charge of resolving an ethical dilemma. This work consists of two parts: 1) an individual assignment, in which each student works in their individual role and 2) a group conclusion, in which all the members of the committee evaluate each other's individual arguments and write a recommendation (AKA a conclusion). Each member of this committee will have a specific set of instructions that will guide you to write your individual ethical argument. Once every member of the group submits their work then that is when the group assignment starts. The aim is that after reading each other's work a dialogue will start, in which the group as a committee will make a decision as to what is the "correct ethical action" to take in regards to the moral dilemma in discussion.

Prerequisite(s): One year of college-level introductory biology (MCB 181 and ECOL 182); botany is not acceptable. Satisfaction of the Mid-Career Writing Assessment (MCWA).

Text and required materials: There is no textbook required for this course. I will post any material that you might need for the discussions that will take place in class as well as any presentation file in D2L.

You must also purchase a Response device, AKA "clicker". Clickers run on AAA batteries; you might want to carry a couple of extras. These devices will allow you to participate in in-class activities that generate class participation points in the course. *Only one brand of clicker will work with our classroom software:* the Turning Tech Response Cards. You can use in this class the old clicker models NTX 002 and 003 but if you don't currently have a clicker the bookstore is selling the new QT model (shown below). In this course you also have the option of using Responseware which is an app from the Turning technology company that allows you to use your smartphone Ipad or laptop as your clicker

You must **register your clicker**. The process of registering a clicker is different depending on whether you are a new clicker user or if you previously registered a clicker in the last two years at the University of Arizona.

New clicker users must follow the following link:

<http://help.d2l.arizona.edu/student/new-student-clicker-registration>

Returning student registration:

<http://help.d2l.arizona.edu/student/returning-student-registration>

It is your responsibility to verify that responses are being recorded for each clicker session by looking at your clicker right after your answer is submitted to make sure that the check mark appears on your screen. You must also check the D2L gradebook to make sure that your class participation points were loaded for each class day. Grades are usually posted right after class. If your clicker score doesn't show in the gradebook or if you disagree with your score, you have

48 hours (after I post the clicker points) to bring any issue to my attention. You should expect a written response from me within 24 hour after reading your email. Thus, the deadline for raising any clicker issue is 48 hours after I post the scores. After that period, any clicker issue will not be considered. If your clicker is not working properly during the class, you must seek the help from one of the preceptors. He/she will assist you with your problem. If the preceptor of the class can't solve the issue, then you should come and see me after the class. Do not wait one or more days to bring to my attention issues with your personal responder. I cannot grant any clicker points to you if you don't bring the issue to my attention.

Cheating with Clickers: Under the University of Arizona Code of Conduct, consider that any student caught using multiple clickers is engaging in an act of cheating. In the event that a student is caught with multiple devices with the purpose of answering clicker questions for other students, they will be asked to surrender all the devices. The devices will be sent to the Dean of Student Affairs, where the rightful owners of the devices will be able to pick them up after talking with the Dean about this incident.

Penalties for Registering your Clicker Late

Register on or Before September 11th – No penalty

Register between September 13th to October 16th – **1 Point penalty**

Register between October 18th to the end of the semester- **2 points penalty.**

If you make a mistake registering your response device, you have until September 13th to correct it; otherwise the same penalty will apply.

Special needs and accommodations:

Students needing special accommodations or special services should contact the Center for Disability Related Resources, 1224 East Lowell Street (East of the 6th Street Garage), 520-621-3268. The need for specialized services must be documented, verified, and presented to the instructor AT LEAST TWO WEEKS prior to the first exam. We will do everything we can to enhance your learning experience.

Classroom expectations:

1. I expect all students to act professionally in the classroom.
2. Wait for your turn to participate. Making comments out of turn and asking questions to the student next to you will distract others. This behavior is extremely disruptive to the students around you. You should respect your fellow students' right to learn.
3. Turn off your cell phone before entering the classroom. If your cell phone accidentally rings, turn it off!! Do not answer your cell phone while the class is in progress. You can always check for messages and missed calls after the class period. The same goes for text messaging. Do not engage in text messaging while the class is in progress.
4. I will post the PowerPoint presentation files and handout(s) on the D2L site for this class. These files will be incomplete. There is information for each lecture that I don't want students to see prior to the lecture. That information will be included in the complete version of the PowerPoint, which I will post after the class.
5. The primary method of communication with my students outside of the classroom is by email. You should check your email each day.
6. You are responsible for visiting D2L every day and looking for course announcement(s).
7. Many of the issues that we will cover in this course can be very provocative and controversial. It is common that during the presentation, discussion can be heated and in many respects passionate. Everyone should respect each other's point of view. You should use reason and knowledge while engaging in the class discussion.
8. **All assignments in this course submitted to the Dropbox must be in Microsoft Word format (.Doc or .Docx). Failure to do this will result in a zero for the assignment grade.**

