Contemporary Ethical Issues
Paper Guidelines

Purpose: The goal of this paper is for you to choose a topic that interests you and analyze it from an ethical perspective. This will require you to choose a topic that is broad enough to find resources, yet narrow enough to deal with opposing viewpoints in a brief paper.

Length 8-11 pages

Due Date: Monday, December 17th

Bibliographic Requirements: standard footnote or endnote (Chicago style)

Sources: At least four (journals, books, magazines, web sites, personal interviews)

Topic Choice: Check with Mr. Feldmeth by Monday, November 29th

Topics: You may choose to focus on a theme (affirmative action in college admissions, stem-cell research, war crimes trials) or an event (Terry Schiavo case, University of Virginia honor code violations) with ethical implications. Again, carefully choose the range of your topic to assure coverage in a short paper. I have a number of ethics source books in my office that you may look through to find a topic of interest. In addition, Mrs. Winslow in the Library is an outstanding resource to point you in the right direction when you find your topic.

Expectations: Because the much more interesting ethical issues are right vs. right topics with significant gray areas, choose one that you care about and for which you can fairly present opposing perspectives. Carefully craft your arguments to make sure they have both evidence and a logical development of ideas. You will learn more from a topic about which you are still undecided. Be sure to apply ends-, care-, and rule-based reasoning to your discussion.

Past topics that have worked well:

1. Confederate flag debate
2. Honor code violations, Univ. Of Virginia
3. Drug sales in developing countries
4. Supermodels and their effect on teenagers
5. Second-hand smoking: a civil liberty issue?
6. Animal rights
7. Physician-assisted suicide
8. Women in combat
9. Industrial espionage
10. Homosexual adoption
11. Child beauty contests
12. Using children in medical tests
13. Lawyer-client, clergy privilege
14. Professor Joseph Ellis lying about Vietnam service to students
15. Hate speech codes on college campuses
16. Polygamy’s legalizati
17. Laws restricting paparazzi
18. Guns in the home
19. Professor-student relationships
20. Animal experimentation
21. Ayala case: having another child to save a dying child
22. Hate speech on the Internet
23. The ethics of nuclear deterrence
24. Title IX in college athletics
25. Abortion special cases