Department of Philosophy & Humanities
Department of Biology & Wildlife
University of Alaska, Fairbanks

BIOL F300 "Research Ethics"
MWF 01:00-2:00 PM
Irving 201

Eduardo Wilner
405A FA, x. 7398
ffemw@uaf.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Overview
Science is not practiced in a vacuum and science changes the way we live. Consequently, the potential for conflict between science issues and moral issues is inescapable. Identifying and dealing with such potential conflicts is not a straightforward matter. This course will try to give you the necessary tools to do so. The course will be roughly divided into three parts. First, you will be exposed to the nature of philosophical inquiry and to the tools of the trade: the logic of argumentation. Second, you will be introduced to some central issues in moral theory. Third and last, we will apply what we've learned to a selection of current dilemmas that lay at the interface between science and ethics.

Requirements
Readings for each class will be assigned at least a week in advance. You will be expected to critically study this material before class (i.e. read it seriously enough to be able to participate in class discussions by answering and having questions regarding this material). My lectures will not repeat the reading material but critically analyze and supplement it.
Attendance is mandatory and will be taken regularly. Only 6 unjustified absences will be permitted. More than 6 unjustified absences will result in the loss of 10% of your final grade.

Text
There is no text for this course. The readings for each class will be available in advance, at the reserve desk, in the Arctic Health Building's library.

Evaluation
Quizzes (20%) Sometimes, I get classes with many students that do not read the assigned material. If that is the case with this class, you will get 4 surprise quizzes spread through the semester (5% each). If most people reads the material, then you will just have an extra take home exam (20%).
Three Take-Home Exams (20% each) These exams will consist of a number of essay questions that will require the application of the material discussed in class. You will be graded on your understanding of the subject matter and your answer's good English and clear structure.
These exams will be about four weeks apart and refer to the material discussed in their particular period. The first exam will include a first draft, that will be evaluated and graded (5% for the draft and 15% for the final version).
Term Research Paper (20%). You will be responsible for a 10 page term paper due by the end of the semester. This research project will consist of a critical review of a specific controversy in research ethics. Topics for this paper must be approved by the instructor. You will be required to provide at least one draft, at least one week prior to the due date.
This exam will cover material of the entire course. Whether it will be a multiple-choice plus essay-questions, in-class exam or another take-home, will be decided after I get an idea of how well you do in the take-home format.