Creating a Supportive Classroom:

Disruptive behavior is prohibited. "Disruptive behavior" means conduct that materially and substantially interferes with or obstructs the teaching or learning process in the context of a classroom or educational setting. This type of behavior includes cell phone use, refusing to collaborate, interrupting class activities, sleeping, newspaper reading, etc. In the event

of disruptive behavior by one of the students in the course, official policies and procedures will be followed as described at <http://policy.web.arizona.edu/disrupt.shtml>.><http://policy.web.arizona.edu/disrupt.shtml>

Attendance policies

1. Attendance is crucial!!!
2. This course uses a team- based learning approach. This means that you will be part of a group of students, which will remain together for the rest of the semester. If you are absent, somebody else in the group will have to take over your responsibilities. In that particular day you will lose points because you were not there to be part of the discussion.
3. If you miss an activity, it is your responsibility to obtain any material distributed during the period that you missed. Remember that you are part of a learning community in general and a learning team in particular. Contact your fellow students. I will suggest that you exchange phone numbers and emails with your classmates.
4. Each class will last for one hour and fifteen minutes. I will take note if you are excessively late or if you leave early. During the first five to ten minutes of class, students will have to submit a homework assignment or answer a quiz question using clickers. At the end of the class the students will also have to answer some questions to test their comprehension of the material.

Assignment/Activity	Number of Assignment and points for each	Total of Points for Each Assignment Category
Midterm Exams	3 @ 200 points each	600
Discussions	4 @ 12.5 points each	50
Wiki Activities	3 @ 33.3 points each	100
Class Participation	10 @ 5 points each	50
Research Paper	1@ 200 points each	200
Total Class Points		1000

Grade scheme: Students’ performance in this class will be evaluated following the grading scheme below. Students can keep track of their progress in the class by referring to the following table, which presents the point grade corresponding to each letter grade. The final letter grade will be based on the following point grade scale.

Letter Grade	Point Range	Grade Point Value
A	900 – 1000	4
B	899 – 800	3
C	799- 700	2
D	699 – 600	1
E	599 – 0	0

Late Work. All assignments are expected to be turned in at the assigned deadline provided in the syllabus unless notification of deadline changes is made by instructional staff; said change in deadline will take precedents. Any work that is not submitted to D2L in the appropriate folder or website section, as determined by instructor, will not be considered for grading unless they have an approved, documented extenuating circumstance. **Any work submitted late will be subject to a 10% penalty per day late (up to 5 days, after which the assignment will be awarded a grade of 0%)** In order to receive an approved extension, students must contact Dr. Pimentel and/or their teaching assistant directly and immediately with the circumstances and supporting documentation.

Dean's Excuse. All approved documentation must be submitted via email or in person to the instructional staff at least 48 hours prior to the event/ deadline. Any late submission of Dean's Excuses will not be accepted. These excuses will only be considered for group wiki assignments and exams, unless otherwise given approval by the instructor. For more information about Dean's Excuses, refer to <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/absences>.

Exams. The exam will have a theoretical part in which ethical theory will be assessed. In addition, one or two ethical problems will be presented to you so you can argue them. Students must make any proper arrangements to be present on exam day. If a student misses this exam, he/she should contact me within 24 hours. I will not grant make-up examinations unless an **extreme and documented** circumstance impeded the student from taking the test. If such a situation exists, the student will have 24 hours from the time of the examination to present a valid document explaining the reason for the absence. The document should clearly state the day and reason for which the student could not take the exam. If I find the document to be vague I reserve the right to deny the make-up examination. No make-up examination will be given to any student if he/she doesn't get in touch with me within 24 hours after the initiation of the exam.

Exams are closed book unless otherwise stated. Exams will be returned to the students. Students have **one week** after the exams are returned to review their tests and if necessary submit a re-grade petition form if he/she believes that any question of the exam was misgraded. **No late submissions** of a re-grade petition form will be accepted. Thus, no changes in test grades will be considered after that time. If you believe that an exam was graded incorrectly, you must address the issue within one week after the exams are returned. Do not wait until the end of the course to improve your grade. The professor will reply and return the re-grade petition no later two weeks after the submission day of the re-grade. The specific instructions for submitting a re-grade petition form are included in the form. You can find the re-grade petition form posted in the important information module of D2L.

Re-grades. Students have **one week** after grades for exams and wikis are returned to review their papers and, if necessary, submit a re-grade petition form if he/she believes that the exam or wiki was mis-graded. **No late submissions** of a re-grade petition form will be accepted. Thus, no changes in test grades will be considered after that time. If you believe that an exam or wiki was graded incorrectly, you must address the issue within one week after the exam or assignment are returned. Do not wait until the end of the course to improve your grade. The professor or teaching assistant will reply and return the re-grade petition no later two weeks after the submission day of the re-grade. The specific instructions for submitting a re-grade petition form are included in the form. You can find the re-grade petition form posted in the important information module of D2L.

