

## Philosophy 4730F/9730F: Feminist Bioethics

<b>Fall Term 2016</b> <b>Class times:</b> Th. 11:30-2:30 <b>Classroom:</b> Stevenson Hall 1145	<b>Instructor:</b> Prof. Carolyn McLeod <b>Office:</b> Stevenson Hall 4133 <b>Office Hours:</b> M 3:30-4:30, Th. 2:30-3:30 <b>Tel:</b> 519-661-2111, ext. 85877 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:cmcleod2@uwo.ca">cmcleod2@uwo.ca</a>
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Feminist bioethics aims to develop approaches to bioethics that are responsive to structural inequalities that affect women's health and the health of other marginalized people across the globe. It has opposed dominant understandings of basic concepts in bioethics—autonomy, informed consent, health or illness, trust, justice, embodiment, and the like—and has created new understandings. In this course, we will focus on how feminist bioethicists have theorized about these key concepts. Thus, we will explore what it means from a feminist perspective to respect the autonomy of patients, to obtain informed consent, to protect the conscience or integrity of health care professionals and patients, to be healthy or ill, and so on. Although our discussion will centre on concepts, we will also delve into some practical problems in bioethics, ones that feminists have tackled and that arise in such areas as assisted reproduction, public health, and the medical treatment of disability.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

All readings will be available for free online or as PDFs or Word documents posted on OWL. We will also be listening to podcasts or videos that will be available for free online, to listen to on any computer or smartphone.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

For undergraduate students:

1. Presentation (~20 minutes) **OR** Summary of readings: 20%
2. Homework and in-class assignments: 20%
3. Two essays (2500-3000 words each): 30% each, for a total of 60%

For graduate students:

1. Presentation (~20 minutes): 20%
2. Homework and in-class assignments: 20%
3. One essay (~6000 words): 60%

Students will be given detailed instructions ahead of time about how to complete this work. Overall, the assignments will be designed to help us achieve the course goals.

## COURSE GOALS

<b>GOALS: As a result of taking this course, you will learn to:</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES: Some of the things we will do to promote these goals are:</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT: We will know how well you have attained these goals by evaluating:</b>
Understand what feminism and feminist approaches to bioethics are like	Introduce and discuss these approaches in the first few weeks of class, reviewing them as needed	Whether you show a good grasp of these theories in your assignments and in class discussion
Understand and assess the arguments feminist bioethicists have given	Reconstruct these arguments in class, and critique them	How you reconstruct and evaluate the arguments on your own in your assignments
Construct your own clear and persuasive written arguments in feminist bioethics	Write essays (or <i>an</i> essay, in the case of grad students) and engage in peer review of one another's essays	Whether your essay(s) meet(s) the standards set in our grading rubric
Orally present arguments clearly and stimulate discussion about them	Do a presentation on assigned readings or learn from others' presentations	Whether the presentation meets the standards set in our grading rubric—or, for students who don't do a presentation, whether they feel more confident after this class in doing presentations
Engage in rigorous, respectful debate about heated topics in feminist bioethics	Raise discussion questions online before class, and have large and small group discussions in class	Whether our discussion is productive and respectful

## AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

## DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

## ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

### **ACADEMIC OFFENCES**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **PLAGIARISM CHECKING**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.