

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2024
PH/BIO 320	Bioethics	Prerequisite: PH125 or BIO 133
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	T & Th	Instructor:	Ken Nickel, PhD	First day of classes:	JAN 9
Time:	1:00 - 2:15	Email:	knickel@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	JAN 21
Room:	2084	Phone:	403-410-2000 ext 6903		
Lab/ Tutorial:		Office:	2103	Last day to withdraw from course:	MAR 28
		Office Hours:	Drop-in or upon request		
Final Exam:	Apr 16 @ 1:00 L2084			Last day of classes:	APR 12

Course Description

This course examines the moral and legal concerns related to a variety of health-related services, research programs, and medical interventions. Issues to be examined include, but are not limited to, abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, stem cell research, reproductive technology, commodification of organs and bodily tissue, patient consent, and the distribution of scarce medical resources.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students should be able to understand and articulate a range of normative moral perspectives on a host of practical medical, health, and wellness related issues.
2. Students should appreciate the broad metaphysical and epistemological contours that give shape to bioethical considerations and issues. Bioethics is always done at the intersection of science/nature and values/culture, and students should be able to think reasonably and responsibly in the midst of these exchanges.
3. Students should come to understand a broad spectrum of views related to human well-being across the life span. Students should be able to articulately and philosophically explain key concepts like “life”, “wellness”, “disease”, and “death”, *etc.*
4. Students should be able to recognize the legal and political implications of bioethical concerns. Students should be able to appreciate how legal theory, legislation, and public policy can give shape and direction to bioethical

conversation. In turn, students should be inspired and motivated to apply their reasonably cultivated philosophical reflections in related areas of law and public policy, as well as private individual decision making.

Textbooks

Weijer, Charles, and Anthony Skelton. *Bioethics in Canada*. 2nd ed. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Recommended:

Stock, Kathleen. *Material Girls: Why Reality Matters for Feminism*. London, UK: Little, Brown Book Group, 2021.

Vaughn, Lewis, and Jillian Scott McIntosh. *Writing Philosophy: A Guide for Canadian Students*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Course Schedule¹

JAN 9	Introduction
JAN 11	Moral Theory
JAN 16	Chapter 1: Conception and Embryos; Chapter 2: Fetuses
JAN 18	
JAN 23	
JAN 25	NO CLASS
JAN 30	Chapter 3: Procreation and Child Rearing; Chapter 4: Adults and Decision-making
FEB 1	
FEB 6	
FEB 8	Chapter 5: Conflict about Appropriate Treatment; Chapter 6: Equipoise and Clinical Research
FEB 13	
FEB 15	
FEB 20	READING WEEK
FEB 22	READING WEEK
FEB 27	Chapter 7: Justice and Access to Health Care; Chapter 16 Neuroenhancement
FEB 29	
MAR 5	Chapter 8: Obligations to the Global Poor; Chapter 14: Public Health
MAR 7	
MAR 12	Chapter 9: Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia; Chapter 10: Defining Death;
MAR 14	
MAR 19	Chapter 11: Harvesting Organs from the Dead
MAR 21	

¹ Course schedule is provisional and may change to address timely and pressing issues.

MAR 26 NO CLASS
MAR 28 Chapter 15: Research on Non-human Animals

APR 2 Chapter 17: Sexual Justice and Health Care
APR 4

APR 9
APR 11

Requirements:²

1. **Attendance & Participation** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by 1:00. Attendance will be taken before each class.
 - Participation is welcomed in the form of in-class questions or comments, but all students are expected to give evidence of participation in Moodle Discussion forums, in-person or Zoom meetings, etc. These participation markers will be documented through the semester.
 - Students lose 1 mark for every absence. Two 'lates' is equivalent to one absence. Students who repeatedly abbreviate class attendance (e.g., arrive late, depart early, etc.) may also be deemed absent. Students who feel the need to put their heads down for nap-time in class are demonstrably absent.
 - Students whose 'attendance' is **perfect** but whose quality of engagement is negligible should anticipate nothing better than C (6.5 out of 10) for this portion of their grade.
 - When a student has **missed 12 classes** the Registrar's office will be notified and a failing grade will be immediately entered in the student's portal. He or she will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