Class participation: Class participation consists of your participation and will be recorded by your responses with your clicker as well as in-class activities. The maximum amount of points that you received per session will be 3 points. I will assign points according to the number of questions that

the students' answers during the in class activities. For example, students that answer all the questions will receive 3 points, students that answer 2/3 of the questions receive 2 points, student that answer 1/3 of the questions receive and if the student answers less than 1/3 of the questions you will receive 0.5 points.

Documentaries: Several movies and documentaries containing bioethical issues will be assigned in this class. It is the student's responsibility to: 1) have the proper software uploaded in your computer to play this material. 2) Call the 24/7 U of A computer support phone if you have any problems accessing the documentary. You don't need to have any special computer knowledge to install the software to watch the documentaries. The installation of the software is relatively easy. However, if the installation of the software takes you more than 10 minutes, I will recommend that you call the 24/7 line. Do not try to watch the documentaries at the last minute because this could overload the server from which the documentary is playing. I will assign this material at least two weeks before presenting the topic in class so you can have time to watch this material and/or have enough time to solve any foreseeable problems.

Audit Grades:

Students registered for Audit will receive "O" grades. This course is not offered as Pass/Fail. Switching from a letter grade to an audit will not be allowed in this class.

Incompletes: I will emphatically avoid giving incompletes. In situations of extreme circumstances, I will discuss this option with the student. I will weigh the severity of the situation and make a decision. The circumstances must be valid and documented. Students who do not take the final exam will, in general, receive a grade of "O" for the final exam and an "E" for the course. In accordance with University policy, the grade of "I," or incomplete, can only be awarded in the case of students whose circumstances prevent them from finishing the required work for the course. In every case the instructor must approve the incomplete before the last week of classes. Thus, students must make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incomplete before the last week of classes. If a student is expected to repeat the course, the grade of "E" must be assigned. Incompletes that are not removed by the instructor within one year are converted to "E" grades. For undergraduate courses, the one-year limit may be extended if approved by the instructor and the dean of the college in which the student is registered.

Academic Integrity:

Integrity is expected of every student in all academic work and there is a zero tolerance policy for breaking these rules. The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own. This principle is described in the student Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures established by ABOR Policies 5-308-5-403, all provisions of which apply to all University of Arizona students. This Code of Academic Integrity is intended to fulfill the requirement imposed by ABOR Policy 5-403.A.4 and otherwise to supplement the student Code of Conduct as permitted by ABOR Policy 5-308.C.1. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course, and in other appropriate disciplinary actions as described at <http://studpubs.web.arizona.edu/policies/cacaint.htm>. Cheating includes answering clicker questions for a student, who is not present in the classroom by using his/her clicker. In that situation the clicker and names of the persons involved will be collected and send to the dean of students. Students will have to pick up their devices in the office of the Dean of students.

Students should not submit work that was used for a previous class. Using work, though written by the student, again is plagiarism and will be treated according to the University of Arizona's plagiarism policy.

Changes to this syllabus:

The information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading and missed-exam policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor

Exam and Assignments schedule:

First Exam..... Wednesday, February 14th at 4:30 PM - 5:45 PM
 Second Exam..... Wednesday, March 21st at 4:30 PM – 5:45 PM
 Third Exam..... Tuesday, December 7th at 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Due dates for the research paper:

1- Submission of your Topic Approval.....Friday, February 2nd at 11:59 PM
 2- Submission of your Research Paper Proposal..... Friday, March 2nd at 11:59 PM
 3- Submission of your Research Paper Rough Draft.....Friday, March 30th at 11:59 PM
 4- Submission of your Final Research Paper..... Friday, April 27th at 11:59 PM

Due dates for the Wiki assignments:

1- Individual Wiki 1 Role submission.....Thursday, February 8th at 11:59 PM
 a. Group Wiki 1 submission..... Saturday, February 10th at 11:59 PM
 2- Individual Wiki 2 Role submission..... Thursday, March 15th at 11:59 PM
 a. Group Wiki 2 submission..... Saturday, March 17th at 11:59 PM
 3- Individual Wiki 3 Role submission..... Thursday, April 12th at 11:59 PM
 a. Group Wiki 3 submission..... Saturday, April 14th at 11:59 PM

Due dates for the Discussion Posts:

1- Submission of your Discussion 1..... Tuesday, January 23rd at 11:59 PM
 2- Submission of your Discussion 2.....Tuesday, February 20th at 11:59 PM
 3- Submission of your Discussion 3..... Tuesday, April 3rd at 11:59 PM
 4- Submission of your Discussion 4..... Tuesday, April 17th at 11:59 PM

