PERSONALIST AND PHEOMENOLOGICAL BIOETHICS: FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

DR. JOSEF M SEIFERT

Course: 2013-2014 • Semester: II • Credits: 4

- COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will present the general foundations of ethics and bioethics, focusing especially on the questions of human dignity, ethical realism, the “seven goods of medicine “and the existence of intrinsically good and evil actions, attempting to elaborate a new realist and personalist foundation of bioethics different from “principalism”, moral relativism, agnosticism, and consequentialist-utilitarian systems of bioethics. It will then analyze fundamental life and death issues, an ethics of health, of pain-relief, of aesthetic considerations and interventions in medicine (plastic and reconstructive surgery), developing a non-formal, rich and content-full bioethics.

- CONTENT/PROGRAM/SYLLABUS

Ethics (besides science and medical art) as constitutive element of medicine and its reference to personal dignity; five fundamental immanent goods entrusted to medicine (human life, health, rational awakened consciousness, pleasure-pain-relief, fundamental aesthetic values). It will show that two highest goods (values) that cannot directly be realized by medicine function as decisive “measure” of bioethical medical action. It will treat many concrete issues such as abortion, euthanasia, in vitro fertilization, contraception, an ethics of health programs and “reproductive health,” terminal sedation, palliative care, reconstructive and cosmetic surgery and the limits of medicine. Special critical consideration will be given to the question of whether the notion of “brain death” corresponds to the real death of the person.

- EXAMINATION METHOD

A short essay of 15 pages; a major essay of 25 pages, an oral or written final exam.


