



ETHC5300 CHRISTIAN ETHICS
Red Carpet Academic Workshop, May 23-27, 2016
 Division of Theological and Historical Studies

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The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and Great Commandments through the local church and its mission.

Core Values

The seminary has five core values. This course supports the five core values of the seminary.

Doctrinal Integrity: Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. Our confessional commitments are outlined in the “Articles of Religious Belief” and the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000.”

Spiritual Vitality: We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

Mission Focus: We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Characteristic Excellence: What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Servant Leadership: We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

The Core Value Focus for this academic year is Mission Focus.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following seven areas:

Biblical Exposition: To interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.

Christian Theological Heritage: To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.

Disciple Making: To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.

Interpersonal Skills: To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.

Servant Leadership: To serve churches effectively through team ministry.

Spiritual and Character Formation: To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.

Worship Leadership: To facilitate worship effectively.

The curriculum competencies addressed in this course are: *Biblical Exposition*, *Christian Theological Heritage* and *Spiritual and Character Formation*

Course Catalog Description

In this introduction to the study and practice of Christian ethics, the student will examine philosophical and theological backgrounds for ethics, the role of biblical authority, and the historical relation between church and culture in order to develop a valid method of moral decision making, examine the importance of ministerial ethics, evaluate ethical issues, and lead the church in applying the gospel to life

Student Learning Outcomes

In order to provide moral leadership by modeling Christian character and communicating ethical truth, students, by the end of the course, should:

1. **Understand** the biblical and philosophical basis for a Christian ethic
2. Be able to **apply** a Christian ethic to contemporary issues
3. Be able to **communicate** Christian ethical and moral truths competently and convincingly

Textbooks

Rae, Scott B. *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

Wilkins, Steve. *Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics: An Introduction to Theories of Right and Wrong*. 2d ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011.

Wright, N. T. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters*. New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

Choose ONE (1) of the following for Text Review 1:

- Bell, Daniel M., Jr. *Just War as Christian Discipleship: Recentering the Tradition in the Church rather than the State*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009.
- Blomberg, Craig L. *Christians in an Age of Wealth: A Biblical Theology of Stewardship*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- Camosy, Charles C. *Beyond the Abortion Wars: A Way Forward for a New Generation*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2015.
- Corbett, Steve, and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor and Yourself*. Chicago: Moody, 2009.
- Kilner, John F. ed. *Why the Church Needs Bioethics: A Guide to Wise Engagement with Life's Challenges*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- McDowell, Sean, and John Stonestreet. *Same-Sex Marriage: A Thoughtful Approach to God's Design for Marriage*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014
- Struthers, William M. *Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009.

Choose ONE (1) of the following for Text Review 2:

- Biggar, Nigel. *Behaving in Public: How to do Christian Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2011.
- Gómez-Lobo, Alfonso. *Morality and the Human Goods: An Introduction to Natural Law Ethics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: HarperOne, 1980; and *Abolition of Man*. New York: HarperOne, 1974.
- In *Mere Christianity*, read only books 1, 2, and 3
 - Read all of *Abolition of Man*

Course Assignments

(You must turn in all assignments to pass the class)

Reading Assignment s (20% of Grade)

Reading Report (10% of final grade); On the first day of class, Monday, May 23, 2016, each student will submit a Reading Report.

For the reading report, simply record your name and the collective total percentage read from the following books:

1. Wilkens, *Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics*, should be read completely before Monday, May 23, 2016.
2. Rae, *Moral Choices*, should be read completely before Monday, May 23, 2016.

This assignment is **on your honor**. **The collective percentage read from both books will be your grade.**

Wright Book Report (10% of final grade). Due Monday, June 6, 2016

Each Student will read N.T. Wright, *After You Believe* and submit the following:

- On a single page, single-spaced, and in Times-New Roman 12 font, type your name and the following: By the due date, I read ___% of Wright, *After You Believe*.
- For the remainder of the page (use a full page), write a reflection on the book. Address the following:
 - How does Wright help me understand the nature of Christian ethics?
 - According to Wright how do rules and character relate?
 - Any concerns with the text.
 - To whom would you recommend the text?
- You may use first-person, limited and in appropriate style.

