

NEUROETHICS

PROFESSOR: Dr. Blake Hereth (“Dr. H”)

PRONOUNS: they/them

EMAIL: Blake_Hereth@uml.edu

OFFICE: Dugan Hall 200L

CLASS MEETINGS: MWF 12:00-1:00pm in Dugan Hall 101

E-OFFICE: Collaborate Ultra (Blackboard)

E-STUDENT HOURS: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:00pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Neuroethics is the study of moral issues of neuroscience. As a new and interdisciplinary field, it has philosophical and empirical dimensions and eschews ‘theory for the sake of theory.’ Getting a grip on neuroethics, therefore, requires being conversant in both philosophy *and* science – particularly brain science. Neuroethics investigates questions about cognitive enhancement, about the brain and free will, about mental privacy and self-ownership, about the use of ‘neurocorrectives’ for criminals, about whether it is permissible to chemically induce or eliminate love, about cognitive disabilities and ableism, about the nature of psychopathy, and more.

COURSE GOALS:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- understand and execute basic logical operations;
- identify and speak intelligently about major issues in neuroethics;
- demonstrate a strong empirical understanding of at least one neurointervention;
- prepare a neurological study for human subjects that is philosophically rigorous, empirically informed, and likely to pass an Institutional Review Board (IRB); and
- write a philosophically rigorous, empirically informed, and original neuroethics paper that contributes to an existing literature.

ESSENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Social Responsibility and Ethics (SRE): This course meets the Core Curriculum Social Responsibility and Ethics Essential Learning Outcome; it provides students the opportunity to reason about right and wrong conduct, to assess moral beliefs and practices, and to apply that knowledge to make a positive difference in the community and the world.
- Applied and Integrative Learning (AIL): This course meets the Core Curriculum Applied and Integrative Learning Essential Learning Outcome; it helps students synthesize their learning experiences, providing them with skills and the disposition to build learning across

the curriculum and co-curriculum, and to realize the benefits of experiential learning opportunities in or beyond the classroom.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Participation (10%): Class will be held face-to-face in Dugan Hall 101. Watch/read/listen to the required content carefully and come prepared to discuss it. Then, when in class, discuss it. You won't receive credit just for being present.
- Presentations (15%): Each student will give a class presentation on an assigned reading. Depending on the size of the class, you will be presenting either alone or in a group. Each presentation should provide a summary of the paper, a reconstruction of the paper's central argument, and questions for class discussion.
- IRB Study (25%): In groups of 3-5, students will develop a neurological experiment for human or animal subjects. The study should be designed with the intention to make philosophical progress. Groups will then have their proposed neurological study evaluated by another group. The IRB Study is due November 21, 2022, by 5pm on Blackboard. Student grades are due by December 1, 2022, at 5pm on Blackboard.
- Empirical Draft Paper (10%): Each student should write a 2,000-word draft paper (exclusive of notes and bibliography) where they demonstrate a nuanced understanding of some neurological intervention drug or technology. (See the Blackboard rubric for further details.) Whichever neurointervention you select will serve as the focus for your Philosophical Draft Paper and your Final Paper. The Empirical Draft Paper is due November 1, 2022, at 5pm on Blackboard.
- Philosophical Draft Paper (10%): Each student should write a 2,000-word draft paper (exclusive of notes and bibliography) where they make an original, creative argument on a relevant course topic. (See the Blackboard rubric for further details.) The paper should very briefly introduce the neurointervention discussed in the Empirical Draft Paper and proceed quickly to philosophical analysis. The Draft Paper is due November 16, 2022, at 5pm on Blackboard.
- Final Paper (30%): Each student should write a 4,000-word paper (exclusive of notes and bibliography) in which they revise their Draft Paper in light of my feedback. The idea is to polish, and add to, the Draft Paper. The Final Paper is due December 16, 2022, at 5pm on Blackboard.

GRADING SCALE:

I use a standard grading scale for this course:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89.99%

C = 70-79.99%

D = 60-69.99%

F = 59.99 or below

TEXTBOOK(S):

- Martha J. Farah, *Neuroethics: An Introduction with Readings* (MIT Press, 2010), \$39.12 (Amazon, new). ISBN-10: 0262514606.
- All other readings will be made available via Blackboard

SCHEDULE:

(NOTE: THIS IS A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE. I MAY ADJUST IT DEPENDING ON NEED OR CLASS PROGRESS.)

