

**DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY**  
**McANULTY COLLEGE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS**

**HEALTHCARE ETHICS**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS<sup>1</sup>**

**Course:** HCE 650/750: **Beginning of Life Ethics, 3 Credits**  
**Term:** Spring 2020 Jan 13 – May 10, 2020  
**Instructor:** Peter I. Osuji, C.S.Sp., Ph.D.  
E-mail: [osujip@duq.edu](mailto:osujip@duq.edu)  
Phone: 412 396-4902  
Office: 301B Fisher Hall  
**Day, Time & Location:** Tuesday, 3:05-5:45 pm. Fisher Hall 600.  
**Office Hours:** By Appointment or walk-in.

**Course Description**

This course will familiarize students to the ethics of reproductive medicine and beginning-of-life issues such as contraception, male womb, surrogacy/outsourcing parenting, artificial reproductive technologies, human cloning, animal-human hybrids, morality of abortion, the moral status of the human embryo, and fetal tissue transplants. The course will look at the various ethical controversies surrounding the definitions of life and of humanity, procreative rights,

**Course Objectives**

**Competences**

Upon the completion of the course students will master the following competences which should be demonstrated both in specific research projects and in the course essay:

- a) Historical analysis  
A capacity to present the historical analysis of present day debate on beginning-of-life issues. Students should be able to explain the moral traditions involved in the debates.
- b) Comparative analysis  
A capacity to critically analyze the differences or complementarity between the common morality/Dominant Moral theories (DMT) perspectives and some religious or cultural ethical perspectives on Beginning-of-life issues.
- c) Theoretical analysis of Beginning-of-life issues.  
A capacity for argument formation, literature integration, and critical analysis when writing a research essay on Beginning-of-life issues.

**Learning Outcomes**

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<sup>1</sup>This syllabus is provisional and subject to revision.

This course will contribute to the fulfillment of the general HCE Program Learning Outcomes. The following Learning Outcomes pertain to HCE 650/750.

a) Fundamental Knowledge.

Students can understand as well as analyze HCE theory and methods, major applied topics in beginning-of-life ethics.

b) Multi-disciplinary Study.

Students can critically relate HCE with multi-disciplinary fields in health care, specifically in connection to the historical background and the philosophical interpretation of fundamental notions and evolving social and cultural attitudes.

c) Scholarship.

Students can research and write scholarly essays, teach and communicate effectively as well as present academic papers. In doing this, they present cogent arguments, engage scholarly literature, and demonstrate critical thinking and analysis.

d) Ethical Leadership.

Students can provide ethical leadership in the area of the Beginning-of-life ethics.

### **Course Methodology**

There will be weekly classes per the Duquesne requirement. The general aim of the course, as one of the courses in the HCE graduate program, is to prepare students for the writing of the Dissertation Proposal. In particular, it will focus on the development of research competencies in connection to the area of Beginning-of-life ethics. The implication of this aim is that the emphasis in the course will be on student learning rather than instructor teaching. Students will especially be trained in doing research, critically analyzing scholarly literature, presenting research results and discussing them in a peer setting, and writing critical, and analytical papers on relevant topics.

Students will focus on three Research Projects:

### **Course Procedures**

#### **a) Research Projects and Required Readings**

##### **1) General Procedure**

For this course, the students need to complete three written assignments: two research projects (7 pages excluding end notes and bibliography), and one research essay (25 pages excluding end notes and bibliography). Students will prepare and submit these assignments following this schedule.

- i. Research Project #1, due Friday, February 7
- ii. Research Project #2, due Friday, March 27
- iii. Research Essay, due Sunday, May 2

- Submission of Essay thesis, abstract, outline, and basic bibliography, by Wednesday, March 11.
- Option to submit mid-term essay. For students who want to be assisted in their progress, a draft of the essay can be submitted for feedback by Monday, April 6.
- Final version is due Sunday, May 2.

At the completion of each research project, students will make a 10-minute class presentation on their paper. Also, at the end of the course, students will be required to make a 15-minute interactive class presentation based on their research essay. The presentations based on Research Essay will take place during the **last two weeks** of the course.

#### Reading Requirements.

Each Research Project will require students to critically engage the equivalent of two or three books to (a) master the relevant knowledge and (b) engage in critical reading and writing.

#### Literature integration.

For each of the Research Projects (i.e. RP1 & RP2), students should include approximately 25 notes referring to the texts assigned for the project. Recall that the title page, table of content, endnotes, and bibliography do not count toward the 7 pages.

#### Research competencies.

The research competencies in the course are identified by the Research Projects and Essay: (a) historical analysis of debate on beginning-of-life issues, (b) comparative analysis, and (c) historical analysis of present day debate on beginning-of-life issues. The Research Projects and Essay will demonstrate that the student has mastered the research competencies.

