

**ANCCI UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION**

**RELI 401 Christian Ethics  
Dates: Fall Semester 2014**

**GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

**PROFESSOR:** Dr. Solomon Waigwa  
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**PHONE:** (254) 295-6225

**PREREQUISITE COURSES:** None

**TEXT BOOK:** Kyle Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality*, Westminster, John Knox ISBN: 0664228984

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY:**

Students are required to complete assignments and be prepared for the class. Students will also be required to discuss assigned materials. If you are unprepared when called upon, you will lose points for class participation. Assignments will vary and students occasionally will be assigned to groups for group projects. Each person in the group is responsible for group projects. Under certain conditions, the professor may intervene when one student is not carrying his/her weight of the assignment. Instruction will take place in a classroom setting and through assignments online through JICS. These online assignments will require, variously, reading, listening, watching, and writing. Quizzes will be done online in JICS as well.

**METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

Performance on attendance, tests, quizzes, midterm examination, homework, classroom participation and a final examination will be taken into account for the final grade. All submitted papers must be typed and properly documented

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

When we claim the name “Christian” certain things are expected of us. People watch our behavior to see whether we really walk our talk. This module will help to define the fine line Christians must walk living in both the secular and religious world.

This course is a study of the methods, resources, structures, and contemporary context of Christian ethics. It provides an introduction to the central doctrines of the Christian faith that is both critically respectful of classic theological traditions and critically open to new voices and emphases in recent theology. Students will become familiar with basic systematic theological doctrines such as creation, Trinity, election, Christology, anthropology, etc. Through the reading and discussion of primary and secondary sources students will develop interpretive skills that will allow for further critical engagement with Christian theology.

**OBJECTIVES**

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. develop an understanding of the basic methods and key themes in Christian theological ethics and be able to apply these methods and themes to contemporary and/or perennial issues facing Christians
2. gain a foundational understanding of the Biblical sources of Christian ethics.
3. develop the ability to critically engage readings in Christian ethics, identifying key assumptions and distinguishing poor from solid argumentation.
4. clarify your own moral reasoning and to grapple with issues of personal integrity and morality.

**GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES**

The General Education Competencies emphasized (E), reinforced (R) or assessed (A) in this course are:

1. Writing: Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively, that is, clearly and persuasively and demonstrate the ability to gather evidence and construct a coherent argument. (E, R)

2. **Critical Thinking:** Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and independently as well as demonstrate analytical reasoning skills and make inferences across the disciplines. (E, A)
3. **Religious and Spiritual Awareness and Moral Development:** Students will demonstrate an awareness of spiritual, ethical and moral considerations in making decisions and evaluating common actions. (E, A)

**STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING RELI 4305-01 SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES IN ALL OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:**

**Knowledge (K)**

K1: Demonstrate the ability to analyze, evaluate and synthesize information about current major ethical theories within the Christian Tradition.

K2: Demonstrate the ability to synthesize approaches, including Biblical perspectives to addressing ethical problems, issues or dilemmas.

**Skills and Applied Knowledge (S)**

S1: Accurately and intelligently apply ethical terminology and concepts.

S2: Demonstrate proficiency in oral communication and argumentation through class discussions and debates.

S3: Gain facility at applying appropriate ethical reasoning and use of ethical theories to daily life.

**Attitudes (A)**

A1: Demonstrate a willingness to move beyond an unthinking relativism to seek understanding of and engagement with others.

A2: Demonstrate the willingness to bring ethical thinking to daily life rather than just doing what comes naturally.

**SOFTWARE AND SUPPLIES**

Requirements: In addition to your textbook, paper, and writing materials brought to each class, some materials and announcements will be sent via e-mail. You also will be able to access information and assignments related to the class through ANCCI University website. Students will need access to a computer with Internet access and the requisite software and hardware to use multimedia resources (audio & video), email capacity, presentation and word processing software. Any additional requirements for specific projects/assignments will be announced by the course instructor.

**COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**General Policies**

**Methods of Instructional Delivery**

Students are required to complete reading assignments and be prepared for the class. Students will also be required to discuss assigned materials. If you are unprepared when called upon, you will lose points for class participation. Assignments will vary and students occasionally will be assigned to groups for group projects. Each person in the group is responsible for the group project. Under certain conditions, the professor may intervene when one student is not carrying his/her weight of the assignment. Instruction will take place in a classroom setting and may also be offered through email. Coursework will include online assignments will require, variously, reading, listening, watching, and writing.

**Other Policies**

This syllabus is subject to modification at the instructor's discretion.

**SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Classroom assignments must be turned in or presented on time, either in person or online, as instructed by the teacher. Students are responsible for work missed due to absence and should coordinate makeup work with the instructor. A student who must miss class is required to notify the instructor in advance via e-mail or present a written excuse upon their return to class. Cheating is not allowed: any form of cheating will result in an automatic "F" on the test or class assignment.

**Late Assignments.**

Late assignments are strongly discouraged. They may or may not be accepted, at the discretion of the course instructor, and late delivery (if accepted) may affect the grade for that assignment.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please be advised that unexcused absences in excess of the stated maximum are grounds for being administratively withdrawn from the course. A roll call will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students are expected to come to class with all materials necessary to participate in class. Students should attend all classes in a punctual manner, unless some exigent circumstances exist. Notification of such circumstances should be made (in advance if possible) via e-mail to the course instructor. Disruptive behavior or sleeping is not permitted in class. During discussions, the exchange of ideas is important, but students must remain respectful of each other and the instructor, even when strongly differing opinions, beliefs, or perspectives are expressed. If you bring a cell phone in class, make sure it is on silent mode and that it is in your bag. **Absolutely no cell phones on the desks or on your hands**

### TECHNOLOGY

#### Email Use

All Nations University recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The University will always maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individuals corresponding and the security of the transmitted information.

### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is an act or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations. It also includes any form of cheating, plagiarism, falsification of records and/or collusion. Students are expected to refrain from cheating which includes, but is not necessarily limited to: copying from another's test or quiz paper; using supplementary materials, electronic devices (calculators, Bluetooth and iPhones, notes, books, Twitter and text messaging, etc.) not authorized by the examiner/instructor; substitution for another student in taking a test; using, buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, transporting, or removing in whole or in part an un-administered test or key information regarding same. Falsifying records, such as alteration of grades or other records, plagiarism and collusion will not be tolerated.

Any student caught engaging in an act of academic dishonesty will assigned a penalty appropriate for the act. These penalties will be assigned at the discretion of the faculty member and may be appealed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### GRADING

There will be a quiz on each chapter reading and some weekly work. There will also be a Mid Term Exam and a Final Exam. There will also be a Research Paper, 3 to 5 pages long. Students must create a case study similar to the case studies modeled throughout the course and provide a theo-ethical response that gives attention to the Biblical Perspectives outlined in this course. The paper should include a clear thesis and construct a theo-ethical argument that uses analysis of the themes to support one's position concerning the case study. Evaluation of the Final course paper will also be based on: a) proper use of grammar, correct spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure; and, b) organized flow of ideas and overall structure. The paper should be typed and double-spaced. Students should use the *Chicago Style Manual* for assistance on style and citations. **The final draft of this paper is due on Thursday, December 14, by Noon.** No late papers will be accepted without previous consent of the instructor. The Final Course Paper will count towards 20% of the total grade.

Your final grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

#### Grading Requirements

|                 |     |                                  |            |
|-----------------|-----|----------------------------------|------------|
| Chapter Quizzes | 20% | Research Paper                   | 20%        |
| Midterm Exam    | 20% | Weekly work                      | 10%        |
| Final Exam      | 20% | Class attendance & participation | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>    |     |                                  | 100%       |

A = 90%-100% B = 80%-89% C = 70%-79% D = 60%-69% F = 0%-59%

### STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are expected to uphold the standards of conduct detailed in the official All Nations University catalog and in concert with the conduct becoming to a All Nations University student according to the Student Handbook provided to all students at the beginning of each academic year.

