

**ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
at Western University**

**Theology 5432B / Religious Studies 2239G – Christian Bioethics**

**Course Outline – Winter 2018**

Thursdays 9:30 – 12:20 PM

St. Peter's Seminary, Auditorium

Instructor: Fr. Murray D. Kuemper

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**A. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a specialized course concerning Roman Catholic moral principles with clinical/pastoral applications for a pluralistic world. Topics include: Perinatology issues (birth control, abortion, human reproductive assistance, etc.), organ transplants, genetic engineering, stem cell research, dying and death, resource allocation and some aspects of global ethics. Many applications to health care institutions and pastoral situations are made.

**B. GOALS**

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

**Knowledge**

1. To understand the tradition of Roman Catholic moral theology, and its foundation in God's revelation to us through Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and human reasoning regarding our salvation in Jesus Christ and our response to follow him in our moral life.
2. To understand the methodology of moral theology as it applies to bioethical issues, drawing upon four sources: (1) biblical themes of scripture; (2) the historical testimony of the Catholic moral tradition; (3) rational philosophical reasoning; and (4) the influences of modern human sciences
3. To acquaint the student with the fundamental concepts, principles and theories of bioethical reasoning.
4. To include in our explorations other faith-based and secular approaches which complement the search for truth and promote authentic moral dialogue concerning human dignity and a just society.
5. To understand how the action of the Holy Spirit in the world can make it possible for a faith-based bioethical perspective to be influential in our culture.
6. To ground the bioethical issues of life and death with a special emphasis on a clear understanding of natural law and an authentic theology of the body.

**Skills**

1. To enable the student to reflect on the moral dimensions of our human experience by studying issues of bioethical concern in our society today.
2. To be able to understand and articulate specific bioethical issues and problems that influence human society on various levels in order to formulate valid Christian and Catholic responses.
3. To expect the student to understand – and, for Catholics, to be able to accept – the Church's Magisterium as the normative source of teaching on faith and morals, and to appreciate the openness of the tradition to historical development and valid theological inquiry on moral and pastoral issues.

4. To enable the student to read and analyse appropriately the documents of the Church pertaining to the moral teaching of the Church in bioethics.
5. To develop the practical set of skills and virtues required in effectively applying a discernment model in doing clinical and pastoral ethics.
6. To enable the student to develop a prudential pastoral approach to people and situations based on an adequate knowledge of applicable moral principles in the light of people's lived experience.

### Attitudes

1. To develop in the student a critical awareness of present moral issues, in order to identify and promote moral values related to the dignity of the human person and the common good.
2. To develop a sense of solidarity with, and love for, the sick and suffering, and those faced with difficult ethical decisions, by making a preferential option for their situation of poverty rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ.
3. To appreciate the need for just solutions to difficult bioethical concerns, and the urgency for those in society and the Church to work for these values with all people of good will, in a pluralistic context.
4. To help the student to grapple with disagreement and ambiguity in the relationship of moral theology and its pastoral application through an attitude of “mercy-in-truth”.
5. To encourage or elicit within the student a deeper sense of moral responsibility for all human beings from conception to natural death as well as for the whole of creation.
6. To encourage virtuous and hope-filled approaches regarding difficult bioethical issues in the light of the saving grace of Jesus Christ available to everyone.
7. To engender the compassionate, healing, reconciling attitude of Jesus Christ toward all human suffering, uncertainty, moral dilemmas, and victims of injustice and poverty, an attitude ultimately based on trust in God our heavenly Father through the help of the Holy Spirit.

## **C. REQUIRED TEXTS**

AUSTRIACO, NICANOR PIER GIORGIO, O.P. *Biomedicine & Beatitude: An Introduction to Catholic Bioethics*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011. (UWO Bookstore)

CATHOLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE OF CANADA. *Health Ethics Guide*, 3rd Ed. Ottawa: Catholic Health Alliance of Canada, 2012. (UWO Bookstore)

### **Official Magisterial documents are in various print editions; all may be found online:**

POPE PAUL VI. Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae*, 1968.

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html)

POPE JOHN PAUL II. Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*, 1995.

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html)

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH. *Quaestio de abortu, Declaration on Procured Abortion*, 1974.

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19741118\\_declaration-abortion\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19741118_declaration-abortion_en.html)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Iura et Bona, Declaration on Euthanasia*, 1980.

