Course Description:
This course is designed for seminarians, other graduate students, and those returning for a refresher course. It has three primary goals.
• First, it aims to introduce the thought and language of secular bioethics and to encourage you to reflect critically upon them.
• Second, it seeks to locate decisions surrounding health care within the framework of moral convictions and practices of the Christian community of faith.
• Third, it attempts to help you to prepare for the role of clergy or concerned layperson in providing care to individuals and families who face health care issues, decisions, and crises.

Participants will explore several different approaches to resolving questions in bioethics, while considering issues that arise at the beginning and end of life and many points in between. Case analyses, discussions, videos, news stories, personal experiences, and guest speakers will be used in addition to lectures to assist us to relate theoretical considerations to concrete matters of bioethics that individuals and families face in increasing numbers today.

Learning Objectives:
It is hoped that by the end of this week you will have gained:
• An increased understanding of some of the major issues in bioethics arising out of developments in contemporary medicine, technology, and health care;
• A grasp of the some of the major approaches in bioethics to resolving these issues;
• An enhanced capacity for critical thought about these issues and an appreciation of their complexity and ambiguity at times;
• An increased ability to explain to those grappling with difficult questions related to bioethics what is at issue ethically and to provide them with pastoral support.
• An appreciation of legitimate differences that can arise regarding questions in bioethics and a honed ability to find common ground through conversation about these differences.

Length and Credit:
The course can be taken for the first week only, the first two weeks only, or all three weeks. With permission, it can be taken for the third week only. One week provides 1 credit, two weeks 2 credits, and three weeks 3 credits.
**Requirements and Grades:**
The grade for degree students will be based on class participation and a take-home exam distributed at the end of each week.

Class participation includes attendance, evidence of completion of reading requirements in classroom discussion and leadership.

The exam (designed for one hour) will involve explaining concepts and arguments discussed in class, as well as writing a critical essay on a question such as: 1) Is it morally right to sell body parts? Kidneys? Cells? Sperm? Eggs? Why or why not? 2) Should we proceed with embryonic stem cell research for therapeutic purposes? Why or why not? 3) Which forms of reproductive technology do you consider ethically and religiously acceptable, if any? Explain. If none, explain why not.

Those taking the course for one week must take the exam at the end of the week in which they are enrolled and pass it. Those taking the course for two weeks must take the exam at the end of each of the two weeks in which they are enrolled and achieve a passing grade when both exams are averaged together. Those taking the course for credit for three weeks must take the exam at the end of the first, second, and third weeks and achieve a passing grade when the three exams are averaged together.

Due notice: “Incompletes” given only in dire circumstances and by negotiation.

**Readings:**
Books available for purchase in the bookstore for the week of Jan. 15-18:

**READINGS FOR WEEK OF JANUARY 15-18**
Reading material in addition to the above books will be distributed as a packet

Go at your own pace. You are required to read the materials preceded by an asterisk. Then read whatever is of interest to you that is included in the possible readings for that day’s three-hour session. No student is expected to read every single reading!

* means required reading
# means purchase book at seminary bookstore
Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2002: Introduction


Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2002: Procreation and the meaning of parenthood; new reproductive technologies; cloning

Video segment – “Making Babies” 15-20 minutes


Thursday, Jan. 17, 2002: Stopping life-sustaining interventions; assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Video segment: “Euthanasia in Holland”- elderly woman and doctor – 15 minutes

Guest speaker: Robert M. Veatch, Ph.D., Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

*#Committee on Medical Ethics, Episcopal Diocese of Washington, “The Morality of Stopping or Withholding Life-Sustaining Treatment,” in Toward a Good Christian Death: Crucial Treatment Choices (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1999),


Friday, Jan. 18, 2002: Genetic testing, gene therapy, germline interventions, enhancement and eugenics.

**Video segment** – “A Question of Genes: Inherited Risks” APOE testing – 20 minutes

**Guest speaker:** LeRoy Walters, Ph.D., Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.


**WEEK OF JANUARY 22-25**

**Readings:**
Books available for purchase in the bookstore for the week of Jan. 22-25:

**WEEK II (Tuesday, Jan. 22- Friday, Jan. 25)**

**Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2002: Designer babies, creating children to save others, orphan embryos and stem cell research, selective abortion**

**Video segment** - “A Question of Genes: Inherited Risks” - Prenatal diagnosis of CF twins – 20 minutes

*Trefil, James, “Brave New World,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, December, 2001.*

**Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2002: Substance abuse and the war on drugs, detecting and treating addiction, providing organs to substance abusers**

**Guest speaker:** Peter J. Cohen, M.D., J.D.  Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C.

*Cohen, Peter J., “Molecules, Mind, Myths and Addiction: Disease, Misconduct, or What?” hand-out for talk.*
*Cohen, Carl, Benjamin, Martin, and Ethics and Social Impact Committee, “Alcoholics...*

Glannon, Walter, “Responsibility, Alcoholism, and Liver Transplantation,” Journal of Medicine and Philosophy, 1998, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 31-49. [Recommended only if you are very interested in this question.]

Thursday, Jan. 24, 2002: Obtaining kidney transplants, regulating organ transplantation, the global organ market, creating organs from embryonic stem cells


Gill, Robin, “The Ethics of Stem Cell Research,” manuscript, 8 pages.

Friday, Jan. 25, 2002: Justice, money, and scarcity. Access, cost controls, health care rationing

Video? Justice issues

Guest speaker:  Tom Hart, Office of Government Relations, Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.


WEEK OF JANUARY 29-FEB. 1

Readings:
Books available for purchase in the bookstore for the week of Jan. 29-Feb. 1:
Cohen, Cynthia B. Casebook on the Termination of Life-Sustaining Treatment and the Care of the Dying (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988).

Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2002: Decisions for vulnerable or incompetent persons, care of the elderly, treatment of low-birthweight newborns, conjoined twins.
Guest speaker: The Rev. Dr. Francis Wade, rector, St. Alban’s Church, Washington, D.C.
Video- Hospice or Low birthweight babies

Video segment – “Whose Death Is It Anyway?” “Nancy Cruzan’s sister”
Guest speaker: Sondra E. Wheeler, Ph.D., Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.


Thursday, Jan. 31, 2002: Research mishaps, clinical research ethics
Guest speaker: Peter J. Cohen, M.D., J.D., Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C.

Dresser, Rebecca, “Financial Interests and Research Protections, Can They Coexist?” Lahey Clinic Medical Ethics Newsletter, Fall, 2001, pp. 4,8.

Friday, Feb. 1, 2002: Ethics counseling, institutional ethics committees, legal interventions, cross cultural questions.
Guest speaker: Vicky Dinneen, J.D., M.T.S., guardian ad litem and guardian for elderly persons, state of Virginia

Kotva, Joseph J., Jr., “The Christian Pastor’s Role in Medical Ethics,” Second Opinion, No. 5, March, 2001, pp. 22-48 [This is long. If you choose to read it, you may want to read it selectively.]