Two Book Reviews: (20% of final grade each)

Students will write one book review each from the **Text Review 1** and **Text Review 2** lists (for a total of 2 reviews). After registering for the course, students should email Dr. Riley's secretary (rileysec@nobts.edu) listing in order from most preferred to least preferred their choice of a review text from each list. Review Texts will be assigned first come first serve. If the top pick is closed, then the next in your list will be considered, and so forth.

- **Text Review 1** in a hard copy is due on Wednesday, May 25, 2016. **Students should be prepared to discuss and field questions on their books in class on the day submitted.**

Discussions about Review Texts characteristically should be:

- i. Informative
- ii. Critical regarding both the review text and the issue(s) treated
- iii. Dialogue producing for the benefit of the class experience

- **Text Review 2** is due Monday, June 20, 2016, **submitted via the class Blackboard** (do not email).

These reviews should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Each book review should be a thoughtful, informed response, taking into account biblical and theological principles and sound reasoning. Students are expected to be demanding readers, aiming to profit from the books, even if the student might disagree with an author's conclusions (disagreement is a very real possibility). Some books will demand more from the reader than others. The goal of reading in ethics is not merely to gain information alone but to increase in understanding. Be a teachable reader.
2. When you disagree with a book or if you find a book laborious or difficult to read, then follow the wisdom of Adler and Van Doran (*How to Read a Book*) and allow the author to speak on his or her own terms. *When you disagree, do so reasonably and not disputatiously or contentiously.* Moreover, *respect the difference between knowledge and mere personal opinion by giving reasons for any critical judgment you make.* You do not have to like or recommend a book. Not all books are worth reading. For this class, however, you are expected not only to learn from the reading but to hone your Christian ethical positions. Your review should be helpful to other students who might want to study an issue treated in the book that you read and review.
3. The critique should be **5-7 single spaced typed pages, Times New Roman 12.**
4. Use the following to **determine content** and **develop subheadings (develop headings using ii—v)**:
 - i. A brief statement introducing the author(s) and title of the book and communicating that the book has been read in its entirety. If the book has not been completely read, then communicate the truth. **If the information about percentage of book read is not included in the review, 10 points will be deducted from the final grade.**

- ii. Describe the primary thesis, purpose, and/or description of the book. DO NOT SUBMIT A CHAPTER BY CHAPTER SUMMARY.
- iii. Describe and analyze critically the ethical issue(s) treated in the book
 - a. Describe the moral issue(s) and how it is treated in the book.
 - b. Describe and critically analyze the ethical conclusions offered.
 - c. What ideas changed or challenged your thinking. How and Why?
 - d. What ideas, if any, are particularly problematic? Why? Move from the critical analysis to a description of your position contra the problematic idea.
 - e. What particular ethical insights are offered in the book (or missing) that practically relate to life and ministry in the church and society?
- iv. Reasonably describe the major strengths and weaknesses of the book.
- v. In the conclusion, give a brief statement of recommendation; why you would or would not recommend this book, and to whom.

One Final Exam, (40% of final grade). Submitted to Dr. Riley via the Class Blackboard (do not email). **Due June 1, 2016.**

The **Final Exam** will test the comprehensive knowledge of the student; that is, the student should demonstrate a proper mastery and application of Christian and biblical ethics as presented during the course. As such, the final will take one or more of the following forms: **essay in response to a general ethical issue; responses to particular ethical case studies; technical ethics position paper.**

Embedded Assignment: Question one of the final exam is an embedded assignment. This assignment will be used to assess how well students are meeting the standards set by the course objectives. The assignment follows:

Write a letter to a young believer (spiritual age, not necessarily physical age) who is struggling with how to relate to a friend who practices homosexuality or has strong same sex attractions. The friend makes statements like, “I believe Jesus is real and he died for me and all that, but I don’t understand how he could make it a sin for me to be a homosexual when I honestly can’t help it.”

This assignment is an embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for grading this assignment is attached to this syllabus. Please complete the assignment according to this rubric.

