

Aquinas Institute of Theology
MOR D-570-01 Health Care Ethics
Wednesdays 8:45 – 11:15am

Course Description

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Office hours: Monday through Thursday: 9-11:30 or by appointment.

Fall 2014

3 credits

Impelled by the Catholic faith and the Dominican mission, Aquinas Institute of Theology educates men and women to preach, to teach, to minister, and to lead.

Course Description: This course explores ethical issues encountered in the context of contemporary health care through the lens of both Catholic teaching and a secular approach. Topics to be addressed include: methods of doing ethics; basic principles of health care ethics including confidentiality, truth-telling, informed decision making, double effect; issues at the beginning of life including reproductive interventions and genetics; research using human and animal subjects; issues at the end of life including physician assisted suicide and euthanasia; issues raised by advancing bio-medical technologies including oncofertility and synthetic biology; questions of distributive justice in health care.

This course advances the mission of Aquinas Institute by helping to equip students with the requisite knowledge to translate the teaching of the Catholic tradition in ways that make it accessible for those with whom and to whom they minister.

Course Objectives:

- To understand and explain the essential elements of contemporary ethical issues in health care in order to contribute intelligently and wisely to dialogue on these issues;
- To articulate the contributions of the Roman Catholic tradition to health care ethics;
- To grasp the complexity of ethical issues in contemporary health care;
- To critically assess and grapple with the contributions of other approaches to health care ethics, e.g., a secular approach.

Required Texts:

Benedict M. Ashley, Jean deBlois, Kevin D. O'Rourke. Health Care Ethics: A Catholic Theological Analysis. Fifth Edition. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006.

Helga Kuhse, Peter Singer, eds. A Companion to Bioethics. Second Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2012.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services. Washington, DC: USCCB, 2009. Available on-line at: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/health-care/upload/Ethical-Religious-Directives-Catholic-Health-Care-Services-fifth-edition-2009.pdf>

Recommended Texts:

Philip Boyle, Ph.D., Kevin D. O'Rourke, O.P. Medical Ethics: Sources of Catholic Teachings. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011.

M. Therese Lysaught, et. al., (eds). On Moral Medicine: Theological perspectives in Medical Ethics. Third Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012.