



News Release

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WESTERN HOSTS PRESENTATION ON STEM CELL RESEARCH ETHICS

St. Joseph, Mo. —Feb. 25, 2005—Stem cell research - it was a hot issue during the recent presidential campaigns, and it is still being heavily debated at the state and national level. Missouri Western State College will host a bioethicist to discuss the issue of stem cell research.

Dr. Kelly Smith, associate professor of philosophy at Clemson University in Clemson, S.C., will speak on the ethics of stem cell research at 7 p.m. March 3 in the Janet Gorman Murphy Classroom Building, room 201.

“I hope the audience will come away with a better understanding of what exactly all the brouhaha is about over stem cell research, and acquire some scientific knowledge at the same time,” said senior biology major Aaron Bunker of St. Joseph. Bunker is a member of the biology department’s honor society, which is co-sponsoring the speaker along with the history, geography and philosophy department.

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“I believe a good number of people probably don’t know a whole lot of the background science of stem cell research, and some may not know what ethical issues are being brought to light in the wake of this new stem cell research technology,” he said. “This will allow them a time to ask questions about what stem cell research involves and what ethical issues it raises.”

Dr. Smith received his master’s in zoology (genetics) from Duke University in 1992, followed by his Ph.D. in philosophy, also from Duke, in 1994. Since then he has pursued research on a number of interdisciplinary topics including the concept of disease in medicine, the relationship between religious faith and scientific reasoning, ethical issues surrounding the search for life on other planets, and the ethical implications of new genetic technologies. His work has been published in numerous professional journals including The Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine, Biology and Philosophy, Philosophy of Science and The Journal of the American Medical Association. He has taught a variety of courses ranging from Business Ethics to Evolution to Statistics. He is committed to the idea that the humanities and the sciences have something interesting to say to each other.

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.