

# RELIGIOUS & THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (RTS)

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## **RTS-225A: The Quest for the Ultimate: Dialogue with Global Religious Traditions (3 Credits)**

The Catholic tradition places high value on thinking seriously about spiritual matters. It also places high value on thinking together, rather than alone. In this exciting yet dangerous time of global pluralism, religious traditions are very much in dialogue, thinking together about ultimate questions and how they impact peoples' lives. In this class, students will bring their own spiritual perspectives into dialogue with the great religions of the world, and in keeping with the Mercy tradition, consider how religious vision impacts concrete human needs.

*Fulfills Core Requirement Faith and Reason.*

## **RTS-337A: Biomedical Ethics (3 Credits)**

**Pre-requisite(s):** RTS-225 is required.

Recent advances in medical and biotechnology have allowed humans in wealthy countries like the United States to address many problems that just a few decades ago would have been inconceivable to overcome. These advances enable us to improve the quality of our lives, overcome obstacles to procreation, replace organs, and extend our life on Earth. At the same time, they have raised many questions, particularly of an ethical nature: What is the nature of illness and health? What is necessary for a high-quality human life? What ethical values should be honored in the patient-physician relationship? Can lives be extended too long? Should life ever be terminated, and if so, under what conditions? What methods of human reproduction are legitimate and which raise moral concerns? Do medical and biotechnologies threaten to reduce some humans to mere tools for other humans? Who receives the benefits of new medical and biotechnology, who is excluded, and on what basis? Does every individual have a right to health care? These questions, in turn, sink their roots into even deeper questions. What is human nature and when do we violate it? How do moral and spiritual values relate to biological and physical values? How do religious worldviews, and in particular Christianity, understand illness and health, life and death? The goal of this course is to enable students to reflect on these and similar questions in an interdisciplinary manner.

*Fulfills Core Requirement in Religious and Theological Studies.*

*Theme: Western Heritage.*