

TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE SPECIAL TOPIC: EUGENICS

Class time+room: Thursday, 9.30 am – 12 noon, Assiniboia 2-02a
Instructor: Rob Wilson
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Please read the whole of this course outline ASAP.
Copies are also posted on the eClass site for the course.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will offer a philosophical exploration of eugenics and related topics—disability, biotechnological disciplining, reproductive rights, bioethics, social policy and bioscience, newgenics—with special reference to the history and contemporary significance of Alberta's eugenics movement. The course will be organized around my recently completed book, *The Eugenic Mind Project*, to be published by The MIT Press later in 2017, together with complementary readings from authors such as Leonard Davis and Anita Silvers (on the concept of normalcy), Julian Savulescu (on procreative beneficence and parental obligation), Alison Kafer (on medicalization and disability), and Alison Wylie and Eva Kittay (on standpoint theory and its application to disability). The seminar will also rely on the work of eugenics survivors, such as Leilani Muir, Judy Lytton, and Glenn Sinclair, through their contributions to the Living Archive on Eugenics in Western Canada project (2010-2015), which I directed. The course may be of special interest to students, given the Department's and University's past involvement in Alberta's eugenic past. Topics to be considered will include:

- what eugenics is and its relationship to racism, ethnocentrism, and disability;
- the legacy of the eugenic past, especially in Western Canada, on marginalized social groups, particularly people with disabilities;
- the social mechanics of eugenics: how ideas, practices, and institutions operated in support of eugenics, particularly in North America
- contemporary ideas and practices that might reasonably be thought to have a eugenic dimension to them, such as common forms of prenatal screening; various forms of ongoing institutionalization, and some defences of bioenhancement; and
- the ongoing endorsement of, and individual and institutional complicity with, eugenic ideas in contemporary bioethics and philosophical ethics.

Much of the weekly work for the course will be done through discussion and collaborative learning.

Additional resources that the course will make use of will be drawn from EugenicsArchive.ca, including a eugenics timeline and “mindmap”, video narratives by sterilization survivors, and over 100 short encyclopedic entries on topics related to eugenics, such as immigration, institutionalization, and sterilization. We will spend some time in Week 1 becoming familiar with these resources.

2. THEMATIC OVERVIEW AND WEEKLY READINGS

The weekly schedule for the course is structured around the three thematic parts to *The Eugenic Mind Project*, as follows:

- A. Eugenic Activities: Probing Eugenics (Weeks 1-6)
- B. Eugenic Variations: The Persistence of Eugenics (Weeks 7-10)
- C. Eugenic Voices: Knowing Agency at the Margins (Weeks 11-12)

Roughly speaking, the first part of the course will provide an extended introduction to eugenics and related themes; the second part will concentrate on the central, novel ideas in the book focused on what I call the social mechanics of eugenics; and the third will reflect on the idea of a standpoint eugenics and the application of standpoint theory more generally in the epistemology of marginalized agency.

For the most part, each week will focus on a chapter from *The Eugenic Mind Project*, together with one or more associated reading. (Exceptions are Weeks 1, Weeks 6, and Weeks 9-10.) These readings are typically discussed or mentioned in the corresponding chapter, but will be drawn from various sources, including epistemology, the philosophy of science, disability studies, the history of eugenics, and bioethics. In addition, we will watch and discuss two films in the course, *Surviving Eugenics* (Moving Images Distribution, 2015) and *Witch Hunt* (Hard-Nac Movies, 2009).

For each week, I have provided a brief orienting summary, together with a couple of questions to think about for that week, and a listing of the course materials. A good idea is to try to answer the questions for each section of the course both in advance of the corresponding classes, and then again in light of those classes. A simple comparison of your responses will allow you to get some self-monitored measure of what you have learned in the intervening weeks.

All numbered course materials will be available from eClass or through direct access from the University of Alberta library. There is thus no course packet to purchase for the course. Non-numbered course materials are videos, blog posts, and other media of relevance that can be accessed directly through the links provided. Further materials may be added at the discretion of the instructor, or at the suggestion of students.

Please read through this thematic overview early on, and let me know if there are other things you would like to cover, either in addition or instead. We may modify the course accordingly.