2. **First Writing Assignment (1200-1400 words)** 15%
 - **Due: February 15** before class (electronic and paper submissions)
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle.
 - At the instructor's discretion papers will be submitted to, for example, "Turnitin", for originality assessment. Other online platforms may also be used to assess A.I. reliance.
 - Students may be required to meet with the professor to discuss the content of the assignment before a final grade is attributed. Failures to meet in a timely fashion and failures to orally substantiate one's writing may result in a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.
 - Students must submit this assignment to be eligible to write the Final Exam.

3. **Second Writing Assignment (1200-1400 words)** 15%
 - **Due: March 15** before class (electronic and paper submissions)
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle.
 - At the instructor's discretion papers will be submitted to, for example, "Turnitin", for originality assessment. Other online platforms may also be used to assess A.I. reliance.
 - Students may be required to meet with the professor to discuss the content of the assignment before a final grade is attributed. Failures to meet in a timely fashion and failures to orally substantiate one's writing may result in a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.

² The Professor reserves the right to modify requirements, assignments, and exams in the event of any permanent transition to online delivery. The current requirements assume the semester will proceed as planned.

- Students must submit this assignment to be eligible to write the Final Exam.

4. **Third Writing Assignment (Minimum 2000 words)** 25%

- **Due: Monday, April 15 @ 4:00 PM** (electronic only – no paper submission required)
- A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle.
- At the instructor’s discretion papers will be submitted to, for example, “Turnitin”, for originality assessment. Other online platforms may also be used to assess A.I. reliance.
- Students may be required to meet with the professor to discuss the content of the assignment before a final grade is attributed. Failures to meet in a timely fashion and failures to orally substantiate one’s writing may result in a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.
- Students who have not submitted all assignments or have not made arrangements to do so will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

5. **Comprehensive / Cumulative Final Exam** 35%

- **Date: Tuesday, April 16 @ 1:00 PM - L2084**
- Students must pass the Final Exam to ensure a passing grade in the course. Even if a student’s accumulated grades are above 50%, the Professor reserves the right to withhold a passing grade for the course if the student fails the Final Exam.
- Students should refrain from scheduling all other commitments (e.g., flights or travel of any sort) that will conflict with the Final Examination schedule. Final examinations will not be rescheduled to accommodate travel arrangements.

Attendance:

(See requirements)

Grade Summary:

Letter Grade	GPA	Description	Percentage
A+	4.0		96-100 %
A	4.0	Exceptional	91-95 %
A-	3.7		86-90 %
B+	3.3		82-85 %
B	3.0	Exceeds Expectations	75-81 %
B-	2.7		72-74 %
C+	2.3		68-71 %
C	2.0	Meets Expectations	63-67 %
C-	1.7		60-62 %
D+	1.3		56-59 %
D	1.0	Minimal Pass	50-55 %
F	0.0	Failure	≤ 49 %

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other: (On a more personal note)

- ✓ **Students are responsible to check the Moodle** course site and their **Ambrose e-mail** accounts regularly. I like to use Moodle and/or e-mail to remind students of upcoming topics and readings, or to pose questions in light of readings or lecture topics. E-mail and Moodle may be used to notify you of cancelled classes or other important and immediate details relating to the course.

