

PHIL 399: Philosophy and Abortion

Instructor: Claire Pickard

1. Course Description

Questions of pregnancy and its termination have been a topic of philosophical discussion for over 2000 years (at the very least). This class will look at the historical, ethical, and political approaches to abortion that have shaped its role in philosophical discourse. The course will address metaphysical questions on the beginnings of pregnancy and life, the bioethical debate over the morality of abortion, and philosophy that questions the role of abortion in politics and culture today.

2. Class Meetings

Class will meet on Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00am – 11:50 a.m. in 303 GER.

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

My office hours are Monday, 10am to 11:50am in Susan Campbell Hall 161. If you are unavailable during that time, please email me at cpickard@uoregon.edu and we can make other arrangements.

4. Course Requirements

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Participation	15 %
Reading Quizzes	20%
First Paper	30 %
Second Paper	35 %

Participation and Attendance: You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in the discussion. I do not take attendance, but it will be difficult to achieve high participation points if you do not regularly attend class.

Reading Quizzes: Reading quizzes will be random and unannounced. They will test for a basic comprehension of the reading assigned for that day's class. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped at the end of the term.

Two Essays: There will be two essays assigned for this course. The goal of these essays will be to demonstrate both your knowledge of the material and your ability to evaluate and analyze philosophical arguments.

Papers should be typed, in Times New Roman, double-spaced, font size 12, with one-inch margins. Late papers will be marked off one full letter grade for every day they are late, unless prior arrangements have been made. Failure to complete either of the essays will result in an automatic failure in the course (grade F). Grading rubric for essays:

A = Excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or another.

B = Good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = Okay. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D = Poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = Failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

5. Learning Outcomes

- Articulate and evaluate philosophical arguments on abortion
- Develop close-reading skills of a text
- Develop communication and discussion skills, especially in relation to a primary text

6. Course Policies

Incompletes and extensions will be given only in the event of documented emergencies.

Accessibility: If you have a documented disability, please contact me in advance. If you need accommodations in this class, I will work with the Accessible Education Center to find a solution for you.

Academic Misconduct: With the advent of the Internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade. In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both direct quotations and paraphrases or summaries of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me. Plagiarism and cheating

on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest. There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the University of Oregon policy on plagiarism, see the following website: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

6. Assigned Text

The readings for this course will be compiled in a course reader, which can be purchased at The Copy Shop on E 13th Ave.

7. Tentative Assignment Schedule (*Subject to revision as we proceed. Some assignments may announced in class*)

<p>Week 1: Introduction/ Framing the Issue</p> <p>T: Introduction to the course</p> <p>R: Luker, <i>Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood</i> (excerpt)</p>
<p>Week 2: Framing the Issue</p> <p>T: Ziegler, “The Framing of a Right to Choose”</p> <p>R: Rudy, <i>Beyond Pro-Life and Pro-Choice</i> (excerpt)</p>
<p>Week 3: Framing the Issue</p> <p>T: Zhang, “Why Science Can’t Say When a Baby’s Life Begins” <https://www.wired.com/2015/10/science-cant-say-babys-life-begins/></p> <p>Chung et. al, “Obstetrician-Gynecologists' Beliefs About When Pregnancy Begins”</p> <p>R: Peters, “The Ambiguous Meaning of Human Conception”</p>
<p>Week 4: Bioethics and Abortion</p> <p>T: Thomson, “A Defense of Abortion”</p>

R: Warren, “On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion”

Week 5: Bioethics and Abortion

T: Marquis, “Why Abortion is Immoral”

R: Lee & George, “The Wrong of Abortion”

Week 6: Bioethics and Abortion

T: First Essay Due on Canvas at 10am

Räsänen, “Ectogenesis, Abortion, and a Right to the Death of the Fetus”

R: Giubilini & Minerva, “After-birth Abortion”

Rini, “Of Course the Baby Should Live”

Week 7: Bioethics and Abortion

T: Dadlez and Andrews, “Legislating Pain Capability: Sentience and the Abortion Debate”

R: Mills, “Seeing, Feeling, Doing”

Week 8: Social & Political Perspectives

T: Rodrigues, “A Woman's ‘Right to Know’?”

R: Francione, “Abortion Rights and Animal Rights”

Week 9: Social & Political Perspectives

T: Hall, “Reconciling the Disability Critique and Reproductive Liberty”

R: Rothman, “Redefining Abortion”

Week 10: Social & Political Perspectives

M: Pickard, “The Problems of Pro-X”

W: Andre, “Pro-Life or Pro-Choice: Is There a Credible Alternative?”

Finals Week

Second Essay Due on Friday, June 15 at 10:15am