Is it a Boy or a Girl?
Intersexuality in the Pediatric Patient

Thursday, October 15, 2015
Wells Fargo Auditorium, Beatty Center
3:15 PM

Kenneth Kipnis, Professor of Philosophy, University of Hawaii

Professor Kipnis has been doing ethics work in hospitals since 1983, when he was present following the birth of a child with ambiguous genitalia. He consulted on the advisability of "normalizing" surgery for the infant. He later collaborated with Milton Diamond, an international expert on reproductive anatomy, co-authoring an influential paper on the ethics of pediatric "normalization". The talk describes both his clinical work and the issues raised by such surgery.

Professor Richard Nunan will discuss a related pair of local cases: M.C. v. Amrhein and M.C. v. M.U.S.C.

Both cases concern a child who was a ward of the State of South Carolina as an infant, when subjected to genital modification surgery. The first of these is an interesting federal constitutional law challenge, decided earlier this year in the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. The second, a somewhat more "traditional" medical malpractice case, is still in litigation in a state court.