



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY  
UNIT OUTLINE**

**BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY**

UNIT TITLE	MEDICAL ETHICS & BIOETHICS
UNIT CODE	C52044
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	C
PREREQUISITE/S	C51013 Introducing Theology
INCOMPATIBLES	Nil
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13-week semester.
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Every three years
PREPARED BY	Rev Kevin McGovern
UNIT COORDINATOR	Rev Dr David Pascoe
TEACHING STAFF	St Paul's faculty member
DATE PREPARED	1 September 2006

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**Rationale**

Because Christian faith has moral implications, a sophisticated reflection on right and wrong has developed within the Christian churches. Especially as modern medicine confronts us with so many difficult decisions, one focus of this reflection has been health and health care, which this unit addresses.

**Relation to program**

An undergraduate degree in theology offers the student a comprehensive understanding of the Christian faith. Because of the importance of health and disease in our lives, it is appropriate to include some reflection on this topic, as a component of an integrated education for Christian ministry.

**Aims**

The unit aims to equip students with a well-organized, well-integrated understanding of the most important issues of medical ethics. It also enables them to develop critical familiarity with the Roman Catholic tradition on these matters.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	
At the end of this unit the student should be able to:	
1.	Define health and disease;
2.	Detail the responsibilities of the individual, the health-care professional and society in the quest for health;
3.	Assess issues related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ human research and resource allocation</li> <li>▪ sexuality and reproduction</li> <li>▪ organ transplantation</li> <li>▪ genetics (including genetic counselling, genetic testing, genetic engineering, cloning, and the use of human embryonic stem cells)</li> <li>▪ psychotherapy and behaviour modification</li> <li>▪ dying and death;</li> </ul>
4.	Explain the place of spiritual ministry in the quest for health.

## **Content**

- 1 The person and health
- 2 Fundamental moral theology
- 3 Individual and professional responsibilities
- 4 Justice in health care
- 5 Human research and resource allocation
- 6 Contraception and assisted reproduction
- 7 Rape and abortion
- 8 Organ transplants, sexual reassignment
- 9 Genetics (including genetic counseling, genetic testing, genetic engineering, the Human Genome Project, cloning and the use of human embryonic stem cells)
- 10 Psychotherapy and behaviour modification
- 11 Allowing to die
- 12 Euthanasia
- 13 Pastoral care

## **Organization and Teaching Strategies**

The contact time comprises lectures and seminars, the latter including discussion of the students' weekly papers as well as issues raised by the lectures and the students' own reading.

## **Assessment**

	<b>Type of assessment</b>	<b>No of words</b>	<b>Weighting %</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes covered</b>
1	Weekly papers	10 x 200	30	Throughout semester	1,2, 3, 4
2	Participation in seminars	Na	10	Throughout semester	1, 2, 3, 4
3	Mid-semester oral examination	Na	30	Week 9	1, 2, 3
4	Final oral examination	Na	30	End-semester	3, 4

## Notes on Assessment

- Item 1 Will develop the student's knowledge and respect of medical ethics in relation to Christian ministry and mission, by engaging a range of views on medical ethical issues.
- Item 2 Will develop the student's ability to engage in reflective practice within the Church and community, to select and use the appropriate level, style and means of communication to convey ideas clearly and fluently in oral form.
- Items 3 and 4 Will develop the student's ability to apply critical reasoning to issues through independent thought and informed judgement and to develop a knowledge and respect of medical ethics in relation to Christian ministry and mission, with a commitment to truth, accuracy, honesty, accountability and ethical standards.

## Bibliography

### Textbooks

- Ashley, Benedict M & Kevin D. O'Rourke. *Ethics of Health Care: An Introductory Textbook*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Catholic Health Australia. *Code of Ethical Standards for Catholic Health and Aged Care Services in Australia*. Red Hill, ACT: Catholic Health Australia, 2001.

### Recommended

- John Paul II. *The Gospel of Life*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers. *Charter for Health Care Workers*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1999.

