Course Description & Objectives: 3 credit hours; fulfills a V course credit in the Philosophy Concentration, primary course credit in the Interdisciplinary Ethics Minor, an ICIS Seminar Credit in the Honors College Core, and a WAC credit in the FAU writing program. As an Interdisciplinary Critical Inquiry Seminar: WAC, Honors Bioethics we will explore philosophical issues arising from the interaction of biological sciences, technology, and social policy. This a team-taught, writing-intensive class that emphasizes discussion. We will critically examine ethical questions arising from abortion, reproduction, gene therapy, eugenics, birth and death, health care resource allocation, organ donation, experimentation with animals and humans, confidentiality, truth telling and the roles of ethicists in medicine and biological research. We will focus on critical thinking and philosophical argumentation through class readings, discussion, writing, and presentation. Consideration of film and literature will enhance our study of key ethical issues. By the end of this class you should have acquired a meaningful grasp of basic issues in bioethics including key positions and arguments in the field, the ethical theories on which they are based, the terms in which they are typically stated, and the kinds of examples from which they arise. You should also have developed your skills in critical discussion, essay writing, and oral presentation. Overall you should have acquired the knowledge and skills to participate responsibly in contemporary bioethical debates. Important related issues such as animal rights and environmental ethics are included in PHI 3682: Honors Environmental Philosophy.

Required Texts:
Blackboard Readings (BB): online in Blackboard
Online readings linked to syllabus (just click)

Requirements, Grades, and Methods of Evaluation:
1) Series of six brief critical essays (600 words apiece): totaling 50% of final grade; evaluated for content and composition as described under WAC criteria below;
2) Final Presentation: 20% of final grade; on same topic as final essay, evaluated in terms of style, organization, and content.
3) Final essay (at least 1,500 words) submitted in two drafts: 20% of final grade and including library research based on the list of sources below as well as a brief extemporaneous presentation of key ideas during final examination period; the essay will be evaluated for content and composition as described below.

FAUnewcrseUG—Revised November 2008
4) **Class Participation: 10%**: including preparation of “reading presentations”; discussion; attendance; and other daily work.

**Late Work and Make-up Policy**: Unexcused late work will be downgraded in accordance with the degree of lateness at the professor’s discretion. Excused late work (supported by a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation) must be made up at the earliest possible opportunity after the due date; it is the student’s responsibility to arrange a schedule for completion of work with the professor and to finish the work accordingly.

**Learning Objectives & Outcomes**: this course includes study of Nietzsche’s major works in translation as well as relevant critical texts; learning will be pursued and evaluated in terms of critical reading, discussion, and writing based on primary and secondary sources. Thus the class is designed:

1) **To allow student to become critically informed about the philosophical issues related to environmental questions.**

2) **To help students specifically to understand different ethical perspectives relevant to the evaluation of options for environmental action.**

3) **To lead students to reflect on the ethical status of different species of living organisms.**

4) **To develop each student’s own intellectual perspective on key philosophical issues in light of readings in environmental philosophy and related issues in science.**

5) **To allow students to explore different cultural perspectives in regard to environmental issues.**

6) **To develop new interdisciplinary insights across the arts and sciences based on 1-5 above.**

7) **To improve skills in critical discussion, writing, and enquiry consistent with the composition of a successful Honors Thesis.**

8) **To contribute to the critical sensibility, enlightened understanding, and open mind of the liberally educated individual.**

9) **To fulfill the goals of FAU’s WAC Program as described below.**

**Students enrolled in this course agree to abide by the Honors College Honor Code** and the **FAU Code of Academic Integrity**: please review these documents.

**Classroom Etiquette**: Students in Honors College classrooms are to maintain an atmosphere of cordiality and collegiality. Each of you should feel free to raise questions, comment on issues under consideration, and join in a group conversation. Each person is expected both to speak her or his mind freely and to listen to the views of others politely. Please keep in mind that ideas are open to debate but that personal criticisms of individuals (ad hominem arguments) are bad etiquette as well as poor logic. Let’s maintain an open democratic culture here with respect for everyone’s opinions.

