Global Bioethics

Spring Semester, 2010, Tuesdays, 6:30-9:00 PM
January 26-April 6, 2010, No class on March 9th

Instructor: Gladys B. White, Ph.D.

Course Description

The birth of bioethics as a field of study is generally identified as a mid 20th
century phenomenon that occurred largely within the United States. But
important issues of moral concern regarding the interface of humanity and
technology can only be meaningfully understood in a global context. The
purpose of this interdisciplinary course is to conduct ethical analyses of a
cluster of cutting edge issues in order to understand the human values and
policy issues at stake. Key topics will include: international exchanges of
tissues, organs and body parts, the creation of genetic databases, public
health ethics including management of communicable disease, reproductive
tourism, pharmaceuticals and the developing world, nanotechnology,
environmental issues including consideration of animal rights, and sports
ethics. Each class or two will be based on at least one important controversy
and debate will be encouraged.

Course Outline

January 26, 2010  Introduction, brief history of bioethics and basic schemes
of ethical reasoning

    Beauchamp and Walters, pp. 1-35.

February 2, 2010  International Exchanges of Tissues, Organs and
Body Parts

    Beauchamp and Walters, pp. 475-554.
February 9, 2010  Creation of Genetic Databases

Maschke, Karen J. “Biobanks: DNA and Research,” The Hastings Center, Bioethics (online) go to www.thehastingscenter.org

February 16, 2010  Public Health Ethics: Management of Communicable Diseases

Paper 1 is due.

Beauchamp and Walters, pp. 625-689, 695-700, 701-704.

February 23, 2010  Reproductive Tourism

Beauchamp and Walters, pp. 299-323 plus handouts.

March 2, 2010  Pharmaceuticals and the Developing World

Petrina et al., Chapters TBA

March 9, 2010  Spring Break

March 16, 2010  Nanotechnology: Ethical, Legal and Social Implications an

Go to www.bioethics.gov to read the transcript of the meeting of the former President’s Council on Bioethics, September 7, 2007, Session 5: Nanotechnologies and Ethics: European and Global Perspectives.

Paper 2 is due.

March 23, 2010  Environmental Issues including Animal Rights

Beauchamp and Walters, pp. 103-125.

Arthur, John and Scalet, Steven Morality and Moral Controversies, Readings in Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy, Eighth edition, Chap. 7, “Animals and
Environmentalism, ” pp. 158-191. (This book will be on reserve in the Bioethics Library, 2nd floor, Healy Building, Note: This reading is Chapter 5 in the Fifth edition, pp. 131-165.)

March 30, 2010  Sports Ethics

Schneider, et al., Chapters 1-3, 7-8 and 10.


**Paper 3 is due.**

**Required Texts**


**Course Requirements**

Students will be required to submit three short papers of approximately 5 pages each. One paper should consist of a newspaper-type article, similar to those that appear for example in the *International Herald Tribune*, intended to acquaint the public with a recent scientific advance and its associated ethical issues (3-5 pages). The second paper should consist of a short briefing paper that a staff member might prepare to acquaint an ambassador or other public official in the U.S. about a current bioethics issue and its global implications (3-5 pages). The third paper should consist of a draft policy document that is intended to promote some international cooperation related to one of the issues that we have considered in the course (2-3
pages). In addition to preparing these papers, students are expected to attend class and actively participate in class discussions. (Papers = 60% of grade, i.e. 20% each; Class participation = 40% of grade).

**Disability Notice**

Please note: If you believe that you have a disability, then you should contact the academic Resource center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey center, suite 335. the Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.