

Class meetings: Tues/Thurs 11-12:15 and Tues evenings: 7-9 p.m.

Office Hours: Weds 10-12 & by appt.

Office: CW 206B

Email: srd123@email.unc.edu

**Prerequisite: One ethics course and instructor approval.**

**Course Description (What is Ethics Bowl?):**

The Ethics Bowl is a national competition that focuses on ethical issues and moral reasoning. This course is intended to be a vehicle for preparing up to two five-person teams for competition at the regional level in November and, hopefully, at the national finals again the spring. The competition format requires teams to develop and defend a position on a case. The yearly set of 15 cases, which force students to think through issues in bioethics, the ethics of race and gender, environmental ethics, business ethics, and more, will be released by early September.

Preparing for competition involves a number of different tasks: researching the various cases, studying ethical and metaethical theories and discussing their application to the cases at hand, preparing case outlines for the positions the teams decide to take, and practicing in mock competitions. In the past, teams from UNC have twice won the Mid-Atlantic Regional competition and twice made the quarterfinals at the National Collegiate Ethics Bowl. We hope to once again win our regional and compete for the national championship. More importantly, though, the course is meant to help students see the ways in which philosophical argument and ethical theory can enrich their thinking about pressing ethical issues.

**Possible Texts:**

-*A Rulebook for Arguments, Fourth Edition*, A. Weston.

-*Elements of Moral Philosophy*, James Rachels.

-*Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Immanuel Kant.

-*Utilitarianism*, J.S. Mill.

-Other articles will be provided on the course website.

**Requirements:**

*For Presenters*

- Participation in the form of:
  - Attendance at evening EB prep meetings
  - Regular consultation with researchers and instructors
  - Complete outlines of each of your cases
  - Travel and participation at Regional Competition  
**Friday November 8; Competition Saturday November 9 at  
Clemson University**
  - Participation in extracurricular demonstration workshops (as needed)

*For Researchers*

- Participation in the form of:
  - Attendance at regular EB class meetings and EB evening prep meetings
  - Conducting intensive research for selected EB cases
  - Posting research on Sakai
  - Regular consultation with presenters
  - Participation in peer-presenter evaluations and as mock competitors/judges
  - Occasional presentations as needed

### *Writing Requirements*

- **FOR PRESENTERS:** At least two 2-page critiques of practice rounds; 5-7-page final paper on a case or ethics-related topic of your choice (you are encouraged to consult with me on your paper topic); two high school ethics bowl cases (see below).
- **FOR RESEACHERS:** At least two 2-page briefs on assigned cases 5-7 page paper on assigned case(s) (format will be posted on Sakai); two high school ethics bowl cases (see below).
- **FOR EVERYONE:** You will all research and write two cases for submission to the National High School Ethics Bowl Case-Writing Committee. In previous years, some of my students' cases have been used in the National High School Ethics Bowl competition. Details are on Sakai.

---

### **Course Schedule:**

---

This course meets Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. There are also additional meetings Tuesday evening from 7-9 p.m. The team will also want to meet outside of class.

The calendar is subject to change based on the timing of the release of the cases, as well as the team's progress developing positions once cases are released. I will maintain a class calendar online, but will roughly follow the schedule below:

Week One	First day of classes; introduction and overview of course
Week Two	Ethical decision making; ethical and metaethical theories
Week Three	Ethical decision making; ethical and metaethical theories
Week Four	Cases should be released; begin to formulate positions
Week Five	Develop and outline positions
Week Six	Begin practice rounds
Weeks Seven-12	Discussion of cases; mock competitions
Oct 16	FALL BREAK –no class
Nov. 8-9	<b>Ethics Bowl Regional Competition at Clemson University</b>
<b>Nov. 27</b>	THANKSGIVING—no class
Final Weeks	Read/discuss criticisms of major ethical theories
Dec. 11	<b>Final Exam —12 noon- 2 p.m. HSEB cases due.</b>

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is necessary—but not sufficient—for full participation. If you are not here, you cannot participate, but, just as importantly, being here does not by itself mean you are participating. In addition, University policy states that:

“Regular class attendance is a student obligation, and a student is responsible for all the work, including tests and written work, of all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings except for excused absences for authorized University activities or religious observances required by the student's faith.”

The demands of the course will peak in mid-November and tail off towards the end of the semester. As such, attendance up to that point will be most important.

If you anticipate you will be absent from a scheduled meeting, you must inform the instructor at least 24 hours in advance. Otherwise, your absence will count as unexcused.

**Important Note on Participation:**

It is essential to the experience of this course that everyone participates, and does so not just by addressing me, but also by addressing each other. This kind of interaction requires that everyone be respectful (and nice!) to each other when speaking. A great deal of philosophical dialogue is based on offering, rejecting, and defending arguments, and so it can be tempting, at times, to become loud or even hostile, (especially in the context of the Ethics Bowl competition!). Don't do it! Do not talk over your classmates/teammates, raise your hand before speaking in class, and be charitable if you disagree with something someone else (or an opposing team) has said. It's perfectly fine (and even good, given the nature of the course) to disagree, but be kind in doing so. Philosophy at its best is a collaborative endeavor; we learn most when we listen to each other.

**Grading:**

For researchers: Participation: 40%; Research: 15%; Paper: 25%; High school ethics bowl cases: 20%.

For presenters: Participation: 40%; Practice round critiques: 15%; Paper: 25%; High school ethics bowl cases: 20%.

Papers and HSEB cases will be due by 2 p.m. during the final exam period on Dec. 11--the end of the scheduled final exam period for the course.