A. Eugenic Activities: Probing Eugenics

Week 1: Surviving Eugenics

In our first week, I will provide a general overview to the course and to the EugenicsArchive.ca website, which we will make use of throughout the course. We will also watch and discuss *Surviving Eugenics*, a 44-minute documentary film created as part of the Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada project. Each of the next four weeks will be dedicated to focusing on one activity with respect to eugenics: standpoint, characterizing, specifying, and subhumanizing. And to round out this thematic part of the course, we'll consider a pair of readings—by the historian Martin

Pernick and by the disability theorist Alison Kafer—that both extend some of the themes that arise and challenge accepted views of both eugenics and disability.

Jordan Miller, Nicola Fairbrother, and Robert A. Wilson, *Surviving Eugenics* (Moving Images Distribution, 2015).

“Report of the MacEachran Subcommittee, Department of Philosophy, April 1998”, submitted by David Kahane, David Sharp, and Martin Tweedale, available from the University of Alberta’s Department of Philosophy website, http://www.philosophy.ualberta.ca/en/About%20the%20Department/~//media/philosophy/Documents/Policies/MacEachran_report.pdf

- In what ways do individual narratives and collective remembering provide us with insights into eugenics and its contemporary ramifications in Canada?
- What does the eugenic past have to do with present thinking—about disability, sorts of people, collective memory, medical science?

Week 2: Standpoint and Eugenics

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.1, “Standpointing Eugenics”.

Robert N. Proctor, “The Politics of Knowledge”, in his *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988, pp.282-297.

Heidi Grasswick, “Feminist Social Epistemology”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2013) section 2.1, “Differentiated Knowers and Standpoint Theory”.

Sandra Harding, “Standpoint Theories: Productively Controversial”, *Hypatia* 24(4) (2009), pp.192-200.

Standpoint epistemology is best-known from feminist work on knowledge and the philosophy of science. This week, we will familiarize ourselves with the general idea of standpoint theory and consider what a “standpoint eugenics” might look like. We will also take up several key ideas for TEMP as a whole, such as that of *engaged individuality* and *institutional complicity*, and reflect on the idea of a politics of knowledge, especially as it emerges from a consideration of the history of eugenics.

- What is eugenics, and how has its relationship to science been viewed by historians?
- What does a standpoint eugenics amount to?

Week 3: Characterizing Eugenics

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.2, “Characterizing Eugenics”.

Philippa Levine and Alison Bashford, 2010, “Introduction: Eugenics and the Modern World”, in their *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*. New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 3-24.

Mathew Thomson, “Disability, Psychiatry, and Eugenics”, in Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*. New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 116-133.

“Eugenics” was coined by Sir Francis Galton in 1883, though the idea of eugenics has a longer history. Eugenics is often thought of as a historical movement existing between (roughly) 1865 and

1945, and has been studied as such. Here we will explore various ways to characterize eugenics and the relationships between eugenics and a variety of “isms”, such as nationalism, racism, sexism, and ableism.

- What role have science and medicine played in the history of eugenics?
- In what ways have intellectual disability and psychiatric illness functioned in eugenic thinking?

Week 4: Eugenic Traits

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.3, “Specifying Eugenic Traits”.

Sexual Sterilization Act of Alberta (1928, 1937, 1942).

Harry Laughlin, “Model Eugenic Sterilization Law”, ch.XV, and “Explanatory Comments on the Model Sterilization Law”, ch.XVI, of his *Eugenic Sterilization in the United States*. Chicago: Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago, 1922, pp.446-461.

Throughout most of the twentieth-century, some people were subject to eugenic classification and treatment based on their putatively having certain traits that were the focus of research, publications, and propaganda generated by pro-eugenic individuals and organizations, and that found their way into marriage, immigration, and sterilization laws in North America and elsewhere. In the most extreme case, that of Nazi Germany, having one or more of those traits became literally a matter of life and death. What were those traits, *eugenic traits*? The Sexual Sterilization Act of Alberta was law in the province from 1928 until 1972, providing the legal basis for the vast majority of Canadian eugenic sterilizations. Here we will be concerned, in part, with the ways in which the eugenic traits invoked in the SSA and in eugenics in practice in Alberta operated, and the kind of standardization of eugenic legislation typified by Laughlin’s model sterilization law.