#### Relation of Projects with Essay.

The Research Projects may be integrated into the Research Essay but not in a manner of cut-and-paste from one to the other. While the research papers are focused on one specific competency, the course essay must demonstrate the three competencies. The research essay is based on a self-selected topic different for each student.

### **2) Research Project #1: Historical analysis**

Presents the historical analysis of the present-day debate on a Beginning-of-life issue, exploring the moral traditions involved in the debates.

### **3) Research Project #2: Comparative analysis**

A comparative analysis of the differences and/or complementarity between the common morality/Dominant Moral Theories perspectives and some religious or cultural ethical perspectives on a Beginning-of-life issue.

## **b) Research Essay**

The research essay will require students to substantively apply the Research Competencies of this course to a Beginning-of-life issue. For the essay, each student will choose an issue or topic in Beginning-of-life ethics and develop a creative, critical ethical argument with literature integration regarding that issue or topic.

Requirements:

1. Submit a Thesis, 500 words abstract, outline, and basic bibliography to be submitted by Wednesday, *March 11*.
2. Students will receive general feedback in class and individual feedback through Blackboard.
3. Submit a copy of the essay by date assigned.
4. The length of the research essay should be, at least, 25 pages, double-spacing. The title page, table of content, endnotes and bibliography do not count towards the 25 pages.
5. Students must adopt the format of the Chicago Manual of Style, as required by the College for dissertation submissions.
6. Students can quote from publications in any language but need to provide an English translation also.
7. Make a Title page and a separate Table of Content.
8. Present a brief Introduction and Conclusion.
9. Notes to the references made in the essay.
  - a. Use end notes (as opposed to foot notes at the bottom of the page).
  - b. Do not use notes for narrative explanations – they belong in the main text.
  - c. There should be approximately 100 end notes in the essay.
10. Bibliography. List all the references in alphabetical order. Only list items actually referred to in the essay.
11. Use of online references. Online references must be accurately identified with complete web address etc., including the date of access. Students are requested to critically deal with content from the internet.
12. Divisions and subdivisions. Use major divisions (headings) and subdivisions (subheadings), evenly distributed throughout the essay, to lay out the sequence of concepts and arguments.

**HCE Handbook.** The Center for Healthcare ethics has developed a *Handbook* of Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines to guide students in all curriculum related matters.

**Course Grade.** There will be no examinations. The course grade will be assigned based on the quality of the course research essay and the three research projects. The grade will be a combination of 15% for each of the two research projects and 70% for the final essay.

No midterm grades will be assigned. End of term grades will be assigned adopting grading policy in the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts, as follows:

- |    |     |                              |
|----|-----|------------------------------|
| A  | 4.0 | distinguished scholarly work |
| A- | 3.7 |                              |

|    |     |   |
|----|-----|---|
| B+ | 3.3 |   |
| B  | 3.0 | normal progress towards degree                  |
| B- | 2.7 |   |
| C+ | 2.3 |   |
| C  | 2.0 | warning; student subject to departmental action |
| F  | 0.0 |   |

**Academic Integrity.** This syllabus incorporates the “Expectations of Academic Integrity.” Cheating and plagiarism cannot be tolerated. All relevant policies of the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts apply.

### **Reasonable Accommodations.**

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations if needed. If you need accommodations, please contact the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services in 309 Duquesne Union (412-396-6657) as soon as possible. Accommodations cannot always be granted retrospectively.

### **COURSE READINGS & SCHEDULE.**

Week 1: Tue. Jan 14. Introduction to the course requirements, procedures and theme.

(Mon. Jan 20 Martin Luther King Day, no class.)

### **Principles & Rights.**

Week 2: Tue. Jan 21- Sanctity of Life & Dignity of Human Being.

- Peter F. Connell. *On the Sanctity of Human Life: Considerations Regarding Life and End-of-Life Issues*. 1st Edition. 2017. (122pages)
- Samuel B. Condic & Maureen L. Condic. 2018. *Human Embryos, Human Beings: A Scientific and Philosophical Approach*. (Introduction pp1-19)

#### Recommended reading

- Joseph Card. Ratzinger Prefect & Alberto Bovone (Secretatry) (1987). “Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation.” *The Linacre Quarterly*, 54:2, 24-49. DOI: 10.1080/00243639.1987.11877891
- Ramizah Wan Muhammad, Fadhlina Alias, Putrei Nemie John Kassin, Nasimah binti Hussin AL-Shajarah. 2016. “The Doctrine of sanctity of life form the Islamic Perspective.” *Journal of the international Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) Volume 21 Number 1: 1-31.* PDF Text.

