Rutgers University
PHIL 730:371 Philosophy of Death and Dying
Spring 2015

Times: Every Tuesday and Friday from 9:50am to 11:10am
Location: Frelinghuysen Hall, Room B1
Professor: Christopher G. Weaver
E-mail: cgweaver [at] rci.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: Office 510 on the fifth floor in the Gateway Building at 106 Somerset St. New Brunswick, NJ, every Tuesday we have class from 12pm to 1:00pm.

I. Course Description

The course will introduce students to various metaphysical and ethical issues regarding life, killing, death, and dying.

II. Learning Objectives

Students will learn various theories of death and dying, while also acquiring the ability to critically engage scholarly literature on the metaphysics and ethics of death, dying, and killing.

III. General Approach

On designated quiz days (see the schedule below), at the start of class, I will administer a quiz over the assigned reading material, as well as the material presented during previous lectures. I will then collect the quizzes and go over the correct answers taking any questions you might have. I will then make a few points about the assigned reading, and subsequently start lecturing through new material. On days we do not take a quiz, we will first discuss the assigned reading, and then move into the content of a new lecture. All lectures will be supported by lecture notes that will be made available on the course Sakai site.

IV. Textbook

The required textbooks for this course are:


We will also be reading some chapters out of the following text (though *it is not mandatory* that you purchase it since I will make mandatory readings from it available):

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1 The Instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus when he deems that a change is necessary.

V. Assignments and Grading

**Preparation and Class Attendance**
You are expected to read all of the assigned material. You are also expected to ask questions during the lectures and participate in in-class activities. **Missing more than two classes will negatively affect your grade.** If you are absent, you might want to e-mail a classmate and get the notes. It is your responsibility to keep up with any work you miss. Class participation grades will also be negatively affected if disrespect is shown to others.

**Quizzes**
These will be given at the beginning of class on designated quiz days (see the schedule below) and will cover material peculiar to the assigned reading and lecture material of the preceding classes. Quizzes will be true or false. **Your lowest quiz score will be dropped and will not count against you.** If you miss a quiz because you are late or absent from class, you will receive a zero for that quiz, but remember, your lowest quiz score will not count against you.

**Mid-Term**
Your Mid-Term will be on **Friday, March 13th, 2015.**

**Final Paper**
Your final paper must be on a topic covered in class or in one of the textbooks. You should try to have your final paper topic approved by Instructor Weaver by March 13th, 2015. Your paper must be 7 to 10 pages *single spaced*, justified, and in Times New Roman font (size 12), with one inch margins. The paper must be documented in the University of Chicago manual of style and should include a bibliography. **Final papers are due in PDF format via Sakai, on Friday May 8th, 2015 at 11:00am.**

VI. Schedule for the Winter Session

**Part 1: Death and Immortality**

1 (Tuesday, January 20th): Death: An Introduction
Homework: Read Feldman, Chapter 4 (Due January 27th)
Recommended Non-Mandatory Reading: Cody Gilmore, “When Do Things Die?” (2013, pp. 5-59)

2 (Friday, January 23rd): Death: An Introduction

3 (Tuesday, January 27th): Dying as a Process  (**Quiz Today**)
Homework: Read Feldman, Chapter 5 (Due December 30th)
Recommended Non-Mandatory Reading: Fred Feldman, “Death and the Disintegration of Personality” (2013, pp. 60-79)

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2 The underlined readings will be posted to Sakai.
4 (Friday, January 30th): Dying as a Process

5 (Tuesday, February 3rd): No Class

6 (Friday, February 6th): Death and Evil (Quiz Today)
Homework: Read Feldman, Chapter 8 and McMahan, Chapter 2 (Due February 13th)

7 (Tuesday, February 10th): Death and Evil

8 (Friday, February 13th): Survival of Death: The Embodied Mind View (Quiz Today)
Homework: Read McMahan Chapter 5 (pp. 423-442) (due February 20th)
Recommended Non-Mandatory Reading: John Martin Fischer, “Immortality” (2013, pp. 336-354)

9 (Tuesday, February 17th): No class

10 (Friday, February 20th): [Substitute Teacher TBD] Survival of Death: The Embodied Mind View (Quiz Today)

11 (Tuesday, February 24th): Survival of Death: The Substance Dualist View
Homework: Read William Hasker’s “Prospects for Survival” (1999, pp. 204-235) (due February 27th)

12 (Friday, February 27th): Survival of Death: The Substance Dualist View (Quiz Today)

13 (Tuesday, March 3rd): The Ethics of Killing
Homework: Read McMahan Chapter 3 (pp. 189-202) (due March 6th)
Non-Mandatory Reading: Matthew Hanser, “The Wrongness of Killing and the Badness of Death” (2013, pp. 391-408)

14 (Friday, March 6th): The Ethics of Killing (Quiz Today)

15 (Tuesday, March 10th): The Ethics of Killing: Animals
Homework: Read McMahan Chapter 3 (pp. 203-231) (due March 13th)

16 (Friday, March 13th): Mid-term

March 14th to March 22nd: Spring Break

17 (Tuesday, March 24th): The Ethics of the Death Penalty
Homework: Torbjörn Tännsjö, “Capital Punishment” (2013, pp. 475-494) (due March 27th)
18 (Friday, March 27th): The Ethics of the Death Penalty (Quiz Today)

19 (Tuesday, March 31st): The Ethics of Abortion
Homework: Read Judith J. Thomson (1971) (due April 3rd)

20 (Friday, April 3rd): The Ethics of Abortion (Quiz Today)

21 (Tuesday, April 7th): The Ethics of Abortion
Homework: Read Alexander Pruss, “I Was Once a Fetus: That is Why Abortion is Wrong” (due April 10th)
Recommended Non-Mandatory Reading: Don Marquis, “Abortion and Death” (2013, pp. 409-431)

21 (Friday, April 10th): The Ethics of Abortion (Quiz Today)

22 (Tuesday, April 14th): The Ethics of Suicide
Homework: Read McMahan Chapter 5 (pp. 455-503) (Due April 17th)

23 (Friday, April 17th): The Ethics of Suicide (Quiz Today)

24 (Tuesday, April 21st): Cloning, Bioethics, and Productive Liberty
Homework: Read Beckwith Chapter 8 (Due April 24th)

25 (Friday, April 24th): Cloning, Bioethics, and Productive Liberty (Quiz Today)

26 (Tuesday, April 28th): Cloning, Bioethics, and Productive Liberty

27 (Friday, May 1st): Review (Quiz Today)

VI. Current Academic Integrity Policy
To view the current academic integrity policy, visit the link here.

VII. Self-Reporting Absence Application:
“Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me [the instructor].”