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Sessions

Abortion

The issue of abortion has dominated religious and political life in the United States since the passage of Roe v. Wade. The issue cuts to the core of many philosophical, religious and personal concerns. When does life begin? What is our duty towards early stages of life? What about our rights to autonomy over our own bodies? Wrestling with this issue has altered American culture, the courts and political life.

Session Leader:

Amy McDonald
Kristy Crooks
Jane Limmer

Web-based Reading Assignment:

http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html

<http://www.guttmacher.org/support/quiz.html>

http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf

Exercises for the Session:

- [Exercise C2](#)
- [Exercise C4](#)

Animal Research and Animal Rights

Students will be guided through a hypothetical, yet reality-based animal research case study. This activity allows students to examine real life issues relating to animal rights and the care and use of animals in medical research. If students have questions about the animal rights movement, or the care and use of animals in medical research or product testing, this is the session to attend.

Session Leader:

Dilip Barman
Kirsten Darby

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- [Animal Rights](#)
- [Animal Rights 2](#)

Are You Obligated To Know Your Enemy

Is there any real obligation to know or understand the "Opposition's" position when you confront an issue of controversy? Can't you just yell louder? This fall's political season promises to be both heated and intense, and there is no place where this will be more evident than in North Carolina. There are Republicans running in every house district as well as every senate district calling for a 15% reduction in the State's Operating Budget; there are an equal number of Democrats running on a platform whose budget proposals are not anywhere near as drastic. What is the truth about both sides' positions? How much real money are both groups talking about? Why is North Carolina's Budget so far from being balanced next year? What are the impacts of both sides' proposals on North Carolina families? Does it really matter which party is in the majority next year? Do Democrats have an obligation to understand Republican's arguments? Do Republicans have that same obligation towards Democrats? This session will explore what ethical obligations voters have before they cast their ballots in November.

Session Leader:

Dave Thaden

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- [Tax Cuts May Provide Better for Politicians than the Economy](#)

Business Ethics

Scandals at Enron, the BP oil spill, eggs tainted with salmonella...What can companies do to avoid cutting ethical corners? Does the profit motive create incentives for companies to cut corners? What can the public do to protect themselves as consumers?

Session Leader:

Michael DeHaven

Web-based Reading Assignment:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2003/apr/20/globalisation.corporateaccountability>

<http://www.economist.com/node/10491144>

[Business Ethics](#)

Capital Punishment

While many countries around the world have abolished capital punishment, it is still in use in the United States. The death penalty remains controversial. Proponents argue that some criminals deserve to be executed and that any lesser punishment is miscarriage of justice. Opponents argue that it is wrong for society to use death as a punishment. We will explore this controversy by looking at arguments on both sides of the issue.

Session Leader:

Kyle Hudson

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- http://www.balancedpolitics.org/death_penalty.htm
- <http://deathpenalty.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=002000>

Cyber Bullying

How does social media change the way we relate to each other? Cases of Facebook Bullying, online anonymous postings and sexting have lead to criminal charges and even suicide. What are the Pros of free and immediate uncensored expression via technology? What about the consequences? How do we balance the two?

Session Leader:

Sabra Feeney

Web-based Reading Assignment:

[http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-38-fall-](http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-38-fall-2010/cyberbullying)

[2010/cyberbullying](http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-38-fall-2010/cyberbullying)

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080717170428.htm>

Environmental Ethics

The Ethics of Geoengineering as a Climate Change Mitigation Tool

Many environmental policy specialists and even political and business leaders are considering the possibility of using geoengineering methods to reduce or, at least, to forestall the most devastating of the predicted climate change impacts. Geoengineering solutions involve large-scale interferences with global systems, some of which are aimed at intercepting energy from the sun --- like tinkering with weather and cloud formation--- or jacking up the activity of a carbon sink in one or more ecosystems --- like fertilizing surfaces of the ocean to enhance photosynthetic algal growth. Since these are large-scale interferences in global balances, there is very little hard information on the true impact of these interventions. However, the technology to implement several of the best known geoengineering strategies is quite widely available.

Who has the right to decide when and where geoengineering solutions can be put in place? How will that decision be reached? If a geoengineering solution goes wrong, who would be responsible? How would victims be compensated?

Session Leader:

Linda Schmalbeck

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/03/AR2010100303437.html?referrer=emailarticle>
- <http://e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2224>

- [As Cuba Eyes Oil-Drilling](#)

This article is not about Geoengineering, however, it does discuss the very real environmental, economic and political potential of decisions by individual countries to exploit resources and raises some ethical questions that are very similar to those raised by geoengineering.

Euthanasia

Is there a time when it is acceptable and ethical to kill another human being to keep them from suffering particularly when they suffer with little or no hope of recovery? These sessions will explore the ethics dimensions of these issues from the point of view of patient and health care provider.

Session Leader:

David Klein

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- [Euthanasia](#)

Facebook and the Ethics of the New Internet

What, if any, new ethical issues are raised by the rise of Facebook, Wikipedia, Twitter, open-source programing, bit-torrent and other aspects of the 'new' internet? Do these technologies have anything to teach us about some old ethical problems about, for example, plagiarism, lying, intellectual property rights, basic respect for others and privacy? Among the topics we will consider are: How can we show proper respect to one another on social networking sites?; what is cyber-bullying and what's wrong with it?; what's wrong with downloading copyrighted music?; what about TV shows that are free to watch anyway?; and is plagiarism an old-fashioned notion that should be updated to benefit from advances in media forms such as wikipedia and open-source programming?

