



ETHC5300 CHRISTIAN ETHICS

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DIVISION OF THEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL STUDIES

MAY INTENSIVE WEEK
MAY 24-28, 2021

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

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.

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 is 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 about 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 the following rubric:

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					

Primary Textbooks

Kilner, John F, ed. *Why People Matter: A Christian Engagement with Rival Views of Human Significance*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017.

Magnuson, Ken. *Invitation to Christian Ethics: Moral Reasoning and Contemporary Ethics*. Invitation to Theological Studies Series. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2020.

Review Textbooks

Read the Following for Text Review 1:

Pearcey, Nancy. *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018.

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

Bradley, Anne R., and Arthur W. Lindsley, eds. *For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty*. Foreword by Arthur C. Brooks. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

Mitchell, C. Ben, and D. Joy Riley. *Christian Bioethics: A Guide for Pastors, Health Care Professionals, and Families*. B&H Studies in Christian Ethics, ed. Daniel R. Heimbach. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014.

Strickland, Walter R. II, and Dayton Hartman. *For God So Loved the World: A Blueprint for Kingdom Diversity*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2020.

Struthers, William M. *Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009.

Walker, Andrew T. *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say About Gender Identity?* Foreword by R. Albert Mohler, Jr. Charlotte, NC: The.good.book, 2017.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will utilize lecture, class discussions, reading assignments, written assignments, cooperative group work, audio visual resources, and an exam to reach the goals of the class.

Course Requirements

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

1. Reading Reports (20% of final grade)

Each student will submit a Reading Report for the primary texts:

- Kilner, *Why People Matter*, should be read completely and a report submitted in **Intensive Week, Wednesday, May 26, 2021** (10%).

The **Kilner Reading Report** should take the following form:

- With single-spaced and in Times-New Roman 12 font, type your name and the following: “By the due date, I read ___% of [put here the particular parts of the book that are due].”
 - For the remainder of the report, choose one chapter and write a one page summary of the content along with a critical evaluation (what you agree with or disagreed with and why—make an argument and support it.
 - You will be asked to sign up for the chapter you choose to summarize via a google doc or email to Dr. Riley. No students may sign up for the same chapter. Students will present their chapter in class on Wednesday.
- Magnuson, *Invitation to Christian Ethic*, should be read according to the following schedule:
 - Parts 1-2 should be read completely and a report submitted in **Intensive Week, Monday, May 24, 2021** (5%).
 - Parts 3-5 should be read completely and a report submitted on or before **July 5, 2021** (5%).

The **Magnuson Reading Report** should take the following form:

- With single-spaced and in Times-New Roman 12 font, type your name and the following: “By the due date, I read ___% of [put here the particular parts of the book that are due].”
- For the remainder of the report, write one paragraph for each chapter (17 total), reflecting on the following:
 - What is the chapter primarily about?
 - What, in particular, did you find most helpful in the chapter for understanding Christian Ethics (it could relate to methodology or a particular issue)

The percentage read for these assignments are **on your honor**. You may use first-person, limited and in appropriate style.

3. Two Book Reviews (each 25% of final grade)

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

- **Text Review 1** is due **June 7, 2021**, submitted via the class **Blackboard** (do not email).
- **Text Review 2** is due **June 21, 2021**, 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 **4-6 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 and the arguments made to support moral positions
 - 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.

4. **One Final Exam, (30% of final grade) Due July 12, 2021**

Submit your final exam to Dr. Riley via the Class Blackboard (do not email).

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.**

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 Student Learning Outcomes. The rubric for grading the embedded assignment is on **page 2** of this syllabus. Please complete the assignment according to the rubric.

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Report, Magnuson 1	5%	Due: Workshop Week, Monday, May 24, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Report, Kilner	10%	Due: Workshop Week, Wednesday, May 26, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/> Pearcey Review 1	25%	Due: June 7, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/> Selected Text Review 2	25%	Due: June 21, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Report, Magnuson 2	5%	Due: July 5, 2021
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Exam	30%	Due: July 12, 2021

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/studentervices/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.

General Outline 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

Intensive Week Schedule

- Monday: Chapel service 1:00-1:50 p.m.; class 2:00-5:00 p.m., 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 8:00-11:00 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- Friday: 8:00-11:30 a.m.

Select Bibliography

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