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# GRAD721 - RESEARCH ETHICS - SYLLABUS

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## MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

Tuesdays, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, from January 11 through Feb. 22, the Graduate Student Center, 211A W. Cameron Ave.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has two aims. First, we want to introduce you to concepts, rules, and issues that are central to research ethics. Some of these matters are moral common sense: don't lie, cheat, or steal; treat others with respect; be fair; etc. You have already learned these values in the course of growing up and receiving an education. A lot of the cases of irresponsible conduct in research involve behavior that you will immediately recognize and know to be wrong. These are the easy cases. But research misconduct can also involve principles and practices that are less easy to recognize and defend. These can be controversial. Learning to become a responsible and successful researcher can be complicated and intellectually challenging. Therefore, introducing you to the concepts, rules, and issues central to research ethics also requires practice in thinking critically about difficult cases. One reason for taking this class and spending seven weeks reading about and discussing these issues is to develop your ability to think critically about non-obvious cases. We will spend most of our time discussing the difficult issues. They are intellectually more interesting, and they are more likely to develop your skills in analytical thinking.

The second aim of this course is to discuss these issues in the company of fellow graduate students, researchers, and faculty. Ethical integrity is supported by being part of a community of scholars who are dedicated to doing the right thing and promoting the values of research. We are part of a community that takes integrity and character as seriously as innovation and discovery. We want this course to make you feel part of that community.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings are available on Blackboard.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

We are asking you to devote approximately one hour per week preparing for each class, and two hours each week attending the seminar. After you have completed each week's reading and reflected on it, you will post a (short) one-paragraph reaction on Blackboard, where you will also be able to read and comment on the reactions of your fellow students. The classes will be devoted to discussing the issues raised in the readings. With one exception (conducting an interview with your faculty mentor) there are no other assignments for this class beside being actively engaged in class discussions. There are no papers or examinations. To receive credit for this course, you must do the reading, submit your comments, attend the seminars, participate in the discussions, and think hard about the difficult issues.

## SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

### WEEK 1: JAN. 11

#### INTRODUCTIONS TO EACH OTHER AND THE COURSE

Required Reading: "What is Research Ethics?"

"Hauser-gate" – a selection of articles about the recent Marc Hauser controversy.

#### ETHICS AND EGOISM

Required Readings: "Is Egoism Plausible?"

Recommended Reading: Plato – "The Parable of the Ring of Gyges"

### WEEK 2: JAN. 18

#### RESEARCH MISCONDUCT: FABRICATION, FALSIFICATION AND PLAGIARISM

Required Readings: "Definitions of fabrication, falsification and plagiarism"

Couzin, Jennifer (2006), 'Scientific Misconduct: Truth and Consequences', *Science*, 313 (5791), 1222-26.

Excerpts from Hill, Thomas E. (2010), 'Moral Responsibilities of Bystanders', *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 41 (1), 28-38.

Required Assignment: The UNC plagiarism tutorial at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/plagiarism/>

Recommended Reading: "UNC Case Studies"

#### LYING AND RESEARCH

Recommended Reading: "Why is lying wrong?"

### WEEK 3: JAN. 25

#### PROBABILITY AND CRITICAL THINKING

Required Reading: "Critical Inquiry"

#### STATISTICS

Required Readings: Utts, Jessica (2003), 'What Every Educated Citizen Should Know about Statistics', *American Statistician*, 57 (2), 74-79.

Additional reading TBA

### WEEK 4 – FEB. 1

#### INFORMED CONSENT

Required Reading: Excerpt from MacLean, Douglas (2006), 'Informed Consent and the Construction of Values,' in Sarah Lichtenstein and Paul Slovic (eds.), *The construction of preference* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press), 668-81.

#### HUMAN SUBJECTS

Required Reading: TBA

Excerpt from Zimbardo, P. G. (2007). 'Power, Conformity, and Obedience,' in *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding how Good People Turn Evil* (New York: Random House) 258-292.

#### MENTORING

Required Assignment: "Mentor Interview"

#### WEEK 5: FEB. 8

##### ANIMALS

Required Reading: "Animals"

Recommended Reading: McNeil, Donald G. Jr. (2008), 'When Human Rights Extend to Nonhumans', *The New York Times*, July 13, 2008.

##### THE ENVIRONMENT

Required Reading: TBA

#### WEEK 6: FEB. 15

##### MENTORING

Required Assignment: Report on mentoring interview in class

##### AUTHORSHIP

Required Reading: "Ethics and Authorship: Two Models"

Recommended Reading: Duke University Authorship Policy

##### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Required Readings: "What is Intellectual Property?"

Excerpts from Rosenberg, Alex (2004), 'On the Priority of Intellectual Property Rights, Especially in Biotechnology', *Politics, Philosophy and Economics*, 3 (1), 77-95.

#### WEEK 7: FEB. 22

##### WOMEN AND UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES

Required Readings: "Recognizing Bias as an Ethical Issue in Graduate Education"

Dar-Nimrod, Ilan and Heine, Steven J. (2006), 'Exposure to Scientific Theories Affects Women's Math Performance', *Science*, 314, 435.

Recommended Reading: Summers, Lawrence H. (2005), 'Remarks', *NBER Conference on Diversifying the Science and Engineering Workforce* (Cambridge, Mass.).

NSF Science Resource Statistics

##### PROFESSIONAL CODES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS

No Required Reading