This course is designed for discussion, and it encouraged at every juncture. However, only one conversation should be occurring at any one time, and there must never be any sign of disrespect toward a person in the class. Carrying on private conversations while another person is talking, laughing at someone or talking about them in your conversations, snoring loudly during class lectures or discussions, or repeatedly cutting someone off in mid-conversation will not be tolerated.

If I perceive a problem, I will give the appropriate person(s) one warning, followed by a removal from the class and the assignment of a full day's absence to the appropriate person(s). This course provides room for a very wide variety of thoughts, positions, and discussions. I encourage the sharing of ideas and questions, but we will understand that

No question, idea, or position vocalized should be equated with that person's own deep beliefs. Both refusing to participate in discussions and dominating discussions are problematic.

If you bring a cell phone in class, make sure it is **on silent mode** and that it is **in your bag**. **Absolutely no cell phones on the desks or on your hands.**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

All Nations University does not discriminate on the basis of color, race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, ideology, political affiliation, veteran status, age, physical handicap or marital status.

In order to facilitate the transition of students with impairments, students with documented disabilities who may need academic services for this class are required to inform the professor of such a need and it will be addressed.

**WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE**

| UNIT | TOPICS & READINGS<br>(IN-CLASS)  | ASSIGNMENT<br>(OUT OF CLASS)  | STUDENT<br>CONTACT HRS.  |
|------|--|---|--|
| 1.   | Introduction and Syllabus<br>Exploring Christian Ethics (1 hr)   | I. Syllabus<br>II. Fedler, Chapter 1 (4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic I:</b><br>Introduce yourself. Tell us about yourself. What city you come from, your major and what your future career goals are.  | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|      | What should we do?<br>Approaches to Ethical Decision Making  | Role of Religion in Ethics (4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic II:</b><br>Is Faith in God necessary for ethics?  | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|      | The Ethics of Divine Commands:<br>Role of Religion in the Moral Life; Religious Belief: Diversities and Dialogue. (1 hr) | Diversity of Ethics: Absolutism, Relativism and Pluralism (4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic III</b><br>Take a deed deemed immoral. (stealing, killing, pedophilia, e.t.c.) Spend enough time investigating and contemplating the circumstances around the deed you chose. Make a plausible argument for why it was understandable, if not justified, and that the perpetrator of such a deed was, in some way, as much a victim as his or her victims.   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|      | What should we do?<br>Approaches to Ethical Decision Making (1 hr)   | i. Egoism<br>ii. Utilitarianism<br>iii. Deontology ( 4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic IV:</b><br>David Hume writes: "Love between the sexes begets a complacency and good-will, very distinct from the gratification of an appetite. Tenderness to their offspring, in all sensible beings, is commonly able alone to counter-balance the strongest motives of self-love, and has no manner of dependence on that affection. What interest can a fond mother have in view, who loses her health by assiduous attendance on her sick child, and afterwards languishes and dies of grief, when freed, by its death, from the slavery of that attendance?" ( <i>An Enquiry Concerning The Principles Of Morals - Appendix II. Of Self-love</i> , 1751). How could one argue that this mother's intention is egoistic? Think about Stirner's argument. | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|      | Fedler, Chapter 3 How should we be? Virtue, Character, and Emotions<br>Case Studies: Case studies: Hiroshima: (1hr)      | Fedler Chapter 3 Glen Stassen and David Gushee, Holistic Character in Ethics in <i>Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context</i> , Google Books. Fussel, A Soldier's View; Google Books. (4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic V:</b><br>Do virtues change over time and across cultures? If so, would this undermine virtue ethics? Can we identify universal virtues?  | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|      | Scripture and Other sources of Wisdom/Christian Guidance (1hr)   | Fedler, chapter 4 (6 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic VI:</b><br>What are some <b>WRONG</b> ways of using scripture in ethical decision making   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
| 2.   | Case Study: Homosexuality<br>Case study: Capital Punishment (1hr)  | The Bible on Homosexuality<br>Glen Stassen, Biblical Teaching on Capital Punishment (4 hrs)   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)                       |