**Students with Disabilities**: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (772-873-3441) – and follow all OSD procedures.

FAUnewcraeUG—Revised November 2008
Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) General Requirements:

This writing-intensive course serves as one of the two "Gordon Rule" classes at the 2000-4000 level that [you must take] after completing ENC 1101 and 1102 or their equivalents. You must receive a grade of "C" (not C-minus) or better to receive credit. Furthermore, this class meets the University-wide Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) criteria, which expect you to improve your writing over the course of the term. The University's WAC program promotes the teaching of writing across all levels and all disciplines. Writing-to-learn activities have proven effective in developing critical thinking skills, learning discipline-specific content, and understanding and building competence in the modes of enquiry and writing for various disciplines and professions.

If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide WAC assessment program, you will be required to access the online assessment server, complete the consent form and survey, and submit electronically a first and final draft of a near-end-of-term-paper.

Specific WAC Requirements:

1. A series of six reading responses written outside of class, essay format, each typically 750 words: 4,500 words minimum total = 60% of final grade; graded for content and composition; typically I will provide a brief paragraph on the argumentation and evidence used in each essay as well as running commentary on grammar and mechanics; I will grade each essay principally in terms of argumentation and use of evidence, but will still provide substantial feedback about compositional skills.

2. A final essay written outside of class in two drafts, the final draft being at least 1,500 words in length = 25% of final grade; the essay will argue a thesis in terms of topics and examples, based on at least one primary source and two secondary sources; the first draft will be discussed both in class and by appointment; grading will be in terms of grammar, mechanics, organization, style, argumentation, and evidence; I will provide both written and oral comments (by appointment) on this draft in terms of content and composition; as stated earlier under "Honors Work," the standards of writing and research demonstrated in this essay should be consistent with those expected in a successful Honors Thesis.

3. Total minimum of graded words to be completed in the course: 5,100 (including reading responses and final draft of final essay).

4. Class participation, including discussion & preparation/presentation of questions = 15% of final grade (5% attendance & participation; 5% daily questions & quizzes; 5%; writing portfolio).

5. Online Writing Handbook will be employed as a guidebook for English composition: Purdue Writing Guide.

6. Writing will be graded for grammar, mechanics, organization, argumentation and style; major essays will be graded by standards commensurate with publishable writing; reading responses (informal essays) will be graded principally for content but will include some grammatical and stylistic comments and evaluation.

Writing Portfolio: all of your assignments for the term are to be collected in a writing portfolio, which you should submit during the final examination period, along with your final essay. You should organize the portfolio in reverse, with the most recent work on top. Please use a simple paper file folder for this purpose (no plastic). Maintenance of your portfolio is to be considered as part of your class participation grade.

FAUnewrseUG—Revised November 2008
Guidelines for writing reading responses and formal and informal essays, including examples of essay questions:

1) General principles: Informal and formal essays should be organized in deductive, inductive, or dialogical form; one paper during the term will be in narrative form (you will have the opportunity to write your own philosophic myth, as in Plato’s Allegory of the Cave). The principal differences between your informal responses and your formal essays will be in length of development and in the process of revision.

2) Specific guidelines:
   a) deductive or thesis-support organization: this essay will be organized into an introduction, a body, and a conclusion:

   The introduction should present the subject of your essay for a wide, educated audience who are somewhat familiar with environmental ethics and may know of a work or two, but who will need you, the writer, briefly to explain how each idea fits into a given philosophy, what key terms mean, and why the issues you deal with in your essays should be of interest; the introduction will culminate in a thesis which is a succinct statement of the principal argument of your essay. Thesis: “Peter Singer’s thesis that using animals for medical experimentation is comparable to using newborn infants or mentally impaired human beings, since both constituencies are comparably sentient, is untenable because it would disallow valuable medical research.”

