

## **I. Teaching Statement**

As a Visiting Professor at Duke University, and as a Teaching Fellow and Teaching Assistant at UNC-Chapel Hill, my experience in the classroom has been limited to teaching undergraduate students. My “teaching philosophy” as it is expressed here will undoubtedly reflect this focus.

I think that learning to read, write, and speak “philosophically” is extremely important for undergraduate students, where this importance is not reducible to the content of the philosophical material that is covered, but is a function of the “philosophical method” itself. Of course all academic disciplines place value on critical thinking, but philosophy is particularly admirable in its emphasis on logic, clarity, rigor, intellectual honesty, and intellectual patience. These are indispensable virtues of thought in the area of philosophy itself, of course; but they seem no less important in other areas of inquiry, academic and otherwise. I am hopeful that my own somewhat demanding requirements in the classroom, where I focus a great deal on methodology as well as content, can be helpful for students even outside of the context of philosophy proper.

Regarding teaching style, I prepare a lecture for each class, but require active student participation. I have had the fortune to guide some excellent and memorable classroom discussions. I have been told by more than one student that my class is the first course they have taken in which they felt comfortable enough to voice their own views. One student evidently told her mother (referring to me) “this guy can get anyone to talk!”

In my very best classes my students and I not only discuss philosophy, but we actually “do” philosophy. Specifically, hypotheses are floated and defended, objections are raised, responses are given, and we make what feels like genuine philosophical progress on an issue.

## **II. A Professor Evaluation**

[The following is an excerpt of an evaluation of my teaching during a bioethics discussion section at UNC-Chapel Hill. I was a teaching assistant for Professor Douglas Long at the time. The comments I have not included were omitted simply because they were administrative in nature and so not relevant here]

*Observation of TAs: Justin Jeffrey Nov. 22, 2002, Professor Douglas Long*

“During the entire class period there was a remarkable level of participation. Nearly everybody had something to say, and they volunteered easily, sometimes without a lot of formal raising of hands. They often just got their words in edgewise, as a family gathering might carry on a conversation. But this was with nineteen students in the room. Justin seems to provide an atmosphere in which the discussion is fun and amusing, and often they would break out in laughter. Yet they were able to put a lot of helpful points on the board, so it was a useful discussion. He has an excellent rapport with the students, and feels comfortable drawing on his own experiences to illustrate points.”

### III. Student Evaluations

#### A. Statistics

The respondents were given the following statements and asked to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, and sometimes just given the options of “yes” or “no”. All of this data comes from courses I taught at UNC-Chapel Hill. I have not yet had a chance to receive evaluations from my students at Duke. (I am happy to furnish more student upon request).

*Fall 2003, Bioethics*

**(26 total respondents)**

1. Overall, considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and course, I would rate this instructor as “excellent”:  
**neutral=1; agree=6; strongly agree=19**
2. Demonstrates enthusiasm about teaching:  
**agree=4; strongly agree=22**
3. Communicates clearly and logically:  
**neutral=1; agree=7; strongly agree=18**
4. Promotes a climate of mutual respect:  
**agree=4; strongly agree=22**
5. Uses teaching strategies that promote active involvement:  
**agree=9; strongly agree=17**

*Spring 2003, Ethics*

**(26 total respondents)**

1. The instructor was one of the best I have had at UNC, fully deserving of a teaching award: **No: 3 Yes: 16**
2. Overall, considering the constraints and opportunities inherent in the subject matter, this instructor was an effective teacher: **agree=16; strongly agree=10**
3. This course challenged me to think deeply about the subject matter: **neutral=1; agree=11; strongly agree=14**
4. The instructor showed enthusiasm for the subject matter in this course:  
**agree=8; strongly agree=18**
5. The instructor handled questions well:  
**agree=9; strongly agree=17**

## B. Student Comments on Course Evaluation Forms

(Grammar and spelling on these comments have not been altered. Comments are only included for classes for which I had full teaching responsibility at UNC-Chapel Hill. I have not yet had the chance to receive feedback from my students at Duke.)

### *Introduction to Ethics*

“I think that Justin is a highly-skilled teacher, on top of being extremely intelligent. I especially appreciated how eager he was to engage in discussions about any and every concern we had. Justin is perhaps one of the most effective teachers I have ever had. He was born for this.”

“This class was excellent. The professor was one of the best I have had at UNC! I would strongly recommend this course, with this professor!”

“This was one of the best classes I took at UNC. Great teacher and he has a great way at helping students understand the material. I would improve nothing, the class is perfect.”

“I actually didn’t mind coming to class”

“Justin is the best instructor I’ve ever had!!”

### *Bioethics*

“This was one of the best classes I have taken in 7 years. I didn’t even notice that an hour + a half had passed when class was over. We were really encouraged to think on our own. Great class!”

“Very informative and entertaining class. I think Justin was an awesome teacher that explained the concepts effectively and enjoyed his time in the classroom which was great. He made the subject interesting and I liked the part lecture, part group work aspect to the course. Holla.”

