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CS 601 Christian Ethics

Wyndy Corbin

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**CS601 ExL: Christian Ethics - 2 units
Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring Term 2003**

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office hours - TBA**

Welcome:

We are ready for our journey as a learning community into CS601. This will be an exciting journey as we follow the syllabus which outlines where we are going and how we are going to get there. I have taught students Christian ethics for the last three years. This will be my second time teaching it through a computer-based medium at Asbury. Therefore, please feel free throughout the course of the term to raise questions and pose suggestions for future consideration that will enhance the delivery of this course through ExL. You will play an important role in shaping this on-line version for future improvement. Thank you in advance for jumping in and making this a meaningful learning experience.

Office Hours:

TBA

ExL Support Team:

For technical support contact *Andy Adams*,
ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu
For questions related to the ExL program contact *Kevin Osborn*,
ExL_Director@asburyseminary.edu, or *Amy Jo Adams*,
ExL_Coach@asburyseminary.edu
For library reference support contact *Hannah Kirsch*,
Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu
For interlibrary loans contact *Dot James*,
Dorothy_James@asburyseminary.edu

Obtaining Library Materials and Reference Assistance:

All ExL students are encouraged to make use of their local library. However, if such services are unavailable or inadequate, ExL students may also obtain library books and journal articles through the mail from Asbury Theological Seminary's B. L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be emailed to the ExL Reference Librarian, Hannah Kirsch (Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu). Hannah is also available to assist ExL

students with reference requests such as how to find citations for books and articles, how to use the various online databases available to ExL students, or how to begin looking for information on a specific topic.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library's WebPac (online catalog of the library's holdings) or one of the journal databases available on the ExL Virtual Library webpage (found in the Resource Center of your ExL classroom). Then send an email to Hannah citing the sources that you would like to request. If you need help searching the databases, do not hesitate to ask. Please allow 5-10 business days for all requests to be filled. ExL students are billed for the cost of photocopies (5 cents per page) and the cost of shipping. Express mail services (price varies according to weight) and faxing (\$1.50 for the first page and 25 cents for each additional page plus photocopy charges) are also available, but material will generally take 1-2 days from the receipt of the request to be processed.

Plan ahead and make your requests early.

- For any other concerns or ideas with the course, contact me using the e-mail or phone number above

- Other contact information:

ExL Technical Support - Andy Adams, email at ExL Support, (859)858-2373

ExL General Questions - Amy Jo Adams, email at ExL Coach, (859)858-2276

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.

Course Description:

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.

Course Objectives:

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- Provide a biblical basis for the moral life.
- Describe various historical and contemporary Christian interpretations of social and personal moral issues.
- Use the basic vocabulary of ethical analysis.
- Use the basic tools of social analysis.
- Explain the Wesleyan emphasis on the various dimensions of holiness, specifically the expectation for personal integrity, moral concern, and social responsibility.
- Recognize and explain at a basic level: the needs, context 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).
- Explain how responses to moral problems and moral integrity shape congregational life.

Course Requirements:

- 20% Course Participation
- 25% Integrative Essay on Module 1
- 25% Integrative Case Study
- 30% Final Exam

Participation - This course is highly interactive befitting for the task of studying Christian ethics and engaging in moral formation. Your engaged participation is crucial for your own learning and for the entire group. Therefore, it is expected that you will post assignments when requested, and respond to your co-learners as required in a thoughtful and informed manner. Your interaction must be

informed, demonstrating you have read the material. Your grade for participation will be determined by on-time postings and your interaction with and use of the course material.

Written Work - All written work must be typed with 12 point type, with standard one inch margins and double spacing. All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings. Please refer to the guidelines on inclusive language found in the Intranet folder under Resources, Inclusive Language.

Written assignments should be sent to my office email address as an attachment in Word or in an rtf. format by the date due. I will read, comment and grade assignments in the format you sent and send assignments back to you via email attachment.