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|    |   | <p><b><u>Discussion Topic VII:</u></b><br/>Listen to the Table Podcast discussion on “Homosexuality in the Context of Christian Sexual Ethics: Discussing Homosexuality and Sexuality Together.”<br/><a href="http://www.dts.edu/thetable/play/discussing-homosexuality-sexuality-together/">http://www.dts.edu/thetable/play/discussing-homosexuality-sexuality-together/</a><br/>How does the doctrine that we are all made in the image of God come to bear on the discussion on homosexuality and sexuality together. Post your responses on discussion board.</p> | Total/Week: (5hrs)   |
|    | Case study: Capital Punishment (1hr)  | <p>Jacob Vallenga, Is Capital Punishment Wrong?<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic VIII</u></b><br/>Give a balanced account of the main arguments for and against Capital Punishment. Give reasons for your support of either opinions. (Note: This is a very large assignment. Plan ahead.) (4 hrs)</p>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
| 3. | Key Ethical Claims and Genesis 1-3<br>God, Humans, and Creation in Genesis 1-3 (1hr)    | <p>Fedler chapter 6<br/>Biblical Reading: Genesis 1-3 (4 hrs)<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic IX</u></b><br/>The Bible says that God created human beings in God’s image. What are the ethical implication and claims of creationism?</p>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|    | <b>Law and Justice</b><br><b>Mosaic Covenant: New Guidelines for a New People</b> (1hr) | <p>Fedler, chapter 7 Scripture readings: Exodus 19, 20-23:13 ; Deuteronomy 5-6, 22-24 ; Leviticus 11-13,25 (4 hrs )<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic X</u></b><br/>Christianity teaches that God is supreme and sovereign. What are the ethical implications of God’s supremacy and sovereignty?</p>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
| 4. | Discipleship and the Teachings of Jesus (1hr)   | <p>Fedler, chapter 9<br/>Scripture: Luke; Matthew 5-7; 25: 31-46; John 8: 1-11; 11:38-44 (4 hrs)<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic XI</u></b><br/>Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commands.” (John 14:15) How is loving God connected with ethical living?</p>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|    | <b><u>Imitation of Christ:</u></b> Imitation and the Life of Jesus (1hr)                | <p>Fedler, chapter 10 (except pages 175-181)<br/>Edward LeRoy Long, The Behavior Of Jesus in <i>To Liberate and Redeem</i> (4 hrs)<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic XII</u></b><br/>Access several reviews of <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> by Thomas a Kempis online. From those reviews, provide a brief summation of this classic.</p>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|    | Case Studies: Agape and Warfare (1hr)   | <p>Ramsey, Selections from <i>Basic Christian Ethics</i><br/>Ramsey, Justice in War ( 4 hrs)<br/><b><u>Discussion Topic XIII</u></b><br/>Just war theory deals with the justification of how and why wars are fought. At the worldwide assembly of Catholic moral theologians in Padua, Italy, a participant suggested that greater incorporation of women’s perspectives might enrich moral discourse about warfare. Review the just war theory and suggest what might change if the voices of women, orphans and exiles were heard in the debates about war</p>      | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |

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| 5. | Case Studies: Agape and Warfare (1hr)                       | Hauerwas, The Theological Basis of Christian Pacifism<br><b>Scripture</b><br>Deut. 6: 4-5; Lev. 19:17-18; 19:33-34; Luke 10:25-37 (Good Samaritan); John 13, 15; I John 4:7-2 ( 4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic XIV</b><br>In the podcast “The Hard Questions For Christian Pacifists,” theologian and ethicist Stanley Hauerwas responds to the most frequent objection to his own Christian pacificism – what about fighting Hitler? Respond to Stanley Hauerwas’s views and show reasons why you agree/disagree with him.<br><a href="http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/08/04/the-hard-question-for-christian-pacifists/">http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/08/04/the-hard-question-for-christian-pacifists/</a> |  |
| 6. | Pauline ethics<br>Justification and New Creation<br>(3 hrs) | Fedler: Looking Back and Looking Ahead<br>Scripture: Rom 1-8, 12-15; Gal 1-3, 5<br>Fedler, Epilogue (4 hrs)<br><b>Discussion Topic XV</b><br>Read “The Foundation of Pauline Ethics” in Bible Gateway and explain how Pauline ethics informs modern Christian living.<br>Source:<br><a href="http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Col/Foundation-Pauline-Ethics">http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Col/Foundation-Pauline-Ethics</a>   | In-class: (1 hrs)<br>Out of class: (4 hrs)<br>Total/Week: (5hrs) |
|    | <b>Final Exam</b>   | <b>Final Exam</b>   |  |
|    | <b>15 Hrs</b>   | <b>30 Hrs</b>   | <b>TOTAL 45 Hours</b>  |

### Online Resources

#### I. Homosexuality and Christian Sexual Ethics.

Table Podcast discussion on “Homosexuality in the Context of Christian Sexual Ethics: Discussing Homosexuality and Sexuality Together.” <http://www.dts.edu/thetable/play/discussing-homosexuality-sexuality-together/>

#### II. *Imitatio Christi*

Reviews of *Imitatio Christi* may be found on the following websites

1. <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/books/books.php?id=2584>
2. [The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis online](#)
3. Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Imitation\\_of\\_Christ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Imitation_of_Christ)
4. Goodreads: [http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/851393.The\\_Imitation\\_of\\_Christ](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/851393.The_Imitation_of_Christ)
5. Patrice Fagnant-MacArthur: <http://www.spiritualwoman.net/Books/ImitationofChrist.html>

#### III. Just war Theory

1. “Just War Doctrine” in Catholic Answers. <http://www.catholic.com/documents/just-war-doctrine>
2. Kenneth R. Himes, “Hard Questions About Just War.” The National Catholic Weekly, Vol. 195 No. 13, October 30, 2006. [http://www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/rvp/pubaf/06/Himes\\_America\\_Oct06.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/rvp/pubaf/06/Himes_America_Oct06.pdf)
3. St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, Part II, Question 40, <http://ethics.sandiego.edu/Books/Texts/Aquinas/JustWar.html>

4. H. David Baer, "The Just War Theory of Peacemaking," in the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*.  
<http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Journal-of-Lutheran-Ethics/Issues/June-2005/The-Just-War-Theory-of-Peacemaking.aspx>

#### IV. **Christian Pacifism**

1. "Christian Pacifism in Brief." Ted Grimsrud with Christian Early.  
<http://peacetheology.net/pacifism/christian-pacifism-in-brief/>
2. Plow Creek Mennonite Church. "Bible Pacifism: Christian Pacifism is the Scriptural Position" by Jim Foxvog. [http://www.plowcreek.org/bible\\_pacifism.htm](http://www.plowcreek.org/bible_pacifism.htm)
3. "Greek words for love" From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek\\_words\\_for\\_love](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_words_for_love)
4. In the podcast "The Hard Questions For Christian Pacifists," theologian and ethicist Stanley Hauerwas responds to the most frequent objection to his own Christian pacifism – what about fighting Hitler? Respond to Stanley Hauerwas's views and show reasons why you agree/disagree with him.  
<http://dish.andrewsullivan.com/2013/08/04/the-hard-question-for-christian-pacifists/>

#### V. **Pauline Ethics**

The Foundation of Pauline Ethics- Bible Gateway

Source: <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Col/Foundation-Pauline-Ethics>