For this assignment, use the following instructions:

- Single-space type your letter.
- Do not type more than 2 single-spaced pages.
- In your response, draw from the facts, concepts, judgments, and so forth that you have been learning in your readings and class notes in regard to the issue of homosexuality. Use some of the terminology from your studies.
- Incorporate Scripture into your response, utilizing good hermeneutical principles.
- Remember the tools you have been learning and use them when and where appropriate, for example, you might utilize the 4 terms that define an ethical act, Dr. Riley’s paradigm, worldview influences, levels of ethical engagement in Scripture, and so forth. Now is the time to apply what you have been learning
- Be alert to your tone. Be redemptive, while clearly communicating biblical moral truth.
- Some of you personally know people who practice homosexual behavior. You might keep them in mind while crafting your letter.
- This is your letter, so you have liberty in what you say and how you say it. You will not be able to say everything, so be fluid and succinct in what you do say while demonstrating to me that you can communicate moral truth affectively and clearly.

Grade Distribution by Assignment and Due Dates

<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Report (2 books)	10%	Due: Monday, May 23, 2016
<input type="checkbox"/> Selected Text Review 1	20%	Due: Wednesday, May 25, 2016
<input type="checkbox"/> Wright Book Report	10%	Due: Monday, June 6, 2016
<input type="checkbox"/> Selected Text Review 2	20%	Due: Monday, June 20, 2016
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Exam	40%	Due: Friday, July 1, 2016

Note: Seminary policy is that grades should be submitted no later than July 15, 2016.

General Schedule for the Week

Day	Class Topics
Monday	Foundational Concepts in Ethics
Tuesday	Foundational Concepts and Approaches to Ethics
Wednesday	Review Text 1 Discussions Biblical Ethics and Issues
Thursday	Issues in Ethics
Friday	Issues in Ethics

Issues in Ethics will be drawn from the following categories

- ★ Issues of Human Sexuality
- ★ Issues of Human Relationships
- ★ Bioethical Issues
- ★ Issues of Life and Death
- ★ Social/Political Issues

Course Evaluation

Grades will be determined on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale:

A: 93-100 **B:** 85-92 **C:** 77-84 **D:** 70-76 **F:** 69 or below

Borderline grades will normally and strictly be determined by the numerical grade received (Dr. Riley rounds up from .5), unless the student's promptness and faithfulness in class attendance, positive attitude and contribution in class discussions, and preparedness and attentiveness in class warrants special consideration. These factors only apply when the student is fractionally close to the next highest grade. In special cases, extra credit can be arranged with Dr. Riley, usually through an additional book review.

Course Policies

Reading Assignments

Students are responsible for completing all reading assignments.

Professor's Policy on Late Assignments

All work is due on the assigned date in the syllabus. The grade for late assignments will automatically be reduced by two points per day. No assignment will be accepted that is over two weeks late unless prior permission is granted by Dr. Riley. **Late work should include the date due and the day delivered on the cover page.**

Professor's Availability and Assignment Feedback

The student may contact the professor at any time using the email address provided in the course syllabus. The professor will make every effort to return answers to emailed questions within a 24-hour period of time during weekdays. Assignments requiring grading will be returned to the student within a reasonable period of time. Student feedback on graded assignments will be provided on the basis of syllabus guidelines

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

This is the official NOBTS Writing Center online help site for writing academic papers and essays. <http://www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html> You will discover writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help you become a better writer. Go here for Turabian and APA style helps and guidelines. You will also find language fonts for Greek and Hebrew.

Academic Honesty Policy

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Please be aware that plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. Refer to the NOBTS Student Handbook <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/student-services/NOBTSHandbook.pdf> where the definition, penalties and policies associated with plagiarism are clearly defined.

Classroom Parameters

Please arrive on time.
Turn off cell phones. Utilize laptops and other technology for class purposes only.
Respect the professor and other members of the class.
Maintain confidentiality when someone shares personal information.
Participate in class and group discussions.

Extra Credit

Extra credit may be available. Talk to Dr. Riley if you are interested in receiving extra credit.

Blackboard and ITC Technical Support

Blackboard is the instructional platform used in this class. Please make sure that your contact information is accurate and up-to-date. If you need assistance accessing Blackboard, Selfserve, or other technical support, please contact the Information Technology Center (Hardin Student Center 290 or call **504.816.8180**). Here are other helpful links to ITC assistance.

- Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
- BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
- ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
- www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.
- For Student Assistance in using Blackboard, visit: [Student Bb Help](#)

Academic Policies

Academic policies relate to absences, grading scale, final examination schedules, and other topics can be found in the current online catalog: [New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

Policy for Graduating Seniors

Graduating Seniors are responsible for alerting the professor of your intention to graduate. All of your assignments must be completed by noon (12:00 PM) on the Wednesday prior to commencement exercises.