- ✓ Please, **put cell phones away during class.** Please try to avoid non-essential technology use during class.
- ✓ Students should not be confused about what paying tuition entitles them to. Paying tuition entitles no one to a **passing grade.** Passing grades, indeed all grades, are *earned*—not paid for.
- ✓ No university student consents to any small amount of violence or harassment in any classroom, but paying tuition and enrolling in a Philosophy course **implies consent** to a variety of things you may or may not like. If students have learned elsewhere to be confused about what ‘violence’ and ‘harassment’ are they should anticipate learning about ‘reality’ in this class. ‘**Academic freedom**’ means you *will be* exposed to words and ideas, some of which will be distasteful to some students and possibly to all. It is impossible to identify and appreciate ‘good’ ideas without carefully considering ‘bad’ ideas. Students should consider *why* they are ‘bad’ or incorrect and not merely ‘forbidden’.
- ✓ Philosophy students consent to the possibility that they might read and hear things that offend their sensibilities. You have every right *not* to be harmed in my class, but you have **NO right not to be offended.** The **pursuit of wisdom** equips students to better **cope** with life’s inevitable challenges. No one on the planet—not God and certainly no Philosophy Professor at Ambrose—bears a duty to make things **perfect** for you. Perfection is the enemy of the good. If you remain in *this* Philosophy class you **consent** to be intellectually challenged. You **consent** to think carefully about, among other things, Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in a world that is all too often deceptive, ugly, gritty, and unjust. The work of Philosophy takes **courage**, though, frankly not very much.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Registration

Registration is the process of selecting and enrolling in classes for upcoming semesters. Only students who are registered will be permitted to attend class and receive a grade for the course. You are responsible for ensuring that the courses you take are appropriate for your program, that they do not have any scheduling conflicts, that they have the necessary prerequisites and that they meet all degree requirements.

Withdrawal From A Course

Prior to the Add/Drop deadline: through the student registration system whereby course(s) will be removed with no academic or financial penalty. After the Add/Drop deadline and until the Withdrawal deadline: through submission of the ‘Withdrawal from Course’ form whereby course(s) will remain on the permanent academic record/transcript with the symbol ‘W’. (See ambrose.edu/registrar/request-forms.) Students who withdraw from more than 30 credits attempted at Ambrose University will be required to withdraw from their program. Students considering withdrawing from courses are encouraged to discuss with their Faculty Advisor and/or the Office of the Registrar questions relating to their withdrawal decision specifically relating to financial assistance, study permit requirements, prerequisites for subsequent courses, readmission, and/or graduation timeline. Students who do not formally withdraw from a course are still considered registered in the course, even if they are no longer attending classes. In this case, students will be assigned a grade based on coursework completed as per the course syllabus and are responsible to pay the tuition and fees assessed for the course. Under extenuating circumstances, students may request from the Office of the Registrar a course(s) withdrawal after the Withdrawal deadline and until the last day of classes. Extenuating circumstances typically consider situations such as medical emergencies, compassionate grounds, or unforeseen conditions/situations beyond the students’ control that arise after the start of the semester and are considered on a case-by-case basis. Supporting documentation from a physician or Registered Health Professional must accompany this request.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. More conditions apply.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Communication

Your Ambrose email account is the University’s primary and official mode of communication with you. Information delivered to your Ambrose email is considered official notification. Ambrose University is not responsible for your failure to receive important information delivered to your Ambrose email.

Lecture Recording

The recording of lectures or any other classroom academic activity, other than an audio recording as an accommodation, is prohibited except at the discretion of the instructor. Any use other than that agreed upon with the instructor constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion. Permission to allow a lecture recording is not a transfer of any copyrights, so such recordings may be used only for individual or group study with other students enrolled in the same class and may not be reproduced, transferred, distributed or displayed in any public or commercial manner. Student must destroy recordings in any, and all formats at the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in the class. All students recording lectures, must sign the Permission Form to audio record lectures which is available through the Office of the Registrar.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the

academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention Skills and can help you access mental health support. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.
- For additional wellness resources go to the Ambrose wellness page: <https://ambrose.edu/wellness>

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Alberta Mental Health Helpline - 1-877-303-2642 (Toll free)
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

We are committed to supporting students who have experienced gender based sexual violence in the past or while at Ambrose. Many of the staff, faculty, and student leaders have received Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need and you can access information about reporting. Information about the Sexual Violence policy and on and off campus supports can be found on our website– ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Alberta's Oneline for Sexual Violence - 1-866-403-8000 call or text
- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888
- Chat: www.calgarycasa.com

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.