- What sorts of traits of people formed the basis for their eugenic targeting, and why?
- How was it that eugenic sterilization continued to be practiced in Western Canada for nearly three decades after the end of World War II?

Week 5: The Subhumanization of the Targets of Eugenics

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.4, “Subhumanizing the Targets of Eugenics”.

Harriet McBryde-Johnson, “Unspeakable Conversations”, *New York Times Magazine*, 16th February, 2003.

Robert A. Wilson, “Peter Singer on parental choice, disability, and Ashley X”, videocast #1 from the Thinking in Action series, available at the Living Archives blog <http://whatsortofpeople.wordpress.com/2009/02/13/all-wrapped-up-complete-thinking-in-action-series/>.

Dick Sobsey, “Singer on universal human rights”, videocast #2 from the Thinking in Action series, available at the Living Archives blog <http://whatsortofpeople.wordpress.com/2009/02/13/all-wrapped-up-complete-thinking-in-action-series/>.

Dick Sobsey, “Peter Singer and profound intellectual disability”, videocast #5 from the Thinking in Action series, available at the Living Archives blog

<http://whatsortsofpeople.wordpress.com/2009/02/13/all-wrapped-up-complete-thinking-in-action-series/>.

The idea of dehumanization (or, as I prefer to call it, “subhumanization”) has received much attention in moral and social psychology in recent years, though its application has primarily been to understanding genocidal killing, nationalism, racism, and ethnocentrism. Here we turn to focus on ways in which eugenic classification, social policy, and legislation, as well as eugenic thinking more generally, is subhumanizing. Moving between the eugenic past and present reflections on cognitive disability and moral philosophy, and between US and Canadian eugenics, we will supplement our reading of the chapter with a focus on some of Peter Singer’s views of intellectual disability and reactions to those views within the disability community.

- How does eugenics subhumanize, if it does, and if it doesn’t, why not?
- In what ways does (and doesn’t) the notion of dehumanization or subhumanization extend to ideas or views (vs practices and actions)?

Week 6: The Unfit, Past and Present

Martin Pernick, “Identifying the Unfit: Biology and Culture in the Construction of Hereditary Disease”, ch.3 of his *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of ‘Defective’ Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures Since 1915*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.41-80.

Alison Kafer, “At the Same Time, Out of Time: Ashley X”, ch.2 of her *Feminist, Queer, Crip*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013, pp.47-68.

As we round out our extended introduction to philosophical, scientific, medical, legal, and ethical issues related to eugenics, we will step away from Part One of *The Eugenic Mind Project* to discuss a couple of readings that were mentioned in Chapter 4. Martin Pernick’s *The Black Stork* focuses on the euthanasia enthusiasm of the Chicago doctor Harry Haiselden and its relationship to eugenics, while the disability theorist Alison Kafer examines the case of Ashley X with a special eye on disability and time. The first provides grounds for reconsidering the eugenic past; the second, the newgenic present.

- Pernick takes euthanasia and eugenics to have a more tightly interwoven history that reveals much about eugenic thinking. Is he right, and if so, about what, more precisely?
- The contemporary case of Ashley X is taken by Kafer to exemplify ways in which disability interrupts expectations about time. How so?

B. Eugenic Variations: The Persistence of Eugenics

Week 7: The Puzzle of Marked Variation

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.5, “Where Do Ideas of Human Variation Come From?”.

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.6, “A Socio-Cognitive Framework for the Puzzle of Marked Variation”.

Lennard Davis, “Constructing Normalcy”, ch.2 of his *Enforcing Normalcy*, reprinted in his *Disability Studies Reader*. Routledge, 2nd edition, 2007, pp.3-16; 5th edition, 2017, pp.1-14, as “Disability, Normality, and Power”.

Anita Silvers, “Disability and Normality” in Miriam Solomon, Jeremy R. Simon, and Harold Kincaid (eds.), *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Medicine*. New York: Routledge, 2016, pp.36-47.