Week 3: Tue. Jan 28. Reproductive Rights

- Kimberly M. Mutcherson. “Procreative Rights in a Postcoital World.” Pp159-181 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).
- Armand H. Matheny Antommara. “Conscientious Objection in Reproductive Health.” Pp209-225 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).
- Anita Silvers & Leslie Francis. “Reproduction as a Civil Right.” Pp 182-208 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbks).

### **Contraception & Abortion.**

Week 4: Tue. Feb 4. - Abortion, embryo status.

- Christopher Kaczor. (2014) *The Ethics of Abortion* (Routledge Annals of Bioethics) Routledge; 2nd Edition (pp.1-257)

Recommended.

- Margaret D. Kamitsuka. 2019. *Abortion and the Christian Tradition: A Pro-Choice Theological Ethics*.
- Kate Greasley. 2017. *Abortion Rights: For and Against*.
- Samuel B. Condic & Maureen L. Condic. 2018. *Human Embryos, Human Beings: A Scientific and Philosophical Approach*. 1st Edition.

Week 5: Tue. Feb 11. - Contraception.

- Rhonheimer, Martin. (2010) *Ethics of Procreation and the Defense of Human Life: Contraception, Artificial Fertilization, and Abortion*. Edited by William F. Murphy Jr. Washington D. C.: Catholic University of America. [**Part I: Sexuality & Responsibility Contraception as an Ethical Problem.**]
- Jennifer Roback Morse PhD. *The Sexual State: How Elite Ideologies Are Destroying Lives and Why the Church Was Right All Along*. Part II. The Contraceptive Ideology. – August 23, 2018.

Recommended Reading

- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Responses to Questions Concerning Sterilization in Catholic Hospitals*. March 13, 1975.  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19750313\\_quaecumque-sterilizatio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19750313_quaecumque-sterilizatio_en.html)
- Turner, J.V., McLindon, L.A. (November 2018) “Bioethical and Moral Perspectives in Human Reproductive Medicine.” *Linacre Quarterly* Vol. 85, Issue 4, 1, Pages 385-398. 10.1177/0024363918816697.
- Legal cases. *Griswold V. Connecticut* 381 U.S. 479.  
<https://www.aclu.org/other/timeline-important-reproductive-freedom-cases-decided-supreme-court>.

### **Reproductive Technology.**

Week 6: Tue. Feb 18. - Artificial reproductive technologies.

- Sidney Callahan. (2019) “The Ethical Challenges of the New Reproductive Technologies.” Pp 71-86 in *Health Care Ethics: Critical Issues for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition by Eileen Morrison & Beth Furlong.
- Paul Lauritzen. “Whose Bodies? Which Selves? Appeals to Embodiment in Assessments of Reproductive Technology.” Pp 850-857 in M. Therese Lysaught, Joseph Kotva, Stephen E. Lammers & Allen Verhey. *On Moral Medicine: Theological Perspectives on Medical Ethics*. 2012.
- Judith Daar. “The Role of Providers in Assisted Reproduction: Potential Conflicts, Professional Conscience, and Personal Choice.” Pp 226-250 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).

Recommended

- Mary Ann Mason & Tom Ekman. 2017. *Babies of Technology: Assisted Reproduction and the Rights of the Child*. 1st Edition.
- Allen Verhey. “A.R.T., Ethics and the Bible.” Pp 870-893 in M. Therese Lysaught, Joseph Kotva, Stephen E. Lammers & Allen Verhey. *On Moral Medicine: Theological Perspectives on Medical Ethics*. 2012.

Week 7: Tue. Feb 25. - Artificial intelligence in reproduction.

- Renjie Wang, et al. (2018) “Artificial intelligence in reproductive medicine.” *Reproduction* 158 R139–R154.
- Carol Lynn Curchoe & Charles L. Bormann. (2019) “Artificial intelligence and machine learning for human reproduction and embryology presented at ASRM and ESHRE.” *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* 36:591–600  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10815-019-01408-x>
- Christopher McCallum, et al. (2019) “Deep learning-based selection of human sperm with high DNA integrity.” *Communications Biology* 2: 250, 1-10.  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s42003-019-0491> [www.nature.com/commsbio](http://www.nature.com/commsbio).
- Craig S. Niederberger, et al. (August 1993) “A neural network to analyze fertility data.” *Fertility and Sterility* Vol. 60, No.2, 324-330.
- Dario Sacchini & Antonio G. Spagnolo. “Impact of Big Data on Beginning of Life Issues.” Chp7 pp131-143 in Sorin Hostiuc. 2018. *Clinical Ethics at the Crossroads of Genetic and Reproductive Technologies*. 1st Edition.

**Infertility & Embryo Adoption.**

Tue. Mar 3. **Spring Break No Class**

Week 8: Tue. Mar. 10. - Infertility.

