Syllabus: 3020 – Fall 2011

Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-1:45 Guggenheim 2
Naomi Rachel (PhD)

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Cell phone on campus- 303-810-1124. My home is out of cell phone reception so the best way to reach me is email. If you leave a message on my cell, you might not receive a response for 24 hours. If you email, it is only a matter of hours. You can always email me and ask to speak to me on the phone. Then we can arrange a good time. For emergencies, my home phone is 303-449-4031

Meeting times. After each class for as long as required. By appointment either day before class. We can always arrange another time to meet. If you want help, I am always willing to make the time to work with you. We can meet in the Seminar Room in the lobby of this building or have a cup of coffee at the UMC.

Course Description and Objectives-
BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH ETHICS

ALL THAT GRAY AREA.......... 

My goal for this course is to enable students to read analytically and to write with clarity and focus. This class will teach you to write well in a variety of styles and to state and defend an argumentative thesis. An educated person must be able to read with in-depth comprehension and to be able to communicate complex ideas in economical and elegant prose. Power comes from communication.

The work done in this class will enable you to do well on graduate school exams (MCATS/ GRE/LSAT) job applications and generally empower you through the analysis of the issues that matters to us now and in our future. We all write best about what we care
about and the essays read and written in this class will inspire both thought and passion. I promise that at least some of the material will be very surprising and shocking. If you don't take ethics seriously, the question is- why not? Medical schools are now recruiting English majors because they can analyze, think critically and read and write with care.

This is a small seminar and I am not going to determine the entire direction of the course before I get to know each of you and your needs and interests. This is a class for flexible minds. This syllabus is only meant to give you a general idea- I reserve the right to make changes during the term. I promise only to subtract, not add, work.

**Class Text**

Required by second class - Available at the CU Bookstore.

**Main Text**= *CASE STUDIES IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH ETHICS*
by Timothy F. Murphy.

These next two highly recommended books you can buy cheaply online at Amazon used. They are also available on campus.

*Keys To Great Writing* by Stephen Wilbers. I first heard of this writing guide from my students. It should answer most of your technical questions.

*Junk English* by Ken Smith A wonderful small book that will help you say more in fewer words and also make you aware of our collective bad writing habits. It's a gem. Junk English is like junk food- learn to avoid it for smart, healthy papers.

The remainder of the reading is available free online. I am saving you money by not requiring you to buy another book, and in return, I expect you to print the assigned reading and bring it with you to class. You should all have VPN numbers to access the extensive CU data base. If you don't use the references below to acquire the number.

If you use Chinook, all the articles are free. For help accessing the system:
ucblibraries.colorado.edu/how/index.htm

To search databases by discipline:
ucblibraries.colorado.edu/screens/findarticles.html

For evaluations and checklists:
ucblibraries.colorado.edu/how/evaluate.htm

And always contact a live librarian.
**Articles:** not necessarily in this order- some are only a few pages.

*Deadly Medicine* by Donald Barlett and James B Steele. VANITY FAIR 12/4/2010

*Making a Killing* by Carol Elliott. MOTHER JONES 9/10/2010

*The Truth Wears Off* by Jonah Lehrer. THE NEW YORKER 12.13.2010


*God Knows Where I Am* by Rachel Aviv THE NEW YORKER 5.30.2011

*Letting Go* by Atul Gawande THE NEW YORKER 8.2.2010

*The Checklist* by Atul Gawande THE NEW YORKER 12.10.2007


*Trial In A Vacuum* by Gina Kolata THE NEW YORK TIMES 1.17.2011

*School of Shock* by Jennifer Gonnerman MOTHER JONES 8/20/2007

*When Is A Pain Doctor A Drug Pusher?* By Tina Rosenberg THE NEW YORK TIMES 6.17.2007

**Classy Guests** - “The great difficulty in education is to get experience out of an idea” George Santayana

In order to bring the reality of ethics into the classroom I have invited very interesting people to come to class. They are all extremely busy people so I can’t, at this time, give you exact dates for all of them. You will be able to interview our guests and the final exam (if there is one) will be based on these class visits.
Barb Losoff - Science Research Librarian- Norlin October 11
Baine Kerr- Malpractice attorney
Terry Leicher- ER psychiatric nurse with expertise in PTSD October 20
Michelle Cho- CU student with lupus and Cushing disease will tell her personal story
Monica Broncucia- Jordan- Adams County Coroner November 1- Day of the Dead.

Class Policies:

Remember to turn off cell phones before class begins. I prefer that students do not open laptops unless there is a disability issue (which must be presented in the first week) or I make an exception. Please be on time. Arriving late or leaving early is disruptive to everyone. I also request you remain in class for the entire period. Since participation is critical to the success of this course, I will provide a sign in sheet every class.

I allow students to be absent four times during the term without penalty. I urge you to save those four times for illness or emergencies. Rather than look at doctor's notes, I just give you four days. If you miss more than four classes, your grade will be lowered. You can also receive extra credit (a surprise at the end of the term) for perfect attendance. To pass the course, you must complete all assignments. Late work will be downgraded one grade the first time, two grades the second time and will not be accepted the third time. I promise to give you a week's notice before a graded assignment is due.

Students with disabilities:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices.

