



**ETHC5300 CHRISTIAN ETHICS**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Division of Theological and Historical Studies**

**Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference**  
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### **Mission Statement**

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.

### **Core Value Focus**

The seminary has five core values.

- 1. Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
- 2. 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. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
- 3. 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. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
- 4. 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. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
- 5. Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is: *Characteristic Excellence*.

### **Curriculum Competencies**

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 areas:

1. **Biblical Exposition:** to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. **Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.
3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

The curriculum competency addressed in this course is: *Spiritual and Character Formation*.

### **Course 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.

### **Course Teaching Methodology**

This is an event course tied to attending the Defend the Faith Conference at NOBTS. The Breakout sessions for this course will include lectures and class discussions, and will be taped for the conference. Following the Conference, students will continue to learn through reading and writing assignments, examination, and audio resources.

### **Embedded Assignment**

This assignment will be used to assess how well students are meeting the standards set by the degree objectives and will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. **The embedded assignment will be question one of the final exam.** 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."

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.

**Embedded Assignment Rubric**

The rubric for grading the embedded assignment is below. Please complete the assignment according to this rubric.

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

## Primary Textbooks

Beckwith, Francis J., and Gregory Koukl. *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Mitchell, C. Ben. *Ethics and Moral Reasoning: A Student's Guide*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.

Rae, Scott B. *Doing the Right Thing: Making Moral Choices in a World Full of Options*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

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

The Bible (NASB, ESV, HCSB, NIV, KJV, or NKJV)

## Review Textbooks

### Review the following for Text Review 1:

Hollinger, Dennis P. *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

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

Butterfield, Rosaria Champagne. *Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert—Sexual Identity and Union with Christ*. Pittsburg: Crown and Covenant, 2015.

Walker, Andrew T., and Eric Teetel. *Marriage Is: How Marriage Transforms Society and Cultivates Human Flourishing*. Nashville: B&H, 2015.

### Choose ONE (1) of the following for Text Review 3:

Charles, J. Daryl. *Retrieving the Natural Law: A Return to Moral First Things*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

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 Requirements

You must turn in all assignments to pass the class. All assignments are submitted to the class blackboard.

### Conference Participation Assignment (10%)

Participation in the Conference requires that students do the following:

- Attend **all** Plenary Sessions
- Attend a break-out presentation each time a break-out session is offered
- Listen to audio recordings of at least **20** breakout sessions not physically attended

Each student will submit by the due date a listening accountability statement estimating total participation, as described above. **Due 14 weeks after the last day of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (Friday, April 14, 2017).**

### Textbook Reading Report (15%)

Each student is required to submit a reading accountability statement estimating how much of the total required reading was completed by the due date, with a brief statement of one important concept gleaned from the book.

- For the reading report, simply record your name and the collective total percentage read from the following books. Include for each book, in no more than half a page, a statement describing one important concept gleaned from the book:
  1. Beckwith and Koukl. *Relativism*: should be read completely
  2. Mitchell, *Ethics and Moral Reasoning*, should be read completely
  3. Rae, *Doing the Right Thing*, should be read completely
  4. Wright, *After You Believe*, should be read completely
- This assignment is **on your honor**. **The collective percentage read from all books with the statements factored in will be your grade. Due 6 weeks after the last day of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (Friday, February 17, 2017).**

### Three Book Reviews: (15% each)

Students will write **one** book review from **each** of the **Text Review 1, Text Review 2, and Text Review 3** lists (for a total of 3 reviews).

**Book reviews may be submitted as they are completed, but the following are firm Due Dates:**

**Text Review One Due (8 weeks after DtF): March 3, 2017**

**Text Review Two Due (10 weeks after DtF): March 17, 2017**

**Text Review Three Due (12 weeks after DtF): March 31, 2017**

These reviews should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The book review should be a thoughtful, informed response, taking into account biblical, theological, and ethical principles and sound reasoning.

2. The critique should be **3-5 single spaced typed pages**.
3. Content should include the following. **Do not simply summarize chapters:**
  - A brief statement introducing the author 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 about how much was read
  - The primary thesis, purpose, and/or description of the book
  - Major ethical insights communicated by the book. What points are particularly helpful for applying Christian ethics?
  - Ideas that changed or challenged your thinking (Ideas that are interesting, novel, or problematic). How and Why?
  - Insights in this book that relate practically to life and ministry, the life of the church, and to moral life in America
  - Major strengths and weaknesses of the book
  - In the conclusion, a brief statement of recommendation; why you would or would not recommend this book.
4. Develop subheading from the above bullet points (2-7).

### **Final Exam (30%)**

#### **Submitted via the Class Blackboard—DO NOT EMAIL.**

Each student must complete a Final Take-Home Exam. The exam will be comprehensive in scope, drawing from the lectures and assigned readings, and essay in form. The exam will test both *mastery of content* and *critical thinking skills*.

**Embedded Assignment:** Question one of the final exam is an embedded assignment (refer to pages 2-3 of syllabus for details). This assignment will be used to assess how well students are meeting the standards set by the course objectives.

**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 on page 3 of this syllabus. Please complete the embedded assignment according to the rubric.**

**Due 14 weeks after the last day of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (Friday, April 14, 2017).**

#### **Evaluation of Grade**

Grades will be determined on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale—an A for 93-100, B for 85-92, C for 77-84, D for 70-76, and F for 69 or below. Borderline grades will normally be determined by the numerical grade received (I round 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.

### Grade Distribution by Assignment and Due Dates

<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading Reports (4 books)	15%	Due: Friday, February 17, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	Selected Text Review 1	15%	Due: Friday, March 1, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	Selected Text Review 2	15%	Due: Friday, March 17, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	Selected Text Review 3	15%	Due: Friday, March 31, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conference Participation	10%	Due: Friday, April 14, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Final Exam</u>	30%	Due: Friday, April 14, 2017
		100%	

### **Technical Assistance**

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](http://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

### **Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”**

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

### **Plagiarism on Written Assignments**

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

### **Course Schedule**

Check the Defend the Faith event schedule to see the topics, times, and locations for the Ethics Breakout Sessions. Any breakout session taught by Mr. Walker or Mr. Suluma will count towards the Christian Ethics course and must be either attended or listened to via MP3 in order to get full credit for conference participation.

### **Miscellaneous but Important Course Policies**

1. **Participation.** You must attend the entire conference.
2. **Absences.** You must attend the entire Defend the Faith Conference to get credit for the course.
3. **Late Work.** Work turned in late will be penalized. No assignment will be accepted that is over two weeks late, and all late work will be assessed a proportional penalty (two points per day) unless **prior permission** is sought and a legitimate reason warrants lateness. **Late work should include the date due and the day delivered on the cover page.**

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- 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.
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