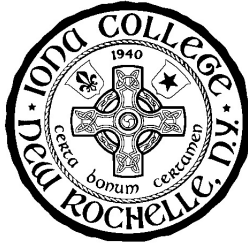


DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

IONA COLLEGE



PHL 401 A

Ethics of Research

*Spring 2012*

Tues & Thurs 2-3:18 Doorley 110

*Dr. Adam M. Goldstein*

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Scientific research and moral and political right are, judged independently, among humanity's most important attainments. Nonetheless, they are not necessarily compatible. Medical research on human subjects poses a special challenge. The physician's professional and moral duty is to act in the best interest of his or her patients. This implies that a physician ought always recommend the treatment he or she believes to be best for the patient. In contrast, scientific research cannot proceed unless there is some uncertain point amenable to solution by applying the scientific method. This is so even in the case of medical research.

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The physician-scientist is in the uneasy position of being morally justified only in recommending treatments believed to be optimum, while at the same time scientifically justified only in administering a treatment in order to find out whether it is indeed optimum.

This semester, we will focus on three topics in the ethics of clinical research that raise deep philosophical issues. First, *clinical equipoise*, which raises important questions about the social nature of the scientific method; second, the ethics of clinical research in underprivileged populations, in which moral issues about *exploitation* and the *just distribution of resources* arise; and third, *near-death research*, some of which aims at applying the scientific method to determine whether there is a human soul independent of the body, and whether such a soul persists after death.

## Course Texts

Two books are required for the course. These books are not available at the Iona College bookstore. Students are expected to obtain them on their own, which should not be difficult, because both are widely available in bookstores and at online booksellers. Both have been published in one edition only, although by different publishers and with different publication dates. Pagination may differ but the works are the same from one publication to another. It is expected that all students will have obtained both of these works by the end of the second week of class.

DAVIS, MIKE. 2005. *The monster at our door: The global threat of avian flu*. New York: New Press. Abbreviated *MAD*.

SKLOOT, REBECCA. 2010. *The immortal life of Henrietta Lacks*. New York: Crown Publishers. Abbreviated *HL*.

Links to all other course texts will be published on Dr. Goldstein's faculty web site. The Blackboard system is not used.

## Evaluation

**Course readings** Students are required to complete all assigned course readings in time for the appropriate class meetings. Consult the schedule of course

readings and assignments below. No particular grade weight is assigned to course readings; but students that do not keep up will most likely not be able to complete graded assignments, and will not be able to make good contributions to class discussion. If it becomes apparent that the class as a whole is not consistently keeping up with the readings, random quizzes will be instituted.

Students are expected to bring a copy of the reading being addressed in a given class session with them to that session. Failing to do so will result in a penalty to a student's class participation grade.

**Attendance & Participation (5% of the grade)** The attendance and participation grade is intended to measure the student's degree of commitment to and engagement in the course. Assessment is qualitative, and is based on a composite, holistic assessment taking into account both attendance and class participation. If a student is in general on time and in class and accomplishes the aims stated in the lists below, he or she will increase his or her prospects for success in attendance and participation. Students taking a leadership role or showing extraordinary or exceptional engagement with the course will in general receive higher marks in the attendance and participation grade.

Students are required to be present and on time for every class meeting, and to remain for the full class period. Student athletes must present written documentation of their participation to Dr. Goldstein if they wish for their participation in these events to be given consideration when determining their attendance grade. The same is true of those who have missed class due to a medical or family emergency. The College's attendance policies, stated in the most recent edition of the *Iona College Undergraduate Catalog*, will be strictly adhered to. Students absent nine or more times will fail the course, being awarded a grade of "FA." Absences for athletic events and in general other events that are not emergencies will not be considered for the purpose of assessing whether a student fails the course with an "FA" grade, that is, missing 9 or more courses, no matter what the reason, warrants the "FA." No documentation concerning class meetings missed by a student (doctor's notes or letters from the athletics department, for example) will be accepted after the last class meeting.

Students will be evaluated on how well they accomplish the following.

- Preparing for class by bringing the assigned reading and having shown strong evidence of having read and thought about it
- Paying attention to Dr. Goldstein and others when they are speaking

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- Speaking out only when called on, after raising one's hand
- Answering questions in an informative, engaged manner, when asked by Dr. Goldstein—"I don't know" is generally not adequate
- Volunteering questions, comments, and ideas
- Responding to others in class when they volunteer questions, comments, or ideas
- When working in a small group, contributing to answering the question or solving the problem assigned to the group by talking about it with others in the group, doing research in a text or online, writing, or planning what the group will say when presenting results
- Working until the end of the class period on group assignments, and completing as much of the work assigned as possible on the day the work is assigned

Any activity that interferes with one's own learning, the learning of others, or Dr. Goldstein's ability to teach is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, the following.

