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CS 601 Christian Ethics

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This is a PRELIMINARY syllabus. Specific details are subject to change. Textbooks, requirements, and overall themes will not change.

CS 601ExL: Christian Ethics  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
Spring 2005

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Office Hours:  
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You can also contact me as needed at the telephone numbers listed or through email at cperabea@drew.edu.

ExL Contact Information:  
For general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program, contact Dale Hale:  
ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu  
Phone: (859) 858-2393

For technical support, library research support, library loans, and ExL media contact Information Commons:  
Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu  
Phone: (859) 858-2233  
Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

Accessing Information Commons Materials:  
1. General Questions:
§ The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/hours.shtml.

2. Materials Requests:
   § To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml
   § ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.
   § ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:
   § ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help choosing a paper topic, determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:
   § To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0’s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

Windows and Icons:
The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules.

The Discussion Center will be used for all public communications. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the modules, the assignments, or anything else which would be of interest to your classmates and the professor, you should post to the Discussion Center.

The (Class Number) Office is for private correspondence between you and the professor. This will contain items that you do not want to appear publicly before all of your classmates.

The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the course of the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center from becoming too unmanageable.

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. Remember: None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.
The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B.L. Fisher Library, chapel services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, Interesting Links, a Powerpoint Viewer, and a Real Audio Player.

Purpose:

To prepare students for ministry by training them to analyze and address the moral life from a Christian perspective. To enable ministers to equip their congregations for understanding moral responsibility and for practicing ministry with integrity. To assist in training ministers who will draw all persons, including those who are excluded by society, into the care and guidance of the community of faith under the Lordship of Christ. To assist in the training of ministers who will exemplify the Gospel-mandated holy life.

Objectives:

Students will be able:
To provide a biblical basis for the moral life.
To describe various historical and contemporary Christian interpretations of social and personal moral issues.
    To use the basic vocabulary of ethical analysis.
    To use basic tools of social analysis.
To explain the Wesleyan emphasis on the various dimensions of holiness, specifically the expectation for personal integrity, moral concern, and social responsibility.
To recognize and explain at a basic level: the needs, contexts, and insights of various cultural groups and marginalized communities in society and in the church (these may include, but are not limited to, particularity arising from ethnic, gender, class, and geographic locations).
    To explain how responses to moral problems and moral integrity shape congregational life.

    Dayton, Donald W., Discovering an Evangelical Heritage ~(Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988).
    Hollinger, Dennis, Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).

Selected readings on electronic reserve

Evaluation:
Grade Range: Work for CS601 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = (4.0) Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B = (3.0) Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = (2.0) Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = (1.0) Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = (0) Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Participation: Students are required to complete all assigned readings. Reading Records will be collected on the last day of class. Failure to complete readings on time may result in a lowering of the final grade, as will poor attendance for class. Attendance will be taken. The deduction for low participation and/or late or incomplete reading of assigned material will be up to 10% against the final grade (a full letter grade reduction).

Written Work: All written work must be typed with 12 point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and true double spacing.

Follow page limit requirements. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse. Papers are due in class on assigned date.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision.

Take-Home Integrative Essays (5 pages, typed, double-spaced) Three essay questions will require moral reflection on, and integration of, the various biblical and historical materials covered in weeks 1—6 (includes readings and discussion on Wesley and Dayton).

Final Examination (45 minutes in class) The examination is oriented toward objective knowledge of ethical theory and historic traditions.

Take-Home Case Study (5 pages, typed, double-spaced) Case Study will describe an issue in ministry and will require analysis from various moral and social perspectives.
Course Schedule:
February 7-13: Moral Foundations and Sociocultural Contexts: Introduction

February 14-20: Moral Foundations and Sociocultural Contexts: Continued

Readings:
Assigned Scriptures
Hollinger, pages 7-123

February 21-27: Making Moral Decisions

Readings:
Hollinger, pages 125-186
Miles, pages 1-59

February 28-March 6: ~Christ and Culture: The Historic Tradition

Readings:
Hollinger, pages 187-215
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:
Augustine, pages 234-237
Thomas Aquinas, 109-118
Luther, 187-194
Schleitheim Confession, 285-287

Electronic Reserve:
Didache
Calvin, Civil Government

March 7-13: Christ and Culture: Justice, Pluralism, and Public Engagement

Readings:
Hollinger, pages 216-272
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:
Niebuhr, 241-247
Wolterstorff, 251-253
Kennedy, 436-442
Yoder, 91-101
Jordan, 442-445
King, 427-436
Boff and Boff, 474-482
Callahan, 270-279

March 14-20: Distinctives of a Wesleyan Moral Vision

Readings:

Electronic Reserve:
Wesley, ~Sermon CXX: Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity
Sermon XCII: ~The Danger of Riches~~
Thoughts Upon Slavery
Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions

Heitzenrater, The Imitatio Christi and the Great Commandment

March 21-27 Reading Week

March 28-April 3: The Church as a Moral Community

Readings:
Dayton, entire book
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:
Rasmussen, 311-315

April 4-April 10: The Church as a Moral Community: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

Readings:
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:
Ruether, 88-91
Gilligan, 172-176

Electronic Reserve:
Koch and Van Leeuwen, excerpt from After Eden, pp. 19-43
Volf, Exclusion and Embrace? Excerpt from ....
New readings on black and Hispanic issues~~~~~~
Ain’t I a Woman?

Take-Home Integrative Essays Due

April 11-17: The Church as a Moral Community: Friendship, Sexuality, and Homosexuality

Readings:
Miles, 103-126
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
Meilaender, 264-270  
Harrison, 331-341  

Electronic Reserve:  
Hays, Homosexuality, excerpt from The Moral Vision of the New Testament,  
379-406  
Circuit Rider articles on homosexuality  

April 18-24: Marriage, Family, and Aging  

Readings:  
Miles, 76-102  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
Farley, 342-346  
Smedes, 347-353  

Electronic Reserve:  
Lysaught, excerpt from Growing Old in Christ, 267-301  
Van Leeuwen, excerpt from My Brother’s Keeper, 189-208  

April 25-May 1: Work, Environment, and Worship  

Readings:  
Miles, 60-75  
Boulton, Kennedy and Verhey:  
Pope John Paul, 468-473  
May, 514-524  
Berry, 524-528  
Electronic Reserve:  
Volf, excerpt from Work in the Spirit, 123-156  

May 2-8: Conclusions, Take Home Case Study and Final Exam