The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity  
Trinity International University  
Deerfield, IL  

BE 7700b Human Nature, Personal Identity, and the Ethics of Brain Technologies  
June 24-26, 2019  
2-3 Semester Hours  
Professor of Record: William P. Cheshire, Jr., MD  
Email: wpcheshire@me.com  
Co-Teacher: Todd Daly, PhD  
Email: tdaly@urbanatheologicalseminary.org  

Course Description  
This seminar explores ethical, philosophical, and theological questions raised by current and emerging brain imaging technologies and neural interfaces. Is the mind the sum of the brain’s neurons? Do brain scans provide a complete or accurate picture of who we are? Has free will been disproved, and if so, what becomes of moral agency? Can or should pharmaceutical agents or electronic interfaces be used to alter personal identity? Memory? Pain or pleasure? Should technology be used to augment human intelligence? What is the best way to improve our minds?  

Course Learning Objectives  
- Discuss and contrast prevailing models of human nature.  
- Analyze reductionist materialistic models of the mind and brain and discuss their limitations.  
- Summarize arguments for and against the use of technology to enhance human cognitive capacity.  
- Articulate the challenges neuroscience and brain technologies pose to the Christian life.  

Required Texts  

Books  

Articles  
3 Credit Hour Participants will add the following required readings:
(2 Credit Hour Participants are encouraged to read these as well, depending on interest)

Books


Articles


Course Expectations

Students are expected to attend every class session and actively participate in discussion. Student participation is considered vital to the goals of this course. Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class in order to be prepared for the material. Students will also be expected to turn in written assignments reflecting the guidelines defined in this syllabus and set forth in class and by the assigned deadlines. Failure to turn assignments in on-time will result in a grade reduction at the professor of record’s discretion. **Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.**

Academic Dishonesty

Founded upon the principles of Scripture and Christian tradition, the Graduate School expects the members of its community to lead lives that are characterized by honesty and integrity. This expectation is equally important in academic matters as well as personal affairs. A policy on academic dishonesty must be understood in this broader context of personal integrity and character.

**Definition**

Academic dishonesty is not limited to “cheating” in or out of the classroom. It also includes plagiarism and misuse of library and/or academic resources on campus. Plagiarism consists of representing ideas and/or direct written material from other sources as one’s own work. Cheating consists of any dishonest behaviors that afford the student an unfair advantage over other students in course requirements.
Avoiding Plagiarism
Morally considered, plagiarism is a combination of theft and deception. This judgment has as its basis the principle that ideas, facts, and arguments, even sentences and phrases, are “owned” by those who discover or originate them. Moreover, when these entities are copyrighted (as almost all published materials are) that ownership is stringently defined and protected by law.

No longer, then, can a person in good conscience or much safety write individual paragraphs and sentences, much less prepare entire papers, simply by finding a reference source addressed to the topic in question and changing its wording. The basic principles of documentation and practice require appropriate attribution to the source and creative use of what others have thought, researched, and written.

Americans with Disabilities Act
In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Trinity International University to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations, or academic adjustments, and services to students with a documented disability to help ensure an equal educational opportunity. Students seeking these services should contact Mary Guthrie, Assistant Dean of Students, at the earliest possible time with supporting documentation. If you believe you might have a disability that negatively impacts your educational performance, but have never been diagnosed, you are encouraged to meet with Mary Guthrie to discuss your needs. You can contact her at mcguthrie@tiu.edu or 847.317.7114.

Learning Assignments/Required

- **All reading** (unless otherwise noted) will be completed at a level of competency which will allow the reader to interact with concepts at a critical level (**note:** this may require the reading of materials more than once).
- Reading assigned materials—prior to the first Seminar if possible
  - Mandatory only for academic credit students.
  - If any required readings have been previously read, select substitutes from the Suggested Reading List at the end of this syllabus in consultation with the course Professor.
  - Students must submit a reading report to confirm the percentage of reading completed.

- Written materials to be submitted at the first class **Monday, June 24, 2019.**
  - A brief paragraph describing the topic(s) in bioethics that the participant proposes to research for the post-Seminar paper(s)/project (academic credit students only) and indicating which perspectives will be addressed.
  - After reviewing these proposals, the professor will provide guidance where needed to assist participants in refining them. An extended lunch period is provided to enable credit students to interact with professors concerning their papers.

- **Paper** (**academic credit students only**)
  - All academic credit students will submit a **Research Paper.** Students should choose a primary source: either a literary text, film, or television show to analyze from a bioethical perspective, considering issues of neuroscience or brain technology in relation to human nature or personal identity. Other formats for this paper may be proposed, but the course professor must approve them.

  - **All academic credit students (2 & 3 credits): Research Paper #1**
    One paper of 10-11 pages (exclusive of title page and bibliography) plus or minus 1 page, double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins, and use footnotes or endnotes in a consistent style. (TIU style guide, Turabian, Chicago, or SBL are acceptable formats). Papers should reference multiple sources beyond the assigned readings, consulting more primary source than secondary source materials. Research should interact with pertinent readings from the TGS Suggested Reading list.
as well as primary sources that include materials from peer-reviewed journals and monographs by prominent contributors to bioethics. Page numbers (not including the cover page or bibliography) should be included. Additional information in guidelines are provided in the document Guidelines and Requirements for Research Papers.