   The body of your essay should be organized into a series of paragraphs each of which is organized into a topic sentence and a series of examples illustrating the topic, evaluating the topic in terms of pros and cons, or analyzing the topic in terms of its components. Each topic sentence should be logically connected to the thesis statement; you should remind your reader explicitly of how each topic is relevant to your thesis. Based on the thesis stated above, one topic sentence might say: “Singer’s argument is based on Jeremy Bentham’s utilitarian argument that the key ethical question regarding animals and human beings is, ‘not do they reason but do they suffer?’” Each of these topics could itself be broken down into subtopics, either for the organization of complex paragraphs or for the development of separate paragraphs. Thus you could write an entire paragraph on the topic, “Bentham’s view implicit in Singer’s thus raises the question of what sort of beings are capable of suffering, which means in practical terms the question of degree: ‘what kinds of animals might make suitable subjects for research, because their suffering is limited or nonexistent, and what species don’t.’” Examples clearly supporting different animals species as candidates for research counterexamples could be drawn from relevant scientific and ethical research. Supporting arguments and possible counterarguments (which you’ll be trying to refute) should be drawn from critical secondary sources relevant to the topic as well.

   The conclusion of your essay should summarize key points made in terms of the topics and examples of the body in light of the introduction, and return to reiterate your thesis in light of the ideas presented overall. You should leave your readers with a refined understanding of our original argument and some lasting food for thought. Remember here as in your introduction who your audience is and what their interests are likely to be. You might of course address the philosophers among them, as well as those less initiated into the difficulties of this discipline, striking a balance between the serious and
the merely curious student of your work.

b) **inductive organization:** arguing to derive a reasonable thesis from evidence via a guiding question.

c) **dialogical form:** developing an argument in terms of a conversation among interlocutors who represent different points of view.

c) **narrative order:** developing your idea in terms of a “story” (plot, character, imagery, symbol).

3) Grading criteria: formal: A, B, C, D, F; informal: \(+\) \(+\) \(+\) \(-\) \(-\); the same qualitative measures (below) will be applied under both formal and informal criteria, but under the informal the content of writing (its ideas and reasoning) will be emphasized while its composition (grammar, mechanics, organization, and style) will be noted but not emphasized; under the formal criteria, both content and composition will be emphasized; thus it’s easier to get a \(+\) \(+\) \(+\) than an A, but any compositional problems noted in the \(+\) \(+\) essay and not corrected in the formally graded essay will likely prevent the latter from receiving an A; thus informal writing will serve to provide feedback about composition which should be incorporated into the writing of formal assignments. *The following descriptions of grades are exemplary but not definitive: they do not constitute exclusive criteria for the receipt of grades in each category; they are meant to provide guidelines for judgment, not to determine it.*

A / \(+\) \(+\): the essay argues a clear thesis in terms of a series of topics and supporting examples; it is organized coherently into introduction, body, and conclusion, with logical transitions between paragraphs; it is based on a careful and through reading and presentation of textual and historical evidence; it not only answers the question but also offers its own, distinctive insight into the problem posed; there are few if any errors in grammar and mechanics; it is written in lucid language with varied sentence structure, versatile vocabulary, and astute word choice. A key indicator is that the language used is consistent with the writing of a distinguished Honors Thesis in the senior year. In inductive, dialogical, or narrative writing the same qualitative standards will apply but in terms of each distinct form of organization: **inductive:** the detailed, consistent, derivation of general principles from evidence, leading in clear steps toward the answer to a question; **dialogical:** the dialectical working out of ideas through their interchange, particularly conflicting views of a problem, leading toward a reasonable resolution; **narrative:** the controlled use of plot, character, imagery, and symbol to represent ideas iconically, clearly illustrating concepts or problems, including intellectual conflicts and their resolutions, allegorically, as in Plato’s famous story of the Cave.