Religious holidays:

Campus policy requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students
who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}}. See policy details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Classroom behavior:

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion, and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, and nationalities. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Honor Code:

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. I will report all incidents of academic misconduct to the Honor Code Council. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Additional information may be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

Sexual harassment:

The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the OSH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed may be found at http://www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment/

Assignments and Grades:

For each assignment, I will give you several topic choices, so you won’t always be writing and critiquing exactly the same work. That’s where we can be flexible and I can direct you to articles that hold a special interest. At the beginning of the class, I will suggest the most positive ways to critique work so you will help your fellow students and also learn how to improve your own work. I grade for improvement. My general grading philosophy is that talent can’t be graded, but improvement can. If your first paper, for example, receives a B- and your second an A, you can earn an A in the class. (It works the other way too, so making a good impression at first won’t help if you slack off later).

I do not have a rigid point system. Your final grade will consist of the following percentages:

- Written work- originals and revisions: 65% (including final exam unless incentive is met)
- Participation and critiques including workshop and peer review: 20%
- Class presentation of interview- ideally two students to a group: 15% (Option to do the interview as part of the final paper but then this 15% is added to the 65%. Do the math)
Papers:
Since I hope you would prefer that your time be spent improving your writing and enjoying the reading and research, I will only give graded exams if students aren’t engaged in learning. If the classroom discussions and critiques are informed and lively, testing won’t be necessary. There will be short weekly or biweekly writing exercises and essays relating to the reading. There will be one longer (minimum 12 pages not including title page or bibliography) research paper due at the end of the term. There will be a number of writing assignments relating to this paper including a proposal, abstract and outline. I call this the slow research paper.

You will have to find your own topic which I must approve. All papers must be typed, 12 point font, double spaced, pages numbered and stapled. Either MLA or APA rules are accepted.

Interviews:
Ideally you will form a pair and be responsible for interviewing someone in the field of Biomedical Ethics. I must approve your subject. Then you and your partner will present the interview to the class and answer questions. You will sign up for this after the second week of class. Each team will be expected to talk for a minimum of thirty minutes and answer questions for at least ten additional minutes. Directly after the presentation, there will be in class written critiques. These interview presentations should be rehearsed in your group and they must add new content to our discussion. You will select your own topic and interview subject, and you must submit a typed proposal for approval at least twelve days before your presentation date. Your group must meet with me at least a week prior to your presentation. At that meeting, you must submit a detailed outline of your presentation and convince me you are ready. I am more interested in originality than I am in power point and hi tech graphics. This is a writing class, so I have decided to ban PP for these presentations since I want more writing not bullet points. You will be presenting orally but, of course, you will have to write a script. These presentations are often the most engaging part of the class.

If the interview pairing doesn’t work out and you can’t, for some reason, give a solo interview, you can add the live interview to the paper for a minimum of 16 pages. Keep in mind that the interview is worth 15% of your grade. I recommend the double assignment (paper and interview presentation) to put less pressure on final paper as percentage of grade.
A syllabus is intended as a contract for the majority of students in the majority of situations, but “stuff happens” and I can be flexible in unusual situations. It is your responsibility, therefore, to alert me to exceptional circumstances as soon as they occur.

And then about your instructor...... Dr. Rachel earned her MFA in Creative Writing and her PhD in English literature. Her writing (including eco, critical and strategy essays) has appeared in over four hundred publications. Before coming to Colorado she taught at the University of British Columbia (Canada). At CU she has earned the Van EK teaching/mentoring award as well as a Women Who Make A Difference Award.

THE MACHINE STOPS ... E.M. Forster-

Read and be prepared to talk about this story in class on Thursday.

Everyone who uses the Internet should read E.M. Forster’s The Machine Stops. It is a chilling, short story masterpiece about the role of technology in our lives. Written in 1909, it’s as relevant today as the day it was published. Forster has several prescient notions including instant messages (email!) and cinematophoes (machines that project visual images).

archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html

This amazing story will help explain why I don't allow laptops in the classroom, why I don't like PowerPoint, and why this class will be mostly a chalk and talk experience. It's a good opening for discussion because it is an amazing example of futuristic thought. In Biomedical Ethics, the issues you will deal with in the future are, at this time, unknown. What might they be?
PRESENTATION DATES AND TOPICS

OCTOBER
10.13- Abbi and Briana- DBS for OCD
10.18 Emily and Stesha- Allergy and Food-
10.25 Charles and Alex E. Organ donations- A. Infants
10.27 Shannon and Zack- Live liver donations

NOVEMBER
11.3- Tara and Clare and Jessica - Twins
11.8 - Lindsay B and Rani- Designer Babies
11.10- Alex A and Rachel- Autism
Same date: Lindsey G and Ned- Genetic Cloning
11.17 Ryan and Kyle- Bipolar Kids
A Vision of the Remainder of This Term

I am penciling in these dates, but I hope and plan to stay with them. They will give you a good idea of what will be expected of you for the rest of this term. We are now in our second month and I have a better idea of how to help you and areas where you could use some more work. This doesn’t, of course, include either the reading or very short ungraded assignments. But this does cover the major written work to the end of the term. I reserve the right to change some dates. You can see that on some days, several longer papers or projects will be due, but you have weeks to do them, so use this calendar and don’t wait until the eleventh hour. None of these are last minute assignments.

OCTOBER
4- Papers Due/ Assign Q for librarian / Assign Q and A reading.
6- Questions for librarian due
13- Q and A critical reading due/ Assign next essay- Due 11.3
18- Final research paper assigned
25- Research paper topic due

NOVEMBER
11.3 Essay due- assign critiques of essays. Assign outlines for final papers
11.10 Critiques due. Revision assigned
11.17- Final paper outline due. Critiques and revision due
11. 29 Assign final paper abstract and scope

DECEMBER
12.1 Abstract and scope due
12.6 Final papers due