“This was an excellent philosophy course. Initially, I took it to fulfill a perspective, but I would recommend it to anyone. Justin engaged us in the material effectively by using a discussion-type atmosphere. It was excellent!”

“He really knew how to break down the material to a level that the class could understand. His explanations were thorough and I feel as though I have learned so much. He made philosophy engaging and less daunting”

## IV. Sample Syllabi

I include here only two sample syllabi, though there are a large number of courses I have already taught and would be prepared to teach again. These include a general introduction to philosophy, an introduction to ethics, a course in the philosophy of religion, environmental ethics, ancient philosophy, and an introductory course in applied ethics. The courses I have most experience teaching are bioethics and an introduction to ethics. Though I have not taught a course on meta-ethics or the history of Ethics, I feel well-qualified to teach both, either at an introductory or advanced level.

### *Introductory Level*

#### **Bioethics**

This course would introduce some of the most contentious issues in bioethics, and examine some of the philosophical arguments on each side of these issues. Discussion would not primarily involve the application of moral theory to cases, but theoretical questions would be revisited at the end of the course after the more concrete issues in bioethics had been discussed.

Most of the reading will be from the textbook, "Contemporary Issues in BioEthics" (Beauchamp and Walters, henceforth CIIB).

#### **Section I. Moral theory and Logic**

Week 1: Logic

Week 2: Logic and Moral Relativism: Read "[Does Relativism Matter?](#)" by Simon Blackburn.

Week 3: Hobbesian Contractarianism: Gauthier's "[Thomas Hobbes: Moral Theorist](#)".

And begin Act Utilitarianism: Read excerpts of John Stuart Mill's "[Utilitarianism](#)" and discussion of Utilitarianism in CIIB.

Week 4: Act Utilitarianism: Read Same as above. And Kantianism: Read discussion of Kantian theories in CIIB, 14-16

Week 5: Casuistry: Reading from CIIB; the nature of the Self: Dennet's "Where am I?"

Week 6: continued discussion of the Self; review and examination on logic and moral theory

#### **Section II: End of Life Issues**

Week 7: Passive and Active Euthanasia: read Rachels' "Passive and Active Euthanasia", and a response.

Week 8: A Duty to Die?: Read Hardwig,. And empirical literature on euthanasia in the Netherlands: read Jochemsen and Keown, and also van Delden in CIIB.

### **Section III: Abortion and Stem Cell Research**

Week 9: Against abortion: Read Marquis; defending abortion: Read Thomson.

Week 10: Against abortion, using the concept of personhood: Read Brody CIIB;  
Defending abortion, using the concept of personhood: Read Warren CIIB. Essay due on end of life issues.

Week 11: Stem Cell Research: Read McGee and Caplan, and also Meilaender. Review for Exam.

### **Section IV: Human Enhancement**

Week 12: Genetic Engineering: Read Glover in CIIB, and Parens in CIIB. Exam on Abortion and Stem Cell Research.

Week 13: Ethical issues surrounding antidepressants: Read Kramer. Also Cloning; read Brock and Kass, CIIB

Final Exam

## *Advanced Level*

### **Ethics in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The course would begin with the ‘open-question argument’ given by Moore in his “*Principia Ethica*”, which seems to have dictated much of the agenda in 20<sup>th</sup> century meta-ethics. The course would trace the moral realism/anti-realism debate that Moore helped inspire, and would explore other more or less related meta-ethical issues such as moral justification, moral epistemology, moral methodology, and the relationship between classical meta-ethics and normative ethics. Certain (often related, and not always clearly distinguishable) 20<sup>th</sup> century debates within normative ethics will be examined as well.

Week 1: Moore, *Principia Ethica* Ch. 1; W.D. Ross; selections from *The Right and the Good*

Week 2: Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* Ch. 6; Stevenson, “The Emotive meaning of Ethical Terms”

Week 3: Geoffrey Sayre McCord, The Many Moral Realisms; Gilbert Harman *The Nature of Morality*, Ch. 1

Week 4: J.L. Mackie, *Inventing Right and Wrong* Ch. 1, Simon Blackburn, portions of *The Ruling Passions*

Week 5: Alan Gibbard, portions of *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings*, (first paper due)

Week 6: Railton, “Moral Realism”; MacDowell, “Value and Secondary Qualities”

Week 7: Portions of Michael Smith’s *The Moral Problem*

Week 8: Firth, “Ethical Absolutism and the Ideal Observer”; Baier, “The Point of View of Morality”

Week 9: Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* Chapters 1 and 2

Week 10: Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy”, MacIntyre “The Nature of the Virtues”

Week 11: Rawls, Two Concepts of Rules; Smart, “Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism”

Week 12: Rawls, “Justice as Fairness”, Scanlon “Contractualism and Utilitarianism” (second paper due)

Week 13: Williams, “A Critique of Utilitarianism” (from *Utilitarianism: for and against*); Gauthier, “Why Contractarianism?” (final paper due)