

## Biology 813: Issues in Bioethics Spring 2019

**Instructor:** Dr. Austin Nuxoll

**Office:** Bruner 320

**Phone:** 308.865.8602

**Email:** nuxollas@unk.edu

**Office hours:** For off-campus students, please arrange office hour appointments by email

### Course Materials:

- Required Texts: *Bioethics and the New Embryology*, by Scott Gilbert, Anna Tyler, and Emily Zackin, ISBN #0-7167-7345-7.
- Announcements, quizzes, test, discussion boards, and position papers: All information for this class will be available on Canvas.
- E-mail: All students must use their UNK email account so that I can reach them.

**Course Description:** Bioethics is the study of ethical controversies in both biology and medicine. Science has progressed significantly in the last century and with this progress has come ethical questions. The intent of this course is to focus on a variety of issues that have arisen, including, but not limited to, assisted reproductive technologies, sex selection, cloning, and stem cell research to name a few.

### Course Objectives:

1. To gain a broad background in biology and ethics.
2. To be able to make an informed analysis of bioethical issues.
3. To critically discuss bioethical issues in a group setting.

*Students will achieve these objectives through quizzes, discussion board, and writing a critical overview.*

### Expectations:

Grades are based on participation and quality of discussion, weekly quizzes, a final comprehensive exam, and one writing assignment. There are no taped lectures for this course. Students must participate online for all discussion topics. The week runs from the Monday through the Sunday listed in the syllabus.

### Grading Scheme:

	Points	Due Date
Discussion Board (15 chpt @ 10 pts each)	150	Bi-weekly
Quizzes (14 @ 10 pts each + 10 pts Intro)	150	Weekly (includes Introductions)
Position Paper (1 @ 100 pts each)	100	Sunday, March 24 <sup>th</sup> by 11:59 pm CST
Comprehensive Final	100	Wednesday May 1 <sup>st</sup> at 11:59 pm CST
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>500</b>	

**Grade assignment:** Grades will be assigned using the standard grading scale for the Department of Biology, as follows: A (93-100%), A- (90-92%), B+ (88-89%), B (83-87%), B- (80-82%), C+ (78-79%), C (73-77%), C- (70-72%), D+ (68-69%), D (63-67%), D- (60-62%), and F (below 60%).

**Schedule:** This class is a graduate level class, therefore I assume that all of you have had a Biology course that covered introductory material at some point in your career. Each week we will be discussing the information presented in one chapter of the book. This schedule is subject to change.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Quiz</b>
#1 1/7-1/13	Chapter 1: An Outline of Human Development	Introductions
#2 1/14-1/20	Chapter 2: Philosophical, Theological, and Scientific Arguments	Timed quiz #1 over Chapter #1
#3 1/21-1/27	Chapter 3: Fertilization and Assisted Reproduction	Timed quiz #2 over Chapter #2
#4 1/28-2/3	Chapter 4: Safety and Ethical Issues	Timed quiz #3 over Chapter #3
#5 2/4-2/10	Chapter 5: The Genetics of Sex Determination	Timed quiz #4 over Chapter #4
#6 2/11-2/17	Chapter 6: Arguments For and Against Sex Selection	Timed quiz #5 over Chapter #5
#7 2/18-2/24	Chapter 7: The Science of Cloning	Timed quiz #6 over Chapter #6
#8 2/25-3/3	Chapter 8: Ethics and Policies for Human Cloning	Timed quiz #7 over Chapter #7
#9 3/4-3/10	Chapter 9: Regenerating Deficient Organs through Stem Cells	Timed quiz #8 over Chapter #8
#10 3/11-3/17	Chapter 10: Ethical Dilemmas in Stem Cell Therapy	Timed quiz #9 over Chapter #9
#11 3/17-3/24	<b>Spring Break</b> Position Paper over "When does life begin" due (3/24 at 11:59 pm CST)	No quiz
#12 3/25-3/31	Chapter 11: Gene Therapy	Timed quiz #10 over Chapter #10
#13 4/1-4/7	Should a Pregnant Woman be Punished for Exposing Her Fetus to Risk?	Timed quiz #11 over Chapter #11
#14 4/8-4/14	Should There Be a Market in Body Parts?	Timed quiz #12 over Week #13 material
#15 4/15-4/21	Should HPV Vaccination Be Mandated?	Timed quiz #13 over Week #14 material
#16 4/22-4/28	Healthcare: A Privilege or Right?	Timed quiz #14 over Week #15 material
#17 4/29-5/2	<b>FINALS WEEK!</b> Wrap up discussion. Class will officially end at 11:59 CST Wednesday, May 1st. The comprehensive test will be removed at this time.	<b>Timed on-line comprehensive test over all chapters</b>