In turning more explicitly to the social mechanics of eugenics in Part Two of *The Eugenic Mind Project*, we begin with what I call the puzzle of marked variation. Ontologically, human variation is ubiquitous, while negatively marked difference is not. Human variation saturates our world in its physical, biological, cognitive, social, and cultural dimensions, while negatively marked difference is arguably not a feature of that world itself at all. Epistemologically, however, it is marked difference that is everywhere for us, with its remainder, mere variation, noticed only secondarily, if at all. Marked variation is often how we identify ourselves and others, and it structures the prosocial lives that we each lead. Given the ubiquity of human variation in the world, what is it that creates the epistemic possibility of marked variation? In the case of disablement and medicalized pathology, what makes it epistemically possible, in a world full of many distinctive forms of human variation, for us to mark some of that variation as sub-normal?

- What is the role of the concept of “the normal” in understanding human variation and our responses to it?
- Does the socio-cognitive framework constitute a reductionist approach to the puzzle of marked variation? Why or why not?

Week 8: Newgenics and Moral Philosophy

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.7, “Backdoors, Newgenics, and Eugenics Underground”.

Jeff McMahan, “Cognitive Disability and Cognitive Enhancement”, *Metaphilosophy* 40 (2009), pp.582-605. Reprinted in Eva Feder Kittay and Licia Carlson (eds), *Cognitive Disability and its Challenge to Moral Philosophy*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, pp.345-367.

Eva Feder Kittay, “The Personal is Philosophical is Political: A Philosopher and Mother of a Cognitively Disabled Person Sends Notes from the Battlefield”, *Metaphilosophy* (40) (2009), pp.606-627. Reprinted in Eva Feder Kittay and Licia Carlson (eds.), *Cognitive Disability and its Challenge to Moral Philosophy*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 393-413.

Robert A. Wilson, “What are the deep facts about our moral status”, videocast #3 from the Thinking in Action series, available at the Living Archives blog <http://whatsortsofpeople.wordpress.com/2009/02/13/all-wrapped-up-complete-thinking-in-action-series/>.

Robert A. Wilson, “The ethics of exclusion, the morality of abortion, and animals”, videocast #4 from the Thinking in Action series, available at the Living Archives blog <http://whatsortsofpeople.wordpress.com/2009/02/13/all-wrapped-up-complete-thinking-in-action-series/>.

As we will have seen in Weeks 5 and 6, one important strand of work in bioethics revolves around the concept of a person, and a number of leading figures in the field have argued that human beings with limited cognitive capacities do not have the moral status “person”. Disability rights advocates have long rejected that view, and in recent years a productive dialogue has opened up between philosophers focused on disability and those advocating such views. Here we will consider the

views of Peter Singer and Jefferson McMahan on persons, as well as Julian Savulescu on the selecting the best children, and explore the relationships that such views bear to eugenics and its history.

- Does standpoint eugenics have anything distinctive to offer in thinking about debates over persons and cognitive capacities?
- In what ways does (and doesn't) mainstream medicine and bioethics promulgate problematic views of people with (intellectual) disabilities?

Week 9: Bioethics, Disability, and Eugenics

Adrienne Asch “Disability Equality and Prenatal Testing: Contradictory or Compatible?”, *Florida State University Law Review* 30 (2003), pp. 315-342.

Julian Savulescu, “Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children”, *Bioethics* 15 (5/6) (2001), pp.413-426.

Julian Savulescu and Guy Kahane, “The Moral Obligation to Create Children with the Best Chance of the Best Life”, *Bioethics* 23 (5) (2008), pp.274-290.

Matthew J. Barker and Robert A. Wilson, “Well-Being, Disability, and Choosing Children”, submitted manuscript.

One issue that arises in thinking about bioethics and eugenics, as we will have seen, is that parents make decisions about, and on behalf of, the fetuses, infants, and children they typically produce, and these decisions and the attitudes they reflect interact with broader social attitudes about people, cognitive capacities, and animals. Here we turn to several more specific issues in this general arena that have been pertinent to disability studies: the expressivist objection to prenatal testing, the notion of profound intellectual disability; and the relationships between disability, parenting, and the idea of loss.

- Is the practice of prenatal testing express a problematically negative view of people with disabilities?
- What moral obligations do we have, given present and likely future reproductive technologies, in the creation of children?

Week 10: The Idea of Wrongful Accusation and Its Application to Eugenics

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.8, “Eugenics and Wrongful Accusation”.