Session Leader:

Adam Cureton

Web-based Reading Assignment:

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/09/plagiarism-is-not-a-big-...>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/28/style/28bully.html>

Genetic Testing

This session will address the ethical concerns of testing for genetically inherited diseases. In this interactive session, students will discuss and role-play scenarios related to genetic testing in teens and adults. They will be challenged to consider societal and personal factors that would influence their decision whether to be tested and ways the test results might affect their lifestyles.

Session Leader:

Regina Williams

Kristy Crooks

Suzanne Wilkison

Derek Howles

Web-based Reading Assignment:

<http://www.genome.gov/10002335>

<http://www.ygyh.org>

<http://www.genome.gov/Pages/Health/PatientsPublicInfo/GeneticTestingWhatItMeansForYourHealth.pdf>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=98818197&ps=rs>

http://www.pbs.org/inthebalance/archives/ourgenes/who_gets_to_know/who_read.html

http://www.pbs.org/inthebalance/archives/ourgenes/who_gets_to_know/who_read.html

Government Ethics

How do systems avoid corruption? Does the nature of government lend itself to ethical slippery slopes more than other environments? What can we do as citizen and voters to guard against moral lapses in our leadership? Are their sufficient systems in place to protect the interests of individuals or small groups? These are the kinds of questions to explore in our discussion of government ethics.

Session Leader:

Julie Robison

Web-based Reading Assignment:

a Video to watch [http://www.youtube.com/user/appliedethicscenter?](http://www.youtube.com/user/appliedethicscenter?feature=mhum#p/u/3/XV6hNF1IzGk)

[feature=mhum#p/u/3/XV6hNF1IzGk](http://www.youtube.com/user/appliedethicscenter?feature=mhum#p/u/3/XV6hNF1IzGk)

Immigration

What core principles and values shape the debate over immigration? Are the main conflicts over immigration between opposing values or are they trade-offs between common values? How would you resolve conflicts over policies related to three of the principal policies debated today: law enforcement, legalization, and guest workers? What about birthright citizenship, open or closed borders, or dual citizenship?

Session Leader:

Noah Pickus

Ronald Garcia-Fogarty

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- [Stopping Arizona Immigration Laws](#)
- [Why Arizona Drew a Line](#)
- [The Borders We Deserve](#)

Legalization of Drugs

This session will explore the implications for drug legalization and decriminalization in the United States. Our discussion will include economic, medical, and social issues surrounding this controversial topic. Students may wish to familiarize themselves with some of the arguments used for and against the legalization of drugs.

Session Leader:

Steve Mazur

Adam Dunn

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- <http://www.npr.org/player/v2/mediaPlayer.html?action=1&t=1&islist=false&id=130351628&m=130351624>
- [Welcome to Potopia](#)

Patenting Human Genes

In this session students will be introduced to gene patents. They will examine the controversy regarding granting of patents of human genes to commercial entities. Students will be challenged to explore the pros and cons of patenting by studying the current patent legislation involving the *BRCA1/BRCA2* genes.

Session Leader:

Ofri Leitner

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- From the American Civil Liberties Union website; provides a nice summary of the arguments against gene patents.

- <http://www.aclu.org/free-speech/brca-genes-and-patents#03>

- Dept of Energy Genomic Website about Gene Patenting; provides background information about what patents are and some of the potential arguments for and against patenting of human genes.

- http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/elsi/patents.shtml

- Geoffrey Karney blogs about the pros of gene patents in his article "In Defense of Gene Patenting"

- <http://www.genengnews.com/gen-articles/in-defense-of-gene-patenting/2052/>

Protection of Human Research Subjects

Are you familiar with the Belmont Report? Did you know it was developed a result of unethical processes that occurred during the Tuskegee Syphilis study (1932-1972)? Ever wonder why you have to submit an application to an Institutional Review Board before you can start your research study involving human research subjects? Or have you even been a research subject and wondered why you have to sign a consent form prior to your participation? These questions and more will be answered during this session.

Session Leader:

Ershela Sims

Web-based Reading Assignment:

Belmont Report:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm>

Belmont Report Educational Video:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/belmontArchive.html#edVideo>

Department of Health and Human Services Policy for Protection of Human Subjects:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm>

Nuremberg Code: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/references/nurcode.htm>

Religious Freedom: The New York Mosque

Session will explore the parameters of religious persecution in American culture. The recent controversy in New York concerning the construction of an Islamic Mosque near the ground zero site has highlighted religious tolerance issues.

Session Leader:

Todd Spiering

Marion Hirsch

Web-based Reading Assignment:

<http://wtcmuslimcenter.procon.org/>

<http://oregonfaithreport.com/2010/08/poll-shows-americans-view-of-mosque-debate/>

Sports Ethics

This discussion will look at how sports play a significant role in the lives of millions of people throughout the world, as participants, fans, spectators, and critics and how it provides a unique model for understanding our own society. Even those who are uninvolved, bored or critical of sports are often affected by them. Sport is a microcosm of society, but it is more than that. How do enhancements like Lasik surgery for Tiger Woods, affect the general public's view about physical enhancements in general? At the extreme end, should parents be able to select among embryos for the traits that are most likely to produce an athlete? a scholar?

Session Leader:

Jan Boxill

Brian Gonyeau

Web-based Reading Assignment:

- The Moral Significance of Sport