



**RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Course Overview**



**Bioethics**  
**Course # 0386**

**General Information**

Credits: 0.5	Length: Semester
Weighted: No	Format: Meets Daily
Prerequisite: Open to all juniors and seniors	Grade: 11 and 12

**Course Description**

Bioethics is a one semester non-science elective open to all juniors and seniors. This course is designed to present the students with bioethical issues confronting society and have the students challenge themselves to think about the paths society should follow. The students in each class choose most of the topics to be covered from an extensive list of subjects presented by the teacher. Class time is mostly spent in discussion and debate. Students keep a journal which includes the summaries of the articles discussed, reviews of speakers and movies presented, and their personal opinions on each topic. Upon completion of each topic the students submit a summary paper. Via the summary paper the students demonstrate both the progression of their knowledge base in regards to the topic as well as their evolving views. A group presentation allows the students to work in small groups to present a topic of their choice in detail.

**Course Objectives:**

- **Advance students' science understanding**
- **Prepare students to make informed, thoughtful choices.**
- **Promote respectful dialogue among people with diverse views.**
- **Cultivate critical-reasoning skills**

**Common Assessments:**

**Required Assessments:**

Common Course Assessments:

**Journal:**

- A Journal is maintained in the required format. (Title of topic, date, and prompts from the board are recorded)
- All writing prompts are answered fully and thoughtfully.
- Journal is submitted by due date.

**Class Participation**

- Students are encouraged to engage in the daily conversations and debate. Varying comfort levels are taken into consideration but class participation is a major component of the course.

**Summary Paper (per topic)**

- Per completion of each topic the students will write a summary paper. The paper is a compilation of their daily journal entries, notes from class discussion, comments about the guest speakers and answers to specific prompts. The prompts are designed so that students may demonstrate the progression of their knowledge base per topic as well to encourage the students to think deeply about their personal views on the topic. Each summary paper closes with the opportunity for the student ask further questions or to make closing comments regarding issues they may not be comfortable speaking about in a open forum.

**Course Reflection**

- At the end of the semester and alternative assessment is given. A final paper is written outside of class in lie of a midterm or final. The semester reflection reviews not just the content of the course by the process of discussion

and debate. The grade for the semester reflection is entered as the midterm of final.

### **Major Units of Study:**

#### **Introduction to Bioethics**

(Students help to create the flow of the course based on their personal interest, the topics below may be taught in any order after the introductory unit has been completed)

#### **Allocation of Health Care**

**Organ Donation**

**Reproductive Rights**

**Human Experimentation**

**Sexuality**

**Legalization of Street Drugs**

**Animal Experimentation**

**Environmental Ethics and GMO's**

**Human Genome**

**"Orphan" Diseases**

### **Materials & Texts**

#### **Required Texts and Resources:**

##### Common Course Texts and Resources:

- **Current literature** on the topic as well as historical articles (provided by the teacher). The literature includes newspapers (regional –national), popular magazines, medical journals.
- **Exerpts from the following Novels/ Publications:** The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lack, The Human Embryonic Stem Cell Debate, Taking Sides: Clashing views on Controversial Bioethical Issues
- **Search Engines and Websites** (please see unit plans for specific websites per topic, the following three sites are used throughout the semester).

##### **Exploring Bioethics**

<http://science.education.nih.gov/supplements/nih9/bioethics/guide/default.htm>

##### **Opposing Viewpoints: Search engine for credible articles**

<http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/ovic/?userGroupName=radn13606>

##### **PROCON.org search engine for both sides of the story**

<http://www.procon.org/>

### **Summer Assignment**

NA