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19800505\\_euthanasia\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19800505_euthanasia_en.html)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Donum Vitae, Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origins and on the Dignity of Procreation – Replies to Certain Questions of the Day*, 1987.

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19870222\\_respect-for-human-life\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Dignitas Personae, The Dignity of the Person*, 2008.

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20081208\\_dignitas-personae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20081208_dignitas-personae_en.html)

Articles or chapters from other sources may be given as handouts or internet links.

## **D. COURSE THEMES AND READINGS**

Note: Readings from the required texts are indicated for the topics covered in class. Other readings may be given during the semester.

### **1. Introduction and Foundations**

**[Austriaco 7-42; CHAC 1-17]**

- a) Course Overview
- b) Place of Bioethics in Moral Theology
- c) Foundations of Health Care Ethics
- d) Principles and Methodologies
- e) Faith, Reason and Virtue in Health Care Ethics

### **2. The Human Person and Ethics**

**[Austriaco 112-134, 263-275; CHAC 113-119]**

- a) Jesus Christ: Healer and Sufferer
- b) The Human Person in Faith and Reason
- c) Moral Norms Relevant to Health Care
- d) Canada's *Health Ethics Guide*
- e) Ethical Discernment

### **3. The Beginning of Human Life**

**[Austriaco 43-111; CHAC 42-53]**

- a) The Beginning of the Human Person
- b) Abortion
- c) Issues in Human Reproduction
  - Prenatal Diagnosis
  - Fertility; Contraception and Natural Family Planning; Sterilisation
  - Treatment of Infertility; Assisted Reproductive Technologies
  - Disputed Questions

### **4. Modifying and Reconstructing the Human Body [Austriaco 170-246; CHAC 68-89]**

- a) Modifying the Human Body
- b) Genetic Intervention; Genetic Screening
- c) Organ Transplantation
- d) Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery
- e) Medical Research and Experimentation
- f) Stem Cell Research

## 5. Ethics at the End of Life

[Austriaco 135-169; CHAC 54-66]

- a) The Mystery of Suffering and Death
- b) Defining Death
- c) Decisions about Prolonging Life; Medical Futility
- d) Allowing to Die; Withholding/Withdrawal of Treatment; Palliative Care
- e) Suicide, Physician Assisted Suicide, and Euthanasia
- f) Care of Patients with Disorders of Consciousness
- g) Advance Care Directives and Power of Attorney for Personal Care

## 6. Catholic Bioethics in the 21st Century

[Austriaco 247-263; CHAC 19-28, 90-109]

- a) Allocation of Resources; Health Care Governance
- b) Catholic Ministry and Witness in Post-modern Culture

## E. ASSESSMENT

### 1. Writing Assignments based on assigned readings (3 x 15 marks each = 45% of final grade):

Details will be given in class. Responses will be typed, 1000-1200 words. They are due in class on the following dates: **February 1, March 1 & March 29.**

### 2. Mid-Term Exam (20% of final grade):

One hour, written, in class **February 15.**

### 3. Final Exam (35% of final grade):

- a) *Students in Theology 5432B* – 15 minute oral exam, **during the exam period.**
- b) *Students in Religious Studies 2239G* – Written take-home exam, given on March 29, due at the end of class on **April 5.**

### **\* Option for Theology 5432B students only:**

#### 1. Major research paper (65% of final grade):

A major paper on a particular bioethical issue. This paper should survey the history and current state of the issue, using relevant Church teachings and research from scholarly articles from both Catholic and secular perspectives. Pastoral/practical implications springing from the issue should be included. The paper will be typed, approximately 5000 words, with full footnotes and bibliography.

Students choosing this option must inform the Instructor by the end of class on **January 25** and provide a one-page proposal, for the Instructor's approval, by the end of class on **February 1.** The final paper will be due in class on **March 22.**

#### 2. Final Exam (35% of final grade):

15 minute oral exam, **during the exam period.**

### **Other Dates to Note:**

February 22 – University Break Week; No Class

March 29 – Course Evaluations

## GRADING SCALE

- A+ 90 - 100% – *for profound and creative work*: exceptional performance with clear evidence of original thinking; a superior grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations; strong evidence of an extensive knowledge base;
- A 80 - 89% – *for excellent work*: outstanding performance with indication the student is approaching some original thinking; good organization and a well developed capacity to critique, analyse and synthesize; an excellent grasp of the subject matter; thorough knowledge of the relevant literature;
- B 70 - 79% – *for good work*: good performance with evidence of a grasp of the subject matter; some evidence of a critical capacity and analytic ability; a reasonable understanding of the relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature;
- C 60 - 69% – *for adequate work*: intellectually adequate performance of a student who is profiting from his or her academic experience; an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to understand the basic concepts found in the material;
- D 50 - 59% – *for marginal work*: minimally acceptable performance; some evidence of familiarity with the subject matter and some ability to synthesize it;
- F below 50% – *for wholly inadequate work*: a failing performance in which there is little evidence of even a superficial understanding of the subject matter; an overall weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