Select Bibliography

- Atkinson, David J., David F. Field, Arthur Holmes, and Oliver O'Donovan, eds. *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics & Pastoral Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1995.
- Budziszewski, J. *What We Can't Not Know: A Guide*. Dallas: Spence, 2004.
- Campbell, Ken M. *Marriage and Family in the Biblical World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.
- Caner, Ergun Mehmet, and Emir Fethi Caner. *Christian Jihad: Two Former Muslims Look at the Crusades and Killing in the Name of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.
- Charles, J. Daryl. *The Unformed Conscience of Evangelicalism: Recovering the Church's Moral Vision*. InterVarsity, 2002.
- Clark, David K., and Robert V. Rakestraw, eds. *Reading in Christian Ethics. Vol. 1, Theory and Method*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- _____. *Reading in Christian Ethics. Vol. 2, Issues and Applications*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- Clayton, Philip, and Jeffrey Schloss, eds. *Evolution and Ethics: Human Morality in Biological and Religious Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Colson, Charles W., and Nigel M. de S. Cameron, eds. *Human Dignity in the Biotech Century: A Christian Vision for Public Policy*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Colson, Charles W., with Nancy Pearcey. *How Now Shall We Live?* Wheaton: Tyndale House, 2000.
- Conyers, A. J. *The Long Truce: How Toleration Made the World Safe for Power and Profit*. Dallas: Spence, 2001.
- Cook, David. *The Moral Maze: A Way of Exploring Christian Ethics*. London: SPCK, 1983.
- Davis, John Jefferson. *Evangelical Ethics*, 3rd ed. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2004.
- Doriani, Dan. *Women and Ministry: What the Bibles Teaches*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2003.
- Feinberg, John S., and Paul D. Feinberg. *Ethics for a Brave New World*. 2nd ed. Updated and Expanded. Wheaton: Crossway, 2010.
- Foster, Richard. *The Challenge of the Disciplined Life: Christian Reflections on Money, Sex, and Power*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1985.
- Geisler, Norman L. *Ethics: Options and Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.
- Grenz, Stanley J. *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.
- Gushee, David P., and Robert H. Long. *A Bolder Pulpit: Reclaiming the Moral Dimension of Preaching*. Valley Forge: Judson, 1998.
- Henry, Carl F. H. *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947 (2003).
- Hollenger, Dennis P. *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

- Holloway, Carson. *The Right Darwin? Evolution, Religion, and the Future of Democracy*. Dallas: Spence, 2006.
- Holmes, Arthur F., ed. *War and Christian Ethics: Classic and Contemporary Readings on the Morality of War, 2nd ed.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Jones, David Clyde. *Biblical Christian Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Jones, Stanton L., and Mark A. Yarhouse. *Homosexuality: The Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000.
- Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Macmillan, 1952.
- Meilaender, Gilbert C. *Faith & Faithfulness: Basic Themes in Christian Ethics*. South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper & Row, 1951.
- Rae, Scott B. *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Shuman, Joel, and Brian Volck. *Reclaiming the Body: Christians and the Faithful Use of Modern Medicine*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- Sider, Ronald J. *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Stetson, Brad, and Joseph G. Conti. *The Truth About Tolerance: Pluralism, Diversity, and the Culture Wars*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005.
- Stott, John. *Human Rights and Human Wrongs: Major Issues for a New Century*. Baker Book House, 1999.
- _____. *Our Social & Sexual Revolution: Major Issues for a New Century*. Baker Book House, 1999.
- White, James Emery. *Serious Times: Making Your Life Matter in an Urgent Day*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Wilkins, Steve. *Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics: An Introduction to Theories of Right and Wrong*. 2d ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011.

Embedded Assignment Assessment Rubric for ETHC5300, Christian Ethics

Student Name _____

Semester _____

Section _____

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE (0 PTS)	BASIC (1 PT)	COMPETENT (2 PTS)	GOOD (3 PTS)	EXCELLENT (4 PTS)
UNDERSTANDING	Able to Understand the biblical and philosophical basis for a Christian ethic					
APPLICATION	Able to apply a Christian ethic to contemporary issues					
COMMUNICATION	Able to communicate Christian ethical and moral truths competently and convincingly					