B / \(+\): the essay has a clear thesis with good support (or question and derivation of answer, or dialectical interplay of ideas, or ideational narrative); but it does not represent its ideas as clearly, utilize evidence as thoroughly and precisely based on the most discerning standards of reading; its organization is clear but not as tightly interlinked as in the A paper; its language is reasonably communicative but not lucid; its sentences are more repetitive and less varied in organization; its word choice is less diverse and less exactly keyed to the concepts expressed; there are more frequent errors in grammar and mechanics, though the writing on the whole is commensurate with the production of a successful Honors Thesis in the senior year.

C / \(+\): the essay presents a thesis but its components could be clearer and more carefully conceived: e.g., “St Francis of Assisi provides an alternative Christian view of nature as a spiritual community of
fellow species all of whom are worthy of respect, according to White.” Instead of, “St. Francis offered a view of nature more friendly to environmental ethics, according to White.” The thesis, moreover, is not developed in terms of clear and consistent topics supported by appropriate evidence (or does not pursue a key question consistently in terms of a careful presentation of evidence, or does not construct a dialogue with clear thematic development, or does not create a clear narrative based on characters and images that effectively convey ideas). There are several (at least) errors in English composition per page (see grading symbols below). In general, the essay is not clearly argued and not well written, though it is just “passable” by common standards of literacy.

D / √ - : The essay does not have a clear thesis; its paragraphs are not organized into identifiable topic sentences and, if topics are present, they are not logical components of the thesis; nor are topics supported by useful evidence; thus the essay does not develop a clear theme (whether deductively, inductively, dialogically, or narratively); there are multiple errors in composition per page; thorough revision is required targeting the organization, argumentation, evidencing, and composition of the text.

F / √ - - : The essay presents no clear arguments, it is disorganized and its ideas, when discernible, are not supported by evidence; the study reveals little or no familiarity with the assigned texts; there are also typically numerous errors in composition throughout; the writer has clearly not taken the assignment seriously or clearly has not studied the relevant material.

4) Grading symbols for grammar and mechanics: English Grammar Online.
   CS = “comma splice”
   D = “diction” or “word choice”
   DOC = “documentation style”
   frag = “sentence fragment”
   M = “mood” (indicative, subjunctive, interrogative, imperative)
   PA = “pronoun-antecedent agreement” or PR “pronoun reference”
   A/PV = “active or passive voice”
   SV = “subject-verb agreement”
   T = “verb tense” (either the wrong tense or an inappropriate tense shift)

Sample Essay Questions including brief Grading Criteria:

Reading Response: to be graded based on the clarity of your argument, the inventiveness of your surmise(s) about the basic assumptions in question, and the overall quality of your English composition, including grammar and mechanics. Sample Prompt: “Peter Singer argues that ‘all species are equal,’ that prejudice in favor of humankind is an example of ‘speciesism,’ and that speciesist policies toward animals are just as ethically unacceptable as racists or sexist ones. Explain Singer’s concept of speciesism and argue whether his view can provide an adequate defense (or critique) of an animal rights group seeking to ‘liberate’ the animals shown in the film Primates from medical captivity.”

Final Essay: 1,500 words minimum, out of class: this essay is to be written in two complete drafts. The key contents of this essay will have been explored in terms of your weekly Responses thus far (on which you have
received written feedback on content and composition). Based on these shorter essays, you should construct the first draft of the Final. This should be a serious attempt to develop an argument in environmental philosophy based on primary sources in ethics and environmental sciences. Your argument should be in clear deductive (thesis-support), inductive (evidential enquiry leading to a conclusion), or dialogical form; you should *discuss this draft with me* (by appointment); the final draft should be a revision of the first based on our discussion; *both drafts* must be submitted together for a final grade; the assignment will be graded based on: a) the clarity of your (or your characters”) argumentation; b) the reasonableness of your claims about the key ideas in the texts studied in light of evidence you present to support your arguments; c) the quality of your insights into the problems of Nietzsche’s philosophy; *Oxford University Press: Environmental Ethics: David Schmidtz*; d) the quality of your English composition, including grammar, mechanics, organization, and style.