- Nicholas R. Brown. “One is the Loneliest Number: How the WHO’s Redefinition of Infertility Provokes Contestations of the Body and the Body Politics. Pp61-70 in Lisa Campo-Engelstein and Paul Burcher. 2018. *Reproductive Ethics II: New Ideas and Innovations*. Springer.
- Weei Lo and Lisa Campo-Engelstein. “Expanding the Clinical Definition of Infertility to Include Socially Infertile Individuals and Couples.” Pp71-84 in Lisa Campo-Engelstein and Paul Burcher. 2018. *Reproductive Ethics II: New Ideas and Innovations*. Springer.

- Henry T. Green. 2018. *The End of Sex and the Future of Human Reproduction*. (Part 1) The Science. Pp 28-60. Harvard University Press.
- Maura A. Ryan. "Faith and Infertility." Pp 865-869 in M. Therese Lysaught, Joseph Kotva, Stephen E. Lammers & Allen Verhey. *On Moral Medicine: Theological Perspectives on Medical Ethics*. 2012.

#### Recommended

- David Orentlicher. "Societal Disregard for the Needs of the Infertile." Pp 357-387 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).

#### Week 9: Tue. Mar. 17. - Embryo adoption, cryopreservation ...

- Peter A. Clark. "Ethical Implications of Embryo Adoption." Chp10, pp 213-229. in *Pluripotent Stem Cell Biology - Advances in Mechanisms, Methods and Mode*. IntechOpen Access Publishers. 2014  
[https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6e61/bacfb14ce02b8c19c1b49d957dce51cc58bc.pdf?\\_ga=2.178234021.1262998072.1573691516-442266895.1573691516](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6e61/bacfb14ce02b8c19c1b49d957dce51cc58bc.pdf?_ga=2.178234021.1262998072.1573691516-442266895.1573691516)
- Hallich, Oliver. (October 10, 2018) "Embryo Donation or Embryo Adoption? Conceptual and Normative Issues." *Bioethics* 33, no. 6: 653–660.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.12515>.
- Imogen Goold. "Late in Life Motherhood: Ethico-Legal Perspectives on the Postponement of childbearing and Access to Artificial Reproductive Technologies." Pp 427-463 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).

### **Emerging Technology.**

#### Week 10: Tue. Mar 24. - Male womb.

- Amani Sampson, et al. 2019. "Uterus transplantation in women who are genetically XY." *Journal of Medical Ethics* 45:687-689.
- Wesley J. Smith. "Bioethicists Urge Animal Research into Male Uterus Transplants." February 28, 2019 2:55 PM. National Review.com  
<https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/bioethicists-urge-animal-research-into-male-uterus-transplants/>
- Michael Toze. (2018) The risky womb and the unthinkability of the pregnant man: Addressing trans masculine hysterectomy. *Feminism & Psychology* Vol. 28(2) 194–211  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353517747007>
- Timothy F. Murphy. (Winter 2010) "The Ethics of Helping Transgender Men and Women Have Children." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, Vol. 53, Number 1, pp. 46-60.
- Timothy F. Murphy (2015) "Assisted Gestation and Transgender Women." *Bioethics* Vol 29 Number 6 pp 389–397 <https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.12132>  
<https://reason.com/2015/01/30/is-it-immoral-for-men-to-gestate-transge/>
- Uterine Transplantation – for Men? by Bioethics @ TIU 2017.  
<http://www.bioethics.net/2017/12/uterine-transplantation-for-men/>



Week 11: Tue. Mar. 31. - Uterus donations, surrogacy/ Outsourcing parenting.

- Ruby Catsanos, Wendy Rogers, Mianna Lotz. “The Ethics of Uterus Transplantation.” Pp 91-102 in Helga Kuhse. *Bioethics: An Anthology*, 3rd Edition. (Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies) 2016.
- Leslie Francis. “Is Surrogacy Ethically Problematic?” pp 388-406 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).
- Donna Dickenson. “Commodification of Women’s Reproductive Tissue and Services.” Pp 118-140 in Leslie Francis, ed. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Reproductive Ethics*. (Oxford Handbooks).
- France Winddance Twine. (2011) *Outsourcing the Womb: Race, Class, and Gestational Surrogacy in a Global Market*. NY/London: Routledge. (pp1-50)

Recommended

- Claire Homer. “My Child, Your Womb, Our Contract: The Failure of Contract Law to Protect Parties in Gestational Surrogacy.” Pp 137-150 in Lisa Campo-Engelstein and Paul Burcher. 2018. *Reproductive Ethics II: New Ideas and Innovations*. Springer.

Week 12: Tue. April 7. – Presentations of course essays.

***(April 9-13 EASTER BREAK)***

Week 13: Tue. April 14. – (Class meet as Monday Class) No class

Week 14: Tue. April 21.- Presentations of course essays.

Week 15: Tue. April 28. Presentations of course essays.

Wed. April 29 Reading day

**Part 2. Research Essay. Due May 2**