Integrative Essay - You will answer two essay questions at the end of Module 1 (Week 6). I will provide the questions by **March 18** with specific instructions for the assignment. The integrative essay is due by **March 28**. The three essay questions will require moral reflection on, and integration of, the various biblical and historical materials covered in Module 1.

Case Study - The case study will focus on an issue in ministry and will require various moral and social perspectives. I will provide the case study to you by **May 2** with specific instructions for the assignment. The case study is due on **May 16**.

Final examination - There will be a final examination for this course. It is oriented toward objective knowledge of ethical theory and historic traditions and will rely heavily on the course readings. The final exam will be available by **May 16** and due by **May 22**.

Expectations:

Expectations for the course in general: My prayer and hope is that our participation in the course will be transformational. I will pray that our lives will be formed more into the image of Christ through our interaction with the material and with each other over the course of the term. Let's pray for greater consonance between our beliefs and actions as Christian leaders and ethicists.

What you can expect of me:

1. You can expect that I will be fully engaged with the material and with you throughout the course.
2. You can expect thoroughness in explanations of assignments and availability to clarify any questions you have about the course and assignments.
3. You can expect openness from me on my own questions and openness to you as you raise new insights and questions in the course.

4. You can expect me to pray for you, both for your work in this course and any personal concerns you bring to my attention during the term.
5. You can expect me to respond to emails on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday of each week, and to be available during office hours.

What I expect of you:

1. I assume you will be fully engaged in this course and will interact when required.
2. I expect courteous and grace-filled interaction among us as controversial issues are discussed and disagreements arise over important issues.
3. I expect you to pray for each other, for our work in the course, and for any personal concerns we have that may come to your attention.
4. I expect (and sincerely hope!) you to enjoy the course, learn a lot, and develop an internalized, God-driven passion for personal and social ethics.

Grading:

Work for CS 601 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = 95-100% Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

A- = 90-94% Far above average, fine work

B+ = 87-89% Above average for graduate work

B = 83-86% Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

B- = 80-82% Slightly below average for graduate work

C+ = 77-79% Meets requirements, but noticeable inadequacies for graduate work

C = 73-76% Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

C - = 70-72% Meets requirements, but serious gaps

D+ = 67-69% Minimal work

D = 63-68% Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = below 60% Failure.

Required Reading:

Required Texts:

Dayton, Donald W. *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988)

Miles, Rebekah L. *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) Packet (to be purchased from bookstore) - readings are not necessarily in order

Recommended Reading:

The following books are helpful foundationall resources for Christian ethics:

Grenz, Stanley. *The Moral Quest* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1997)
Hays, Richard. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996)
Hollinger, Dennis. *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002)
Verhey, Allen. *Remembering Jesus: Christian Community, Scripture and the Moral Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002)
Wogaman, J. Philip. *Christian Ethics: A Historical Introduction* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993)

Course Schedule:

Module 1 - Foundations for Christian Ethics (February 10 - March 28)

The first half of the course will explore the biblical, theological and historical foundations of Christian ethics. You will be introduced to basic terminology and themes in ethics and various approaches to Christian ethics. Specific instructions for each section of the module will be listed by week under the Module 1 Folder in the Course Center. We will cover the following topics in Module 1.

- Course Introduction
- Role and use of Scripture in ethics
- Central biblical themes
- Historical foundations
- Wesleyan foundations and practices in Christian Ethics

Module 2 - The Church as Moral Community and the Pastor as Moral Guide (March 31 - May 16)

Note: Reading Week is ?

Finals Week: May 19-22

The second half of course will focus on personal and community practices in ethics, the pastor as moral leader, and the church as the ethical community of Christ. Specific instructions for each section of the module will be listed by week under Module 2 in the Course Center. We will cover the following topics in Module 2.

- Introduction to Module 2
- The Church as a Community of Personal and Social Holiness
- Pastors, Leaders and Moral Formation
- The Church as a Community of Reconciliation: Race and Ethnicity
- The Church as a Community of Reconciliation: Gender