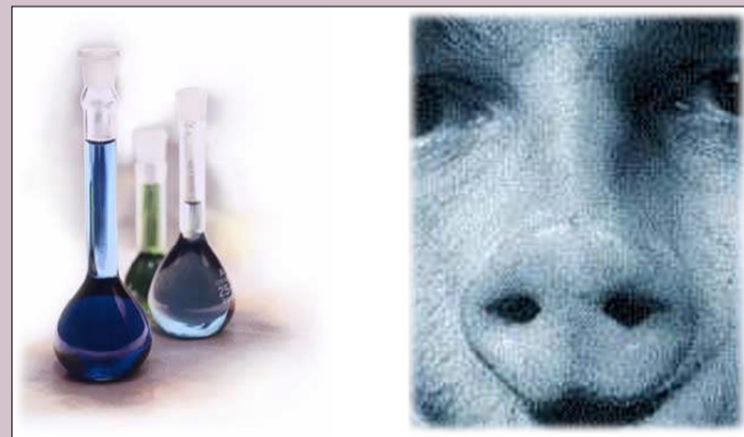


Bioethics

Dr Morven Shearer (with Dr Iain Matthews – values & the environment)



Introduction

The field of bioethics is vast, and there's simply not enough time in a 15 credit module to cover every topic and controversy thoroughly. Instead, within BL4293, we look at the major themes which occur within bioethics, and illustrate each of those themes with relevant examples and case studies.

- Life and Death
- Rights
- Values
- Ownership
- Responsibilities

By the end of this class you will have gained a better understanding of the nature and diversity of bioethics, be more aware of the current issues in bioethics and be well equipped to tackle and dissect such issues through reasoned argument and clear critical thinking.

Examples of extended essay titles (2007/2008):

1. A defence of saviour siblings - The ethics of xenotransplantation: are we ready for whole-organ xenotransplants?
2. Altering the law of organ donation in the UK: will governments implement changes or are ethics holding us back?
3. Saving nature or feeding people? - The Pannstenflannel bird and biocentric consequentialism.

Format

Teaching: Weekly discussion seminars (2 hr).

Assessment: Case study & dialogue - 20%
Reflective essay on case study & dialogue (7%)
Extended essay (based on case study) (40%)
Written Exam Essay (in class) (33%) - choice of 1 out of 3 questions.

Main learning objectives:

1. Understanding of the nature and diversity of bioethical issues and the controversies involved
2. The ability to link widely separate topics and draw general conclusions from potentially conflicting views
3. The ability to acquire, and to argue for, a balanced view on complex ethical issues

Images from:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/>
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Key texts

Ethical Argument: Critical Thinking in Ethics (2nd Edition), Hugh Mercer Curtler
A Companion to Bioethics Edited by Helga Kuhse & Peter Singer
An Intelligent Person's Guide to Ethics Baroness Mary Warnock