**Sample Prompt:** “Consider whether the medical research on animals, e.g. as depicted in Friedrich Weisman’s film *Primate*, is ethically acceptable and, if so, under what conditions. Base your argument on a discussion of contending perspectives from Peter Singer, Jeremy Bentham, Immanuel Kant, and Michael Pollan.” Note that Pollan does not *directly* concern himself with animal experimentation but rather with animals in the human food chain; thus you would here have to extrapolate his view on medical testing from his perspective on the bioethics of food. He does say, helpfully, “In the case of animal testing, all but the most radical animal rightists are willing to balance the human benefit against the cost to the animals” (“An Animal’s Place”).

Make sure that you cite all sources in a recognized documentation style and argue a coherent thesis based on them.

**Students enrolled in this course agree to abide by the Honors College Honor Code. Please review this important document: [http://www.fau.edu/divdept/honcol/students/honorcode.html](http://www.fau.edu/divdept/honcol/students/honorcode.html).**

**Key Links:**
Bioethics Resources on the Web

**Weekly Assignments**

**Week 1/ August 24**
Introduction: Biotechnology, Ethics, & the Human Prospect: *The Belmont Report*; *World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki*

Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. Class discussion based on the book and HC Forum 8/26/11 (please attend). Note: you should have read *Henrietta Lacks* in its entirety plus the following BB readings before coming to class.

Ethical Frameworks: Kant *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*; *Jeremy Bentham: An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation: Consequentialism; Deontological Ethics*

**Week 2/ August 31**

**Essay 1 due: on Henrietta Lacks**
Ethics of “uses” of animals in agribusiness and scientific research.; Michael Pollan: *The Omnivore's Dilemma; Understanding Animal Research; Vivisection Overview*; William Hogarth, *The Four Stages of Cruelty; Film: Primate* by Frederick Weisman; *Health, medicine, diet, and animal rights. Reading: Bioethics, Introduction;*
the ethics of experimentation with animals. Reading; Bioethics essay 62 Immanuel Kant, “Duties Towards Animals”; 63 Jeremy Bentham, “A Utilitarian View”; 64 Singer, “All Animals are Equal”; recommended, Michael Pollan, An Animal’s Place | Michael Pollan; for Food Industry criticisms of Michael Pollan see: Michael Pollan Wikipedia (final section and bibliographic-links); Recommended, Bioethics 65, “Vivisection, Morals, and Medicine: An Exchange.”

Week 3/ September 7

Essay 2 Due: Ethics of Research with Animals


Week 4/ September 14

Issues in Reproduction; Assisted Reproduction: PBS: Frontline: The Last Abortion Clinic--Abortion Wars


Week 5/ September 21

NOVA: Cracking the Code of Life; Bioethicists Offer Reward For Proof On HPV Vaccine Claim : Shots - Health Blog : NPR


What is Amniocentesis? Spina Bifida? Chorionic villus sampling?

Week 6/September 28

Essay 3 Due: Ethics of Abortion and Genetic Screening

Stem Cell Basics

Prenatal Screening, Sex Selection and Cloning cont’d: 15 John A. Robertson, Jeffrey P. Kahn, and John E. Wagner, “Conception to Obtain: Hematopoietic Stem Cells.”

What is a stem cell? What is a Hematopoietic stem cell? ; 16 David King, “Why we should not permit embryos to be selected as tissue donors”; 17 Michael Tooley, “The Moral Status of the Cloning of Humans.”

PBS: NOVA:


Week 7/ October 5

Distant Past”; 24 Dena S. Davis, “Genetic Dilemmas and the Child’s Right to an Open Future”; Frontline: a
class divided: watch the program | PBS ; Kant: On the Supposed Right to lie; A vindication of the rights
of woman / by Mary Wollstonecraft; Utilitarianism by John Stuart Mill.
Supporting documents: Stem Cells: Early Research; Stem Cells: 2006 Update; What Is Evo Devo?: The
Covenant by Peter J. Boyer. Terms: Germinal epithelium (female); Germinal epithelium (male); An
Introduction to Recombinant DNA; Recombinant DNA; Pronucleus; Blastocyst definition; Neural plate;
Neural crest; Oöcye; Transfected cells; Court OKs US-Funded Stem Cell Research For Now ; NPR.
Cracking the Code of Life;  NOVA | Becoming Human Part 3.