Witch Hunt. Hard-Nac Movies, Your Half Media Group: Glendale, CA, 2009.

In this final chapter of Part Two, we take up another puzzle about the social mechanics of eugenics and consider one novel answer to it. Given the scientific, epistemic, and moral limitations and failures of eugenics that we now recognize, how did eugenics continue on as it did in the postwar era? To put it the other way around: how did the social mechanics of eugenics continue to operate, given that there is widespread agreement now that eugenics was fatally flawed on scientific, epistemic, and moral grounds? Those questions are especially striking in the context of eugenics in Canada, given that people were still being sterilized on eugenic grounds right up until the repeal of

the Sexual Sterilization Act of Alberta in 1972. The answer that we will consider construes eugenics as a form of wrongful accusation, and fleshing this answer out will take us into the dark waters of the satanic ritual child abuse epidemic prominent in North America in the last two decades of the twentieth-century.

- Is there any real puzzle to be solved about the persistence of eugenics in the postwar era?
- What are the pros and cons of conceiving of eugenics as a form of wrongful accusation?

C. Eugenic Voices: Knowing Agency at the Margins

Weeks 11 and 12: Standpoint Theory, Eugenics, and Disability

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.9, “Knowing Agency”.

The Eugenic Mind Project, ch.10, “Standpoint Eugenics Unbound: Survivorship for the Subhuman”.

Elizabeth Anderson, “Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2015), section 2, “Feminist Standpoint Theory”.

Anita Silvers, “Feminist Perspectives on Disability”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (2013), sections 3 and 4.

Alison Wylie, “Feminist philosophy of science: Standpoint matters”, In *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, vol. 86(2), pp.47-76. American Philosophical Association, 2012.

In these final weeks of the course we return to reflect on the application of standpoint theory in understanding eugenics, past and present, particularly with respect to disability. Since standpoint theory has its origins in both classical Marxist accounts of class struggle and in feminist epistemology, part of our task here will be to see how standpoint theory operates in both of these domains before turning to the case of eugenics and disability. We will divide the readings here between the final two weeks of the course once we get most of the way through the course, adjusting as seems appropriate.

- What, if anything, does standpoint theory tell us about knowledge “at the margins”?
- Is the idea of a standpoint sufficiently robust to shed light on cases that fall beyond its paradigm applications?

3. ASSESSMENT

For assessment, students should expect to write a short (1500-2000 word) and a long (3500-4500 word) paper for the course, and to actively participate in weekly in class discussions. These will be worth, respectively, 25, 50, and 25% of the final grade for the course. The differential expectations for undergraduate and graduate students are reflected, in part, in the differential lengths for the written work for the course. All students will be assessed by the following components, which will be formally equal in value:

- participation
- short paper (412: 1500 words 510: 2000 words)
- term paper draft (412: 2500 words 510: 3500 words)
- term paper final version (412: 3500 words 510: 4500 words)

Participation will include class attendance and manifest preparation, and the completion of minor writing tasks given in class. A core part of your participation will be assessed via eClass, including your participation in assigned forums and the maintenance of your weekly reading log that records your summaries of and reflections on the assigned readings and other resources, covering Weeks 2-11 of the course. This log will be kept on Eclass, and while I have included it primarily as an active learning tool, it should also show the reading and thinking you have been doing for the course on a week-by-week basis. I will monitor these regularly, and provide feedback as seems appropriate.

Late submission of papers is discouraged, and you should talk to me in advance about a paper that will not be submitted by the due date. Expect a grade reduction for a late paper that does not have an extension in writing from me; I penalize at a grade a day for late papers, and set a date after which the paper will receive a grade of *zero*. To avoid disappointment, please take this general policy seriously.

4. PLAGIARISM AND OTHER ACADEMIC OFFENSES

What I hope is a reminder for most of you: that **plagiarism** is a seriously academic offense that is grounds for disciplinary action. The first item under “Inappropriate Academic Behaviour” in the University of Alberta’s Code of Student Behaviour reads:

30.3.2(1) Plagiarism

No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student’s own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.