### Chicago Style

According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments must follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style (Footnotes and Bibliography). Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. For further information, please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at the following web address:

<https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf>

### Class Attendance

Any student missing more than three lectures will not be admitted to either the final oral exam or the final paper (take-home exam) without consultation with, and the permission of, the instructor.

## **F. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Sources on Reserve at A.P. Mahoney Library

- These sources are all general works on bioethics by Catholic authors, and contain useful bibliographies.

ASHLEY, BENEDICT M., JEAN DEBLOIS, AND KEVIN D. O'ROURKE. *Health Care Ethics: A Catholic Theological Analysis*. Fifth Edition. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006.

FISHER, ANTHONY. *Catholic Bioethics for a New Millennium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

FURTON, EDWARD J., PETER J. CATALDO AND ALBERT S. MORACZEWSKI, ED. *Catholic Health Care Ethics: A Manual for Practitioners*. Second Edition. Philadelphia: National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2009.

LEIES, JOHN A. *Handbook on Critical Life Issues*. Revised Third Edition. Philadelphia: National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2010.

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PASTORAL ASSISTANCE TO HEALTH CARE WORKERS. *New Charter for Health Care Workers*. Trans. by The National Catholic Bioethics Center. Philadelphia: National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2017.

SGRECCIA, ELIO. *Personalist Bioethics: Foundations and Applications*. Trans. by John A. DiCamillo and Michael J. Miller. Philadelphia: National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2012.

## **G. IMPORTANT STUDENT INFORMATION** (from King's College Dean's Memo)

### **Faculty Office Hours:**

Faculty office hours can be found on King's homepage under the menu heading Current Students (<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/planning/faculty-office-hours/>) and are also posted on the bulletin board across from the Administrative Assistants Office on the second floor of Dante Lenardon Hall.

### **Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:**

([http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)). Student Medical Certificate (SMC)

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

### **Tests/Examinations:**

Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

### **Support Services:**

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western:

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

Information about Counselling and Student Development, including Accessibility Services (formerly Services for Students with Disabilities) at King's is available at

<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/who-we-are/administrative-departments/dean-of-students/>

For emotional/mental health assistance see: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The website for Academic Services at King's University College is <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-support/>

### **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices:**

Use of Electronic Devices:

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Use of Laptops in the Classroom:

King's University College at The University of Western Ontario acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of laptop computers can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of laptops by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using laptops for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct. See

[https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/studentLife/conduct/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_2003.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/studentLife/conduct/code_of_conduct_2003.pdf)

Inappropriate use of laptops [or smart phones] during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these

settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.”

**Statement on Academic Offences:**

King’s is committed to Academic Integrity.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://turnitin.uwo.ca/>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

**Copyright re: Course Material:**

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty Members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a Faculty Member. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student’s answers or papers on the course website he/she should ask for the student’s written permission. (Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)

**Mailbox re Submission of Late Essays/Assignments ONLY:**

Only late essays/assignments not handed in at class may be dropped off in the drop box, located between the inner doors of the Cardinal Carter Library. Please inform your students that essays dropped into the mailbox will be picked-up twice per day: once in the morning (9:30 a.m.) and in the afternoon (4:00 p.m.). All essays dropped off after 4:00 p.m. on a Friday will be date-stamped the following Monday. Essays should be placed in an envelope addressed to the professor with the course code and student number clearly indicated.

**NOTE: For this course, the chute at the Cardinal Carter Library may NOT be used. Late assignments may be dropped off only at the Reception office of St. Peter's Seminary.**

**Class Cancellations:**

All reported class cancellations are posted at: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/outages-service-interruptions/>

**NOTE: For this course, class cancellations will be given in advance by announcement at the previous lecture or by e-mail notification.**

(These services are not meant to replace those offered at St. Peter's Seminary, but may be beneficial to our students after consultation with the appropriate instructors, administrators, and formators.)