Syllabus, Philosophy 104: Bioethics, CSU-Sacramento, Spring 2019. Sections 1 & 60 (catalog #s 30476 & 31294; fully online)

Instructor: Russell DiSilvestro. Best contact option: Canvas “Conversations”—expect a quick response within 24 hours or by the next business day. Expect grading/feedback within 1 business day. Virtual office hours = M/T 9-10, W/R 12-1. Other contact options: email (rdisilvy@csus.edu), phone (916.278.6766) or office appointment (3000 Mendocino Hall).

Catalogue Description: “Ethical dilemmas faced by professionals and patients in the field of medicine, e.g., patient self-determination and informed consent, discrimination in health care, euthanasia, abortion, surrogate motherhood, genetic modification, and rights to health care. Emphasis is on the well-reasoned application of general moral principles to practical medical decisions.”

Text: Caplan and Arp, Contemporary Debates in Bioethics, Wiley (2014). Free ebook online at http://library.csus.edu

Technology Requirements: Students must be able to access Canvas on a stable internet connection.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, each student will be able to...

✓ Meet the learning objectives associated with all GE area D (Individual and Society) courses at CSUS:
  1. Describe and evaluate ethical and social values in their historical and cultural contexts.
  2. Explain and critically examine social dynamics and issues in their historical and cultural contexts.
  3. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of human diversity in human society (for example, race, class, age, gender).
  4. Explain and apply the principles and methods of academic disciplines (for example, philosophy) to the study of social and individual behavior.

✓ Meet the learning objectives associated with developing competence in philosophical language and literature on ethical dilemmas in biology and medicine:
  5. Identify moral and social consequences of advances in biology and medicine on the practices and institutions of our and other societies.
  6. Critically examine how thoughtful and diverse experts and peers apply moral concepts and theories to moral issues raised by advances in biology and medicine.
  7. Represent and express philosophical reasoning about advances in biology and medicine by writing clear and concise analytical and argumentative prose.

Accessibility: Let me know me before January 26 if you have a disability requiring accommodation (documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, 916-278-6955, see http://www.csus.edu/sswd/index.html) or if you must miss something for some reason.

Academic Honesty: Know the policy: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/STU-0100.htm. We also use http://turnitin.com.

Policy Regarding Exceptions: Late work will only be accepted, and missed assignments or assessments will only be excused, if there is a documented serious excuse (for example, a system-wide Canvas crash).

Grading: Your final grade is determined by how many points you earn out of 1000, with these grade floors: 930=A, 900=A-, 870=B+, 830=B, 800=B-, 770=C+, 730=C, 700=C-, 670=D+, 630=D, 600=D-. Your total points are calculated as follows (though extra credit may be earned for some achievements, like the most outstanding discussion board posts):

✓ Quizzes (30 points per Part x 15 Parts = 450 points): For each module, after reading the texts and watching the online videos, take a timed online quiz before 11:59pm each Saturday (3 points). The questions come directly from that module’s readings and videos. I suggest taking a screenshot at the start of each quiz, in case you have a crash, to prove you were on a desktop/laptop (not cell phone). Each quiz can only be taken once.

✓ Discussions (30 points per Part x 15 Parts = 450 points): For each module, use the discussions to make your own long reply to the target question by 11:59pm each Wednesday (10 points), your own medium replies to three long replies of other students in your small group by 11:59pm each Saturday (15 points), and your own short replies to the remaining long replies of other students in your small group by 11:59pm each Saturday (5 points). See details in the ‘Discussions’ PDF and each module.

✓ Paper (100 points): You can expand one of your long replies into a full philosophical analysis by 11:59pm on Sat May11. See details in the ‘Philosophical Analysis’ PDF, which is more specific to this class than the general department standards for writing or the general department instructions for doing a philosophical analysis found online at the CSUS Philosophy Department webpage: http://www.csus.edu/phil . We will use http://turnitin.com for this paper.

* Please note: Students who do not participate in the online discussions and take the daily quizzes during the first two weeks of semester will be considered to have abandoned the course and may be administratively dropped by the instructor. Re-enrolment will not be permitted.