- Using phones, laptops, or any other device for purposes not directly related to class activities
- Becoming absorbed in one's computer screen, and so becoming passive and unresponsive
- Looking over a classmate's shoulder, across the aisle, etc., in order to look at his or her computer, phone, or other device, or offering the opportunity for others to do so
- Having earphones in one's ears, wearing headphones, or listening to any kind of amplified sound
- During class meetings in the lecture-discussion format, engaging in private conversations with classmates
- Speaking without having been called on or having raised one's hand
- Reading or doing work for other classes
- Planning one's schedule or making to-do lists

Those whose distracting activities become a problem during a particular class session may be asked to leave that class session, and may be referred to the appropriate campus services, for instance, services aimed at helping students work at a college level or cope with college life. The same is the case for students who engage in a pattern of distracting activities from one class meeting to another. Uncivil, hurtful behavior is not permitted in class. In the case of such behavior, in addition to the kinds of services just mentioned, campus security will be contacted.

### Philosophical *agent provocateur* (15% of the grade)

**agent provocateur** An agent employed to induce or incite a suspected person or group to commit an incriminating act.

“You may think that I am looking through very coloured spectacles when I attribute . . . the Bulgarian atrocities to Russian intrigue—that Russian *agents provocateurs* prepared the Servian rebellion.”

“Constantinople had long been the Mecca of the professional spy and *agent provocateur*.”

“agent provocateur, n.” OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.rocky.iona.edu:2048/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/3864> (accessed December 29, 2011).

Each student will be responsible, during a single class session of his or her own choosing, for stimulating and directing class discussion by explaining ideas from one of the course readings. The intention of this requirement is to provoke thought in a way that advances the *agent's* classmates' understanding of the issues and course material. Each *agent* will be assessed by the importance of the ideas he or she presents; the adequacy of his or her explanation of those ideas and the texts which make use of them; and on his or her ability to promote and guide class discussion. Each student will be encouraged to determine what works best for him- or herself, no requirements being placed on the use of slide shows or handouts.

**Quote Analysis (“QA”) essays (5% of the grade each, 20% total)** The aim of a quote analysis essay is to interpret a brief passage from course reading. Five such essays are assigned; a student's lowest QA essay grade will be dropped. Due dates for the QA essays are indicated on the schedule of readings and assignments. Additional course documentation explains the QA essay assignment in full.

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**Midterm essay (20% of the grade)** This essay may incorporate material from QA essay. The midterm essay will require the student to elaborate a point of view about the central issues of the course. Succeeding on the midterm essay demands close interpretation of course texts, their explanation, and comment on their relevance and success. Students are expected to exhibit a high degree of proficiency in written composition. For further details, consult the appropriate additional documentation provided by Dr. Goldstein.

**Final essay (30% of the grade)** This essay may incorporate material from both QA essays and from the midterm, each of which may be viewed as a part of the drafting process of the final essay. Requirements for success on this essay as the same as those described above for success on the midterm essay, with the additional requirement that the final essay synthesize the texts and ideas of the course. As in the case of the previously mentioned assignments, Dr. Goldstein will distribute additional documentation detailing requirements for the final essay.

The final essay must be turned in to Dr. Goldstein's office or philosophy department mailbox in Spellman 205 by the end of the final exam period scheduled for the course by the registrar. The final exam schedule is posted on the registrar's web site at the following address.

<http://www.iona.edu/admin/sfs/register/finalExamSchedule.cfm>.

## Policies

**Minimal work for passing** A student must turn in a midterm essay, a final essay, and act as *agent provocateur* for at least one class session to pass the course.

**Deadline for documenting absences** No documentation (doctor's notes or letters from the athletics department, for example) will be accepted after the last class meeting.

## Academic Integrity

A student suffers a lapse in academic integrity if he or she turns in, under his or her own name, work that is authored, in whole or in part, by someone else, but does not attribute that work to its author. This is called plagiarism. A student's intentions are not taken into account when determining whether he or she has plagiarized: whether a student meant to do so is irrelevant to the determination of whether he or she did in fact plagiarize. A student plagiarizing in this class will *fail the course*, that is, *receive an "F" grade for this class*. Students will not be given a chance to make up or drop assignments on which they have cheated: the student fails the course, not just the assignment.

## Schedule of Readings & Assignments

Midterm & quote analysis essays are due the *Thursday* of the week indicated.

- 1 Jan. 17 Tattersall; Jacob. *MAD* Preface, chs. 1–4.
- 2 24 Emanuel. *MAD* 5–8.  
Nuremberg Code, Helsinki Declaration.
- 3 31 Emanuel, etc., cont'd. *MAD* 9–12.  
**QA 1 due.**
- 4 Feb. 07 Freedman.  
*MAD* 13–end; *HL* i-9, 1–4.
- 5 14 Peirce.  
*HL* 5–9.
- 6 21 Longino.  
**QA 2 due.** No class Tues.
- 7 28 Staley.
- 8 Mar. 6 Exploitation. *HL* 10–14.  
**Midterm essay due Fri. 9 Mar.**  
**Spellman 205, 2 p.m.**

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	Mar. 12-16	SPRING BREAK ...
9	20	Exploitation. <i>HL</i> 15-22.
10	27	Exploitation. <i>HL</i> 23-26. <b>QA 3 due.</b>
11	Apr. 03	No class.
12	10	Exploitation. <i>HL</i> 26-34.
13	17	Near-death research. <b>QA 4 due.</b>
14	24	NDR, cont'd. <i>HL</i> 35-end.
15	May 01	Cont'd. <b>QA 5 due.</b>
		<b>Final essay due, Spellman 205</b> Time & date TBA.