ET 681 Issues in Sexual Ethics and Bioethics
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President &
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May 21-25, 2012
Charlotte Campus

Description

The complexities of our contemporary world raise ethical questions that the Church and Christians are often not equipped to tackle. This course will explore some of those issues in the areas of sexual ethics and bioethics, in light of God’s Word and a Christian world view. Among the issues to be addressed are: a theology of sexuality, premarital sex, homosexuality, reproductive technologies, abortion, stem cell research, bio-technologies, treatment termination, and euthanasia. Attention is given to how the Church and Christians can address these issues in congregations as well as secular, pluralistic contexts. (This course meets the ethics requirement for various degrees or can serve as an elective.)

Course Objectives

1. To gain a descriptive understanding of the issues.
2. To learn to apply biblical and theological (i.e. Christian worldview) thinking to the issues.
3. To develop discerning wisdom in seeking the ethically good amidst moral ambiguities and complexities.
4. To develop sensitivity in our pastoral responses to people grappling with these issues.
5. To develop appropriate responses to our culture as it faces these ethical issues.
6. To gain perspective for applying ethics to professional settings.

Texts


Course Requirements

1. Attend class and enter into discussions.
2. Do all the required reading and report the amount read with the final paper. It will be helpful to do as much of the reading before the class week as possible, but is not an absolute necessity.
3. Write one position paper on either an issue in sexual ethics or bioethics. The paper is to be 8-10 pages (double spaced; no longer). In the paper cover the following: (1) the nature of the issue; (2) various positions on the issue; (3) a description and defense of your own view; (4) a description of how you think the church should concretely respond to this issue. You are to do solid research with at least six sources (books or articles, but go light on the internet sources). Rubrics to guide the paper are at the end of the syllabus. The paper is due July 9. Late papers will be docked: 4 points for one to seven days late, 10 points thereafter.

Alternate Paper: For those in or anticipating church ministry you are encouraged to do your paper as a sermon or teaching lesson, which is appropriate for a church context (Sunday morning, youth group, Sunday school class, etc.) The sermon or lesson should involve the same amount of research, with sources listed in a bibliography at the end of the sermon or lesson. But the paper must be contextualized for the setting, translating theological and ethical language into the church setting. You can be creative, using power point, visuals, etc. It should be equivalent to the 8-10 pages of the position paper. Due date and late penalties are the same, July 9.

Note on Papers: all papers should use size 12 font, and be double spaced. No paper should be longer than 12 pages! All papers should be submitted on sakai.

4. Take the final exam by June 9. The exam will involve multiple-choice questions and an essay. The exam will be accessible by June 1. You will have 3 hours to take the exam and will only be able to enter sakai to take the exam one time.

*Note: The grading of the exams and position paper will be done by Esther Bruland, Ph.D. Esther is a GCTS grad with a Ph.D. in Ethics from Drew University and knows the professor’s thought very well. With the rubric guideline she will be able to be objective and will do a good job.

Grading: Exam 45%; Paper- 45%; Class Participation 10% (Failure to read the texts will adversely affect one’s class participation grade.)

Course Outline
(Topics to be covered each class are listed beside the date in the outline)

I. Introduction: The Nature of Ethics May 21 a.m.
II. Sexual Ethics
   A. Historic and Contemporary Views of Sex May 21 p.m.
      1. Sex and Ethical Theories
      2. Worldviews and sex
   B. A Theology of Sex May 22 a.m.
   C. The Purposes of Sex
D. Sex Before Marriage
E. Sex Within Marriage
F. Homosexuality
G. Responding to the Culture

III. Biomedical Ethics

Introduction to Biomedical Ethics

A. Issues at the Beginning of Life
   1. Reproductive Technologies
   2. Abortion
   3. The Stem Cell Debate

B. Issues in the Course of Life
   1. Organ Transplants
   2. Genetic Engineering
   3. Biotechnologies and the Redesign of humans

C. Issues at the End of Life
   1. Defining Death
   2. Treatment Termination
   3. Active Euthanasia/Physician Assisted Suicide

Selected Bibliography

Sexual Ethics


**Bioethics**


Dowbiggin, lan. *A Merciful End: The Euthanasia Movement in Modern America*. New York:


**Journals in Bioethics:**

Christian Bioethics
Ethics and Medicine: An International Perspective On Bioethics
Hastings Center Report
Second Opinion: Health, Faith and Ethics

**Helpful Websites for Bioethics:**

www.bioethics.com
www.cbhd.org
www.ncbcenter.org
# Rubrics for Ethics Paper Spring 2012

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<tr>
<th>Rubrics or Criteria</th>
<th>Potential Points</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nature of the Issue:</strong>&lt;br&gt;What is this issue all about? What are the ethical considerations? What are the facts (empirical judgments) surrounding the issue?</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Various Ethical Positions on the Issue:</strong>&lt;br&gt;What are the different perspectives on this issue? Why do proponents hold these perspectives? Be as faithful as you can to the proponents arguments even though you may disagree with them.</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Your Own View:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Clearly state your own ethical position on the issue. Why do you hold it? What are the compelling arguments biblically, theologically, rationally?</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Church Addressing this Issue:</strong>&lt;br&gt;How should the church address this issue within the Church? Within society? What are the pastoral and tactical approaches the Church should use? In reflecting on this, set forth your own Christ-culture position with rationale.</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing, Sources and Documentation:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Write clearly, concisely and with a clear road map. Proper grammar and correct spelling is expected. Use at least 6 varying sources (books and journals), and use proper citation, either endnotes or (Smith, 1998, p. 35), with bibliography at end.</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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Total Points and Grade:
### Rubrics for Issues Sermon/Lesson 2012

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<tr>
<th>Rubrics or Criteria</th>
<th>Potential Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly focused purpose:</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>The sermon or lesson should be clear in purpose, main ideas and major arguments</td>
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<td>Clear understanding of the ethical issue:</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td>In popular style present a clear overview of what the issue is all about.</td>
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<td>What is at stake in this issue? Why is it important for Christians?</td>
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<td>Ethical analysis and presentation of your view:</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<td>While the sermon should not present ethical theory per se, it should reflect</td>
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<td>familiarity with various positions on the issue and the arguments employed by</td>
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<td>those positions. A clear presentation of your own position is a must.</td>
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<td>Appropriate use of scripture:</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td>The sermon should be built from a single biblical text (expository) or several</td>
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<td>biblical texts and themes (topical). It should show clear understandings of the</td>
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<td>text(s), good interpretation and presentation of the text(s).</td>
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<td>Pastoral Context:</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td>The sermons should reflect appropriateness to the setting, the nature of the</td>
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<td>issue addressed, and the potential pastoral implications for the church and for</td>
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<td>the church’s involvement with society on the issue.</td>
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<td>Writing and Sources:</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write clearly and concisely and with a style that is appropriate for a Sunday</td>
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<td>morning sermon. Use at least 6 sources (books and journals) listed at the end</td>
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<td>with appropriate bibliographical detail. Accurate grammar and spelling is</td>
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<td>expected, along with good movement of ideas.</td>
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Total points and grade:
Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Returned Work
Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage- paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.