

## GRAD 721: Research Ethics

Wednesdays, 4-6 pm at the Graduate Student Center  
August 29, 2018 – October 10, 2018

Lauren Townsend and Macy Salzberger  
[lhtownse@live.unc.edu](mailto:lhtownse@live.unc.edu) / [macys@live.unc.edu](mailto:macys@live.unc.edu)

### Course Description:

This will be a discussion-based course that examines ethical issues in research. Broadly speaking, ethical theory is about answering the question of how we ought to live. The narrower question of research ethics focuses on how we ought to act as researchers: how to determine what is right or wrong in one's research practice, and equally important, how to do what is right in the face of countervailing pressures. This course will provide a background on some influential ethical theories and foundational ethical concepts and then focus in on some of the main topics for the modern researcher such as conflicts of interest and biases, advocacy, intellectual property, mentorship, vulnerable populations, and bioengineering.

### Requirements:

The requirements of the course are to read the online material, attend all meetings, and participate in discussions and in-class writing reflections. There are no exams or papers. You will be expected to keep your in-class writings and the occasional out of class writing reflection in a blog through sakai. You may keep a paper journal instead if you prefer. **Please note that case studies will be distributed in class and do not need to be read ahead of time.**

### Meetings:

Class will meet the following Wednesdays from 4:00-6:00 pm in the Graduate Student Center: 8/29, 9/5, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26, 10/3, 10/10. **You cannot pass this course unless you attend and participate in all 7 meetings.**

### Course Plan:

Date	Topic	Text	Agenda
8/29	Intro to Ethical Theories	Intro to Ethical Theories Videos	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introductions</li><li>2. Intro to Ethical Theories<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Writing Reflection/Discussion on different ethical perspectives</li><li>b. Analysis of a code of ethics in your profession or an organization you belong to</li></ol></li></ol>
9/5	Classification/Categorization Bioengineering and the Aims of Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. "What is a Disease?" (Jackie Leach Scully)</li><li>2. The Case Against Perfection</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discussion of What is a Disease?</li><li>2. Writing Reflection on your research process</li><li>3. Discussion:</li></ol>

		3. Couple ‘Choose’ To Have Deaf Baby	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What is the ideal human and must we define it for guidance in bioengineering?</li> <li>b. What kind of caution is called for in genetic research and in your own? How can we balance caution with progress?</li> </ol> <p>Role-playing case study</p>
9/12	Advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UNC Policy on Employee Political Activity</li> <li>2. On Advocacy by Environmental Scientists: What, Whether, Why, How</li> <li>3. “Stop Stealing Our Stories”</li> </ol>	<p>Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nature of objectivity/neutrality</li> <li>2. Arguments for and against</li> <li>3. Responsibilities to research subjects</li> <li>4. Analysis of UNC Policy</li> </ol>
9/19	Mentorship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss with your advisor or an older graduate student a problem they had with their own mentor in graduate school or early in their career or write a paragraph on a mentorship issue that concerns you.</li> <li>2. Case Studies (From <i>Case Studies for Ethics in Academic Research</i>)</li> <li>3. “I’m Your Professor, Not Your Therapist” (Tenure, She Wrote)</li> </ol>	<p>Discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflection on discussions with mentor</li> <li>2. Responsibilities to mentees beyond academic issues</li> <li>3. Case Studies</li> </ol>
9/26	Conflict of Interest Bias Collaborations with Industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaboration Between Academia and Private Industry</li> <li>2. Discuss with your advisor or other faculty member what they believe to be the biggest problem with bias or conflict of interest that has affected your field.</li> <li>3. Case Studies</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conflict of interest: writing reflection and discussion</li> <li>2. Reflection on discussions with Faculty</li> <li>3. Discussion of Texts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Analyze guidelines</li> <li>b. Discuss Cases</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Other case studies</li> <li>5. Midterm Feedback</li> </ol>
10/3	Intellectual Property Publishing and Peer Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Case Studies</li> <li>2. The Trouble With Scientists</li> <li>3. “Guerilla Open-Access Manifesto” (Aaron Swartz)</li> <li>4. “Academic Paywalls Mean Publish and Perish” (Sarah Kendzior)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Open Access</li> <li>b. Peer Review</li> <li>c. Analysis of the Open Science Framework</li> <li>d. Brainstorming the ideal system</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Case Studies</li> </ol>

10/10	Vulnerable Populations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Excerpt from: "From Object to Subject" (<i>Loving Animals: Toward a New Animal Advocacy</i>)</li><li>2. Girlfriend, Mother, Professor</li><li>3. Case Studies (including Stop Stealing Our Stories)</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Nonhumans</li><li>2. Issues surrounding vulnerable researchers</li><li>3. Case studies</li></ol>
-------	------------------------	--	---