This document can be found at:

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour/303OffencesUndertheCode/3032InappropriateAcademicBehav.aspx>

I also draw attention to a later section of this same document:

30.3.6(4) Misrepresentation of Facts

No Student shall misrepresent pertinent facts to any member of the University community for the purpose of obtaining academic or other advantage

since several students I have taught in the past have been investigated for this breach of the student code.

I would encourage you to consult these sites early in the course if you are unfamiliar with their contents and, more generally, **not to risk the consequences of plagiarizing** in this course, which could include not only *outright failure in the course*, but have more severe repercussions for your future at the University. As 30.3.6(4) above implies, plagiarism is not the only way to violate the Code of Academic Integrity that the University operates under, and other violations will also be treated

seriously when detected. To sample from my recent experiences at Alberta, the following kinds of behaviours, should they occur in this course, will be viewed by me as reasonable grounds to think that the Code of Student Behaviour has been violated:

- lying to your instructor about personal illness or family misfortune in order to get an extension on a paper (e.g., you were not actually ill, the person you have claimed died is actually still alive)
- falsely claiming that your participation in the course has been limited because of another course you are taking (e.g., when the course does not even exist, when it exists but you are not taking it)
- throwing your paper at your instructor because you are disappointed in the grade you receive for it, and engaging in defamatory communications about your instructor on that basis.
- checking the eClass site for the course during the final examination on your phone or computer.

What follows in the remainder of this section are notes required on all syllabi in the Faculty of Arts, many of which pertain to such matters.

Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

Academic Integrity

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx>) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Learning and working environment

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the student ombudservice: (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>). Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110>.

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Office of Student Conduct and Accountability](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [23.3\(1\)](#) and [23.5.6](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Accessibility Services, contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email ssdsrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB www.ssds.ualberta.ca).

Grading:

Each piece of work completed for the course will be given one of the following letter grades, and these will be converted to a grade point in according with the following table, then added together and averaged to arrive at your final letter grade. There is no fixed percentage of students who can receive any particular grade for any particular assessment component, or overall in the course; there are also, in my view, no meaningful descriptors for any of the particular grades, except a larger number of smiley-face emoticons the higher your grade ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺.

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+		4.0	
A		4.0	
A-		3.7	
B+		3.3	
B		3.0	
B-		2.7	
C+		2.3	
C		2.0	
C-		1.7	
D+		1.3	
D		1.0	
F		0.0	

5. STUDENT SERVICES, ACCOMMODATION, SPECIALIZED NEEDS

The University of Alberta offers a range of student services, including the Aboriginal Student Services Centre and Specialized Support and Disability Services. You can find these listed at <http://www.ssds.ualberta.ca/> and at <http://www.deanofstudents.ualberta.ca/student-services.aspx>. You are encouraged to consult these pages and make use of relevant services provided. If there are ways in which I can improve the accessibility of the course and the materials it uses, please do not hesitate to let me know.

6. ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

I came to Alberta in July 2000 as a Professor of Philosophy after teaching previously at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where I was a member of the Cognitive Science Group at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, and at Queen's University. I did a BA(Hons) in Philosophy at the University of Western Australia, and my MA and PhD in Philosophy at Cornell University, minoring in Cognitive Studies. I was the founding Director of Philosophy for Children Alberta (2008-2015) and the principal investigator for the *Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada* project (2010-2015, see www.eugenicsarchive.ca) a 5-year project funded by the Community-Research Alliance Program of SSHRC. I was also a Professor in Educational Policy Studies from 2013 to 2015.

My chief research and teaching expertise is in the philosophy of mind, cognitive science, and the philosophy of biology; I have also published on topics outside of these areas—disability, Locke on primary qualities, personal identity, constitution views in metaphysics, and kinship. In general, I am most interested in connections between philosophy and the various sciences. I am the author or editor of six books, including *Boundaries of the Mind* (Cambridge, 2004) and *Genes and the Agents of Life* (Cambridge, 2005), and have recently completed one other, *The Eugenic Mind Project* (MIT Press, 2017), and expect to finish another, *Relative Beings*, which is on kinship in the biological and social sciences, during 2017. I am a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and a long-standing member of the Luxuriant Flowing Hair Club for Scientists (see Gallery #2).

<http://www.improb.com/projects/hair/hair-club-top.html>

January 2017