- For 3 credit students only: Research Paper #2
  - An additional paper of 14-15 pages (exclusive of title page and bibliography) plus or minus 1 page, double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins, and use footnotes or endnotes in a consistent style. (TIU style guide, Turabian, Chicago, or SBL are acceptable formats). Papers should reference multiple sources beyond the assigned readings, consulting more primary source than secondary source materials. Research should interact with pertinent readings from the TGS Suggested Reading list as well as primary sources that include materials from peer-reviewed journals and monographs by prominent contributors to bioethics. Page numbers (not including the cover page or bibliography) should be included. Additional information in guidelines are provided in the document Guidelines and Requirements for Research Papers.

E-mail all papers in a consistent format. They must be received by August 10, 2019 (wpcheshire@me.com).

Assessment & Final Course Grading

- Papers will be graded with respect to organization, quality of composition, depth of research, demonstrated competency with respect to the issues at hand.
- Late papers or those in excess or deficient of the page length will be evaluated more strictly, out of fairness to other students.

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Course Calendar

Monday, June 24, 2019:

8:30-9:30 a.m. Introductions; course overview and relevance

9:30-10:30 a.m. Neurons, neuroscience, and neurotechnology (Cheshire)

10:30-11:30 a.m. Crick’s “astonishing hypothesis” (Cheshire)

1:00-2:00 p.m. Is your brain you? The mind/body problem (Daly)

2:00-3:00 p.m. What reductionism leaves out (Cheshire)

3:00-4:30 p.m. Models of human nature (Daly)
Tuesday, June 25, 2019:

8:30-9:30 a.m. Has neuroscience disproven free will? (Cheshire)

9:30-10:30 a.m. Did my brain make me do it? (Daly)

10:30-11:30 a.m. The argument from reason (Cheshire)

1:00-2:00 p.m. Dementia and the disintegration of identity (Daly)

2:00-3:30 p.m. Pharmaceuticals, electronic interfaces, and personal identity (Cheshire)

3:30-4:30 p.m. Critique of reductionism (Cheshire and Daly)

Wednesday, June 26, 2019:

8:30-9:30 a.m. Cognitive bioenhancement (Cheshire)

9:30-10:30 a.m. Transhumanist moral bioenhancement (Daly)

10:30-11:30 a.m. Community, intimacy, and virtual reality (Daly)

1:00-3:30 p.m. How then should we live? Answering the challenges of neuroscience (Cheshire and Daly)

3:30-4:30 p.m. Student project reports

The course calendar may be modified by the professors at their discretion.

Additional Suggested Readings – Please see http://library.tiu.edu/bioethics/recommended-reading

Guidelines and Requirements for Bioethics Summer Course Research Papers

Have a clear research question from the start. “How” and “why” questions are important, because they naturally lend themselves to creating an argument. You must make an argument in the paper and not just recite facts or quotations, or merely report on what you have read. The argument needs to be more than mere opinion.

A general rule is that you should consult twice the amount of resources as the pages required for the paper. For example, if you are required to write a ten page paper, you should consult twenty resources. Some of this will fall into background reading, you may not end up including all of these resources in your paper. Your bibliography should only include resources that are cited in the paper.

It is essential to consult resources outside the required reading for the course. Start by utilizing the suggested reading list provided for the course, the bibliographies available on http://cbhd.org, and the MA Bioethics list on the myTIU website. Move on to reading academic articles and journals. Do not rely solely on secondary sources and avoid dependence on internet sources unless they are formal reports or reputable journals. Use primary sources in your research as much as possible. Do not just read about Kant or Aristotle, read their writings directly. Find out what major research studies or seminal works have been done on your topic and access those as well.
Avoid plagiarism by citing all quotes, paraphrases, and ideas that are not originally yours. Trinity’s policy on plagiarism can be found on pgs. 5-6 of the Academic Handbook. Trinity subscribes to the TurnItIn Anti-Plagiarism Service (https://moodle.tiu.edu/enrol/index.php?id=468). Please use this service. Use footnotes or endnotes in a consistent style. TIU style guide, Turabian, Chicago, or SBL are acceptable formats. Consult a manual for whichever style you choose and again, follow that style consistently throughout the paper.

Use direct quotes sparingly, reserving their use for thoughts that you cannot say as well in your own words. Additionally, any direct quotes should have an explanation unpacking them. When using a quote it is strongly preferred to use the original source where the quote appears to cite it. Shorter quotes should have double quotation marks around them. Longer quotes (50 plus words) need to be block quotes, single-space, and indented from the left margin. Biblical citations should note which translation and be accompanied with appropriate explanation. If the citation is significant to the overall argument, pertinent biblical scholarship (i.e., commentaries/such as Pillar, New International Commentaries, World Biblical Commentaries) should be consulted.

The paper should be written in Times New Roman using 12 point font and double-spaced. Use 1inch margins on the top, bottom, left, and right sides of the page. Please do not make adjustments to these guidelines.

All papers need to have a cover page. It should include the title of the paper, your name, the course, and the date on which it was submitted, and your email address to facilitate the return of graded papers.

Make sure the pages are numbered on the bottom. The first page is blank with numbering beginning on page two of the paper (the number two at the bottom). Neither the title page nor your bibliography should be numbered.

Proof-read your paper and have a friend proof-read it as well. A second proofreader will pick up on things that you have missed. Let’s face it you have been staring at this paper for far too long! Do not rely solely on the spell/grammar check.

If it has been awhile since you have written a formal research paper or if this is not a skill previously developed, the University Student Success Center may be able to provide writing assistance for you. Contact information for the USSC: 847.317.8193.