Week 8/ October 12
Essay 4 Due: Prenatal Screening, the New Genetics, and the Ethics of Genetic Selection: Reflections on
“A Class Divided”

Life and Death Issues Introduction; 25 Jonathan Glover, “ The Sanctity of Life”; 27 Germain Grisez and
Joseph M. Boyle, Jr ., “The Morality of Killing: A Traditional View”; FILM: The Diving Bell and the
Butterfly; Destiny of the Republic; NPR a tale of presidential assassination and bad surgery.
Recommended: The Sea Inside

Week 9/ October 19
The Suicide Tourist | FRONTLINE | PBS ; MRSA Infection Control The People's Pharmacy®
28 James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"; 29 Winston Nesbitt, "Is Killing Better than Letting Die?";
30 Helga Kuse, "Why Killing is Not Always Worse."
75-83.

Week 10/ October 26
Resource Allocation: Introduction; Micro-Allocation: Deciding Between Patients: 43 Paul T. Menzel,
“Rescuing Lives: Can’t We Count?”; 44 Nicholas Rescher,
Sick Around The World | FRONTLINE | PBS

Week 11/ November 2
Prospectus for Oral Presentation due; In-class essay: Obama’s Deal | FRONTLINE | PBS; Organ Farm | FRONTLINE | PBS; NOVA | Replacing Body Parts;
FRONTLINE/WORLD. Rough Cut--India: A Pound of Flesh | PBS; "Deadly Monopolies": Medical
Ethicist Harriet Washington on How Firms are Taking Over Life Itself
Literary Interlude: Ishiguro, Never Let Me Go, chs. 1-3. BB: Keith McDonald, “Days of Past Futures:
Kazuo Ishiguro's Never Let Me Go as ‘Speculative Memoir’” Biography, Volume 30, Number 1 (Winter

Week 12/ November 9
Essay 5 Due: Social Justice, Resource Allocation, and Organ Donation
Experimentation with Humans: Introduction; Human Subjects: FAU IRB Principles of Research
Integrity
54 Henry K. Beecher, “ Ethics and Clinical Research”; 55 Benjamin Freedman, “Equipoise and the Ethics of
Clinical Research”; 56 Samuel Hellman, “The Patient and the Public Good”; 57 Torbjorn Tansjo, “The
Morality of Research: A Case Study;” World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki; Ploidy; Oncogene;
Tumor Grade - National Cancer Institute; Film: Das Experiment.
Literary Interlude cont’d: Ishiguro, Never Let Me Go, chs. 4-9. Discussion groups.
Week 13/November 16

**Rough draft of final essay due**

**Human Experimentation:** Film: Das Experiment. 67 Immanuel Kant, “On a Supposed Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives”; 68 Joseph Collins, “Should Doctors Tell the Truth?”


**Heteronormativity**

---

Week 14/ November 23

**Essay 6 Due:** The Ethics Human Experimentation: Das Experiment

**Truth-Telling:** NPR—Listen: Drug Companies Hire Troubled Doctors As Experts; 69 Roger Higgs, “On Telling Patients the Truth”; 75 Ruth Macklin, “The Doctor Patient Relationship in Different Cultures.”

**Literary Interlude complete:** Never Let Me Go, chs. 16-23 (end); **Discussion groups on Never Let Me Go and aforementioned critical articles.**

Discussion groups.

---

Week 15/ November 30

**Oral Presentations; Final Essay Due:** on Historical Narrative, Literature, Science, and Ethics: the Cases of Henrietta Lacks and Kathy H

---

Exam Week/ December 7

Oral Presentations during Exam Period as needed