### References – Books

- If You Couldn't Speak Who Would Be Your Voice: A Guide to the New Laws About Enduring Powers of Attorney Commencing 1 June 1998*. Brisbane: Queensland Department of Justice, 1998, 1-9.
- Ashley, Benedict M, Jean De Blois & Kevin D O'Rourke. *Healthcare Ethics: A Catholic Theological Analysis*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006.
- Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. *Statement on Abortion* (19 April 1988).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Catholic Hospitals: A Vital Part of National Health Care* (April 1992).
- Beauchamp, Tom L & James F Childress. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed; Oxford: OUP, 2001.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Declaration on Euthanasia*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation*. Boston: Daughters of St Paul, 1986.
- Devettere, Raymond J. *Practical Decision Making in Health Care Ethics: Cases and Concepts*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2000.
- Devine, Richard J. *Good Care, Painful Choices: Medical Ethics for Ordinary People*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed; New York: Paulist, 2004.
- Ford, Norman M. *When Did I Begin?: Conception of the Human Individual in History, Philosophy and Science*. Cambridge: CUP, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Prenatal Person: Ethics from Conception to Birth*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.
- Ford, Norman M & Michael Herbert. *Stem Cells: Science, Medicine, Law and Ethics*. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls, 2003.
- Hepburn, Elizabeth. *Of Life and Death: An Australian Guide to Catholic Bioethics*. North Blackburn: Dove, 1996.
- Kirby, Michael. *The Human Genome Project: Ethical and Legal Challenges*. Tenth Concannon College Oration; Toowoomba: Concannon College, 1997.

- McCormick, Richard A. *Health and Medicine in the Catholic Tradition*. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*. Canberra: AusInfo, 1999.
- O'Rourke, Kevin D & Philip Boyle. *Medical Ethics: Sources of Catholic Teachings*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1999.

### References – Journals

- Anderson, William French. "Human Gene Therapy: Why Draw a Line?" *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 14 (December 1989), 681-693. Reprinted in *Bioethics*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed; ed Thomas A Shannon; New York: Paulist, 1993, 140-151.
- Bernat, James L. "How Much of the Brain Must Die in Brain Death?" *Journal of Clinical Ethics* 3:1 (Spring 1992), 21-26.
- Committee on Social Development and World Peace, United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops. "The Right to Health Care". *Origins* 15 (1985), 186-188.
- Dagi, Teo Forcht. "Comment on 'How Much of the Brain Must Die in Brain Death?'" *Journal of Clinical Ethics* 3:1 (Spring 1992), 27-28.
- Genovesi, Vincent. "To Suffer and Die In Christ". *America* 174:10 (23-30 March 1996), 8-15.
- Goddard, Martyn. "The (Crazy) Politics of Health Reform." *Consuming Interest* Spring 2003, 13-15.
- Gula, Richard. "The Virtuous Response to Euthanasia". *Health Progress* December 1989, 24-27.
- Hepburn, Elizabeth. "Genetic Testing and Early Diagnosis and Intervention: Boon or Burden?" *Journal of Medical Ethics* 22:2 (April 1996), 105-110.
- Herbert, Michael. "Reforming Health Care". *Carolyn Health Ethics Bulletin* 10:2 (Summer 2004), 1-4.
- John Paul II. "Biological Research and Human Dignity". *Origins* 12 (1982), 342-343.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Ethics of Genetic Manipulation". *Origins* 13 (1983), 385, 387-389.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Care for Patients in a 'Permanent' Vegetative State". *Origins* 33 (2004), 737, 739-740.
- Pontifical Academy for Life. "Reflections on Cloning". *Origins* 28 (1998), 14-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Production and the Scientific and Therapeutic Use of Human Embryonic Stem Cells". *Catholic International* 12 (2001), 163-166.
- United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops. "Pastoral Letter on Health and Health Care". *Origins* 11 (1981), 396-402.
- Vacek, Edward V. "Vatican Instruction on Reproductive Technology". *Theological Studies* 49 (1988), 110-131.
- Walters, William & Nicholas Tonti-Filippini. "Are Sex Change Operations Justified?" in *For and Against: An Anthology of Public Issues in Australia*. Ed Richard Giles; Milton, Qld: Brooks Waterloo, 1989, 291-301.

### References - Online and Other IT resources

- Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's Bishops' Committee for Doctrine and Morals & Bishops' Committee for Health Care. "Briefing Note on the Obligation to Provide Nutrition and Hydration." [Online, accessed 8 July 2006].  
<http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bc/docmoral/2004090316.htm>