**Discussion Board:** You are posting as part of a **discussion**, not just for points. Each chapter/week discussion will be scored out of 10 points for a total of 150 points. You need to post during the week and weekend. You will be graded not on the number of posts per week (two is the minimum to get a score of any type for **each** question, it does NOT guarantee you will earn all the points possible), but on the **quality** of posts. **At least one post per question** must have a peer-

reviewed **science (not ethics or bioethics)** reference attached to it. Your other post can have a Bioethics or ethics reference if you wish. This is a good practice in having an **informed** opinion. The score for your posts will be based upon critical thinking (a post rich in content and full of insight), connection with issue and real-life situations, uniqueness (new ideas and new connections), depth and detail of posts, respect for classmates, and **discussion with classmates** (if you wait until Saturday and Sunday and are discussing with yourself or one other person, you get 0 points). As you can tell, I do not want people simply agreeing with each other or posting for points. You should be prepared to discuss the questions! The week runs from the Monday through the Sunday listed in the syllabus.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the semester, you will be given 14 timed quizzes worth 10 points each. In addition, the first week introductions will be counted as a quiz score. The quizzes will cover the book material. You will be allotted 5 minutes to answer 5 multiple choice or true/false questions. The questions will be given one at a time. You will have only one chance to answer the question and will not be allowed to go back and change answers. Therefore, make sure to answer carefully. If you run out of time while taking the quiz, you will not be given extra time. If you have a problem while taking your quiz, send me an email and I will deal with it as soon as possible. The computer displays a message that tells me what kind of problem you had, whether you took too much time or there was a computer problem. Everyone is expected to take all of the quizzes. The dates for the quizzes are listed on the schedule and will be made available at 8:00 am CST on Monday. You have until 11:59 pm CST on Sunday of the week listed to take the quiz. For example, the first quiz will be put on blackboard at 8:00 am CST on Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup> and you have until 11:59 pm CST Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> to take the quiz. **THE DEADLINE IS FINAL!** The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that you are keeping up with the course material.

**Position Paper:** Students will have one formal writing assignment, which is a position paper on "When does life begin". Specific details on this writing assignment will be provided for you. The report is due on the date listed on the next page and should be submitted to Blackboard using the "Position Paper" link under "Assignments". **The day and time the final report is due is not negotiable.** For every day the report is late, your grade will be dropped one letter grade. FYI, late day grading starts at 12:01 AM CST on March 25<sup>th</sup> (i.e., as of this time, your paper is already a day late, even though it is only one minute late). Yes, you can hand these in early. The Safe Assignment tool will be set up so that you can plagiarism check your paper before handing it in. **You must do this writing assignment to receive full credit or you automatically fail the course and receive a letter grade of an "F".**

**Final Exam:** There is only one exam given and it is a comprehensive exam over the entire semester. The material on the exam will cover the book material. The exam will be composed of multiple choice or true/false questions and is taken on-line. You will be given 80 minutes to answer 50 questions. Everyone is expected to take the exam. **You must take the exam to receive full credit. If you miss the exam, you will automatically fail and receive a letter grade of an "F".**

### UNK Library

The library is a good resource when looking for articles that may not be available online. The following links are especially usefully to distance students.

<http://library.unk.edu/services/distance.php>

<http://library.unk.edu/services/illdd.php>

If you have specific questions about Interlibrary loan contact Sheryl Heidenreich at

[heidenreichs@unk.edu](mailto:heidenreichs@unk.edu).

### Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, please refer to the student handbook or ask me for more clarification on the subject if unsure what constitutes plagiarism. It is expected students work independently on assignments unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Group work where not specified will be considered cheating and students will receive a zero for that assignment. Multiple offenses will result in the student(s) receiving a failing grade for the course and possible removal from the program.

### Withdraw (W) and Incomplete (I)

In unusual circumstances beyond the student's control, an incomplete (I) may be issued. The (I) is issued as a final grade with the student having 12 months to complete the necessary work. If the coursework is not completed in this time the (I) will be converted to a failing grade (F) on the student's transcript. Students may withdraw from the course before 9 weeks have been completed and a (W) will appear on the transcript. Students are responsible for filling out the necessary paperwork to complete this process. Instructors are not able to withdraw students. If the student drops the class the (W) will not contribute to the student's overall GPA.

### Student Accommodations

#### **Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to students with documented disabilities. To receive accommodation services for a disability, students must be registered with UNK Disabilities Services Coordinator, David Brandt, in the Disability Services for Students office, 175 Memorial Student Affairs Building, 308-865-8214 or by email [unkdso@unk.edu](mailto:unkdso@unk.edu)

#### **Students Who are Pregnant**

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to students who are pregnant. To receive accommodation services due to pregnancy, students must contact Sue Pedersen in Student Health, 308-865-8218. The following link provides information for students and faculty regarding pregnancy rights. <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/pregnant-and-parenting-students-rights-faqs-college-and-graduate-students>

#### **Reporting Student Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence or Sexual Assault**

Reporting allegations of rape, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and stalking enables the University to promptly provide support to the impacted student(s), and to take appropriate action to prevent a recurrence of such sexual misconduct and protect the campus community. Confidentiality will be respected to the greatest degree possible. Any student who believes she or he may be the victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report to one or more of the following resources:

**Local Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Advocacy Agency** 308-237-2599

**Campus Police (or Security)** 308-865-8911

**Title IX Coordinator** 308-865-8655

Retaliation against the student making the report, whether by students or University employees, will not be tolerated.