WEEK 1 (SEP 2): COURSE INTRODUCTION

Readings:

- Syllabus

WEEK 2 (SEP 5, 7, 9): LOGIC + BETTER BRAINS

Readings:

- **No class Monday, September 5th (Labor Day)**
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 2.2
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 2.4
- Logic Exercise 1
- Logic Exercise 2

WEEK 3 (SEP 12, 14, 16): BETTER BRAINS

Readings:

- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 2.5
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 2.3
- Jessica Flanigan, “Adderall for All: A Defense of Pediatric Neuroenhancement” (Blackboard)

WEEK 4 (SEP 19, 21, 23): BETTER BRAINS

Readings:

- Allen Buchanan, “Will the Rich Get Biologically Richer?” (Blackboard)
- Karim Jebari, “What to Enhance: Behavior, Emotion, or Disposition?” (Blackboard)
- Francisco Lara & Jan Deckers, “Artificial Intelligence as a Socratic Assistant for Moral Enhancement” (Blackboard)

WEEK 5 (SEP 26, 28, 30): BRAIN, SELF, AND AUTHENTICITY

Readings:

- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 3.1
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 3.3
- Françoise Baylis, “‘I Am Who I Am’: On the Perceived Threats to Personal Identity from Deep Brain Stimulation” (Blackboard)

WEEK 6 (OCT 3, 5, 7): BRAIN, SELF, AND AUTHENTICITY

Readings:

- Alfred R. Mele, “Testing Free Will” (Blackboard)
- Monica Diana Bercea Olteanu, “Neuroethics and Responsibility in Conducting Neuromarketing Research” (Blackboard)
- Thomas Douglas, “The Mere Substitution Defense of Nudging Works for Neurointerventions Too” (Blackboard)

WEEK 7 (OCT 10, 11, 12, 14): BRAIN READING

Readings:

- **No class Monday, October 10th (Indigenous Peoples Day)**
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 4.1
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 4.3

- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 4.5

WEEK 8 (OCT 17, 19, 21): BRAIN READING

Readings:

- Oliver Rollins, “‘Picturing’ Risky Brains,” from *Conviction: The Making and Unmaking of the Violent Brain* (Blackboard)
- Jesper Ryberg, “Neuroscience, Mind-Reading, and Mental Privacy” (Blackboard)
- Amihud Gilead, “Can Brain Imaging Breach Our Mental Privacy?” (Blackboard)

WEEK 9 (OCT 24, 26, 28): NEUROSCIENCE & JUSTICE

Readings:

- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 5.1
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, Reading 5.3
- Elizabeth Shaw, “Against the Mandatory Use of Neurointerventions in Criminal Sentencing” (Blackboard)

WEEK 10 (OCT 31, NOV 2, 4): NEUROSCIENCE & JUSTICE

Readings:

- William Bülow, “‘It Will Help You Repent’: Why the Communicative Theory of Punishment Requires the Provision of Medications to Offenders with ADHD” (Blackboard)
- **Empirical Draft Paper due November 1st by 5pm on Blackboard**
- Hallie Liberto, “Chemical Castration and the Violation of Sexual Rights” (Blackboard)
- Zofia Stemplowska, “Should Coercive Neurointerventions Target the Victims of Wrongdoing?” (Blackboard)

WEEK 11 (NOV 7, 9, 11): BRAINS & PERSONS

Readings:

- Farah, *Neuroethics*, 6.2
- Farah, *Neuroethics*, 6.4
- **There is no class Friday, November 11th (Veteran’s Day)**

WEEK 12 (NOV 14, 16, 18): BRAINS & PERSONS

Readings:

- Julian Savulescu & Anders Sandberg, “Neuroenhancement of Love and Marriage: The Chemicals Between Us” (Blackboard)
- Parker Crutchfield, “Moral Enhancement Can Kill” (Blackboard)
- **Philosophical Draft Paper due November 16th by 5pm on Blackboard**
- Thomas Douglas, “Neural and Environmental Modulation of Motivation: What’s the Moral Difference?” (Blackboard)

WEEK 13 (NOV 21, 23, 25): DISABILITY + THANKSGIVING!

Readings:

- John T. Maier, “Addiction is a Disability, and it Matters” (Blackboard)
- **IRB Study due November 21st at 5pm on Blackboard**
- **No class Wednesday, November 23rd, or Friday, November 25th (Thanksgiving)**

WEEK 14 (NOV 28, 30, DEC 2): DISABILITY

Readings:

- Joel Michael Reynolds, “The Ableism of Quality of Life Judgments in Disorders of Consciousness: Who Bears Epistemic Responsibility?” (Blackboard)
- Natalie Ball & Gregor Wolbring, “Cognitive Enhancement: Perceptions Among Parents of Children with Disabilities” (Blackboard)
- **IRB Study grades due by December 1st at 5pm on Blackboard**
- Sara Goering & Eran Klein, “Neurotechnologies and Justice by, with, and for Disabled People” (Blackboard)

WEEK 15 (DEC 5, 7, 9): PSYCHOPATHS

Readings:

- Andrea Glenn & Adrian Raine, “Neurocriminology: Implications for the Punishment, Prediction, and Prevention of Criminal Behavior” (Blackboard)
- Marko Jurjako & Luca Malatesti, “Psychopathy, Executive Functions, and Neuropsychological Data: A Response to Sifferd and Hirstein” (Blackboard)
- Thomas Nadelhoffer & Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, “Is Psychopathy a Mental Disease”? (Blackboard)

WEEK 16 (DEC 12, 14, 16): FINALS WEEK

Readings:

- **Final Paper due December 16 at 5pm via Blackboard**