



# **Course Syllabus**

## **Wycliffe College**

### **Toronto School of Theology**

#### ***Course Identification***

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Course Number: WYT2932HS L0101  
Course Name: Beyond Bumper Stickers: Christian Ethics for Ministry  
Course Meetings: Mondays, May 27 – July 15, 6:00 – 9:00pm Wycliffe College, St. George Campus

#### ***Instructor Information***

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Co-Instructor:	Jonathan Clemens	Co-instructor: Michael Buttrey
E-mail:	jon.clemens@mail.utoronto.ca	E-mail: michael.buttrey@mail.utoronto.ca
Office Hours:	By Appointment	

#### ***Course Description***

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This course will have two parts. The first half will look at key theories, sources, and methods used in Christian Ethics and the second half will look at specific contemporary issues that are likely to arise in a church context, such as abortion, euthanasia, disability, war, violence, and politics. The concepts, distinctions, texts, and questions presented in the course will help students practice integrating Scripture, tradition, philosophy, and experience and give them resources to better assist family, friends, neighbours, and parishioners in thinking through ethical issues. It will also ask and explore attendant questions around the major moral issues that could arise specifically in the life of parish ministry.

#### ***Course Methodology***

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This course is a seminar. The majority of class time will be devoted to discussion of the readings, which are selections from significant primary sources, interspersed with short lectures covering basic concepts and distinctions as well as exercises in applying these concepts and distinctions. To make this course a success, students will need to complete the required readings (about 50 pages/week), prepare short reading summaries and responses each week, and be willing to discuss the readings and their responses in class. Other assignments will give students a chance to work on particular issues or themes they find interesting and are pertinent to their ministry and also give them competence in further research on such issues and themes.

## *Course Outcomes*

<b>COURSE OUTCOMES</b>	<b>COURSE ELEMENT</b>	<b>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</b>
<b>By the end of this course, students will be able to:</b>	<b>This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:</b>	<b>This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv, MDivP)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate familiarity with different philosophical and theological approaches in the history of Christian ethics</li> </ul>	Lectures, Discussion, Papers	<b>MTS:</b> 1.4 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.4 <b>MDivP:</b> 1.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate familiarity with different uses of Scripture as source and norm for Christian ethics</li> </ul>	Discussion, Papers	<b>MTS:</b> 1.2 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.2 <b>MDivP:</b> 1.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>give an accurate summary of the substance of a secondary source in theological studies, to give a plausible account of its place in the discussions or controversies of an academic or faith community, and to evaluate whether its approach to solving a problem is appropriate</li> </ul>	Lectures, Discussion, Papers	<b>MTS:</b> 1.4, 2.1 <b>MDiv:</b> 1.4, 2.1 <b>MDivP:</b> 1.4, 2.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>write an academic essay with a clear thesis statement, an expository outline dependent on the thesis statement, a selection of primary evidence appropriate to the exposition, persuasive interpretations and arguments, and reference to alternative possible interpretations of the primary evidence</li> </ul>	Short paper and final paper, Discussion	<b>MTS:</b> 2.1, 2.2 <b>MDiv:</b> 2.1, 2.3 <b>MDivP:</b> 2.1, 2.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>articulate the importance of the concepts and issues covered in the course in relation to their practice of Christian ministry</li> </ul>	Short paper and final paper, Discussion	<b>MTS:</b> 3.3 <b>MDiv:</b> 2.4 <b>MDivP:</b> 2.4

## *Course Resources*

### **Required Course Texts**

- Course Packet

## *Class and Reading Schedule*

### **Class 1 Introduction to the Course and to Ethical Theories**

#### Required Reading

None

## **Class 2 The Use of Scripture in Ethics**

### Required Reading (48 pages)

William Placher, "Is the Bible True?" (5 pages)

Glen Stassen & David Gushee, "Authority and Scripture" (18 pages)

Karl Barth, "The Strange New World within the Bible" (25 pages)

### Further Reading (52 pages)

William Christian Sr., *Doctrines of Religious Communities*, chapter 5 (28 pages)

Stanley Hauerwas, "Jesus: The Presence of the Peaceable Kingdom" (24 pages)

## **Class 3 Philosophy, Theology, and Tradition**

### Required Reading (45 pages)

Ellen Davis, "Critical Traditioning" (19 pages)

Cornel West, "The Indispensability yet Insufficiency of Marxist Thought" (10 pages)

Alasdair MacIntyre, excerpts from *After Virtue* (16 pages)

### Further Reading (21 pages)

Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Rationality of Traditions" (21 pages)

## **Class 4 Guiding Principles in Christian Ethics: Law, Love, Justice, and Anti-Essentialism**

### Required Reading (54 pages)

Augustine, *Sermon on 1 John 4:4-12* (11 pages)

Augustine, *City of God*, XIV.28, XIX.4 (6 pages)

Stanley Hauerwas, "Love Isn't All You Need" (13 pages)

Timothy Jackson, "Is God Just?" (24 pages)

### Further Reading (51 pages)

Tertullian, *Apology*, 37-38 (4 pages)

Origen, *Against Celsus*, V.37 (2 pages)

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II.vii.6-12 (8 pages)

Martin Luther, "On the Freedom of a Christian" (26 pages)

Menno Simons, "A Kind Admonition on Church Discipline" (11 pages)

## **Class 5 Liberation Critiques of Christian Ethics: Feminist, African-American, Latin American, and First Nations**

### Required Reading (58 pages)

Sojourner Truth, "Ar'n't I a Woman" (1 page)

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," "I Have a Dream," and "Where Do We Go from Here" (17 pages)

Phillip Berryman, "Introduction," *Liberation Theology* (8 pages)

Susan Frank Parsons, "On Diversity" (13 pages)

Emilie M. Townes, "To Pick One's Own Cotton: Religious Values, Public Policy, and Women's Moral Autonomy" (10 pages)

James Cone, "Legacies of the Cross and the Lynching Tree" (9 pages)

### Further Reading (29 pages)

Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, Appendix (9 pages)

Clara Kidwell, Homer Noley, and George Tinker, *A Native American Theology*, Introduction (20 pages)

## **Class 6 Beginning of Life: Abortion, Birth, and Disability**

### Required Reading (61 pages)

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion" (20 pages)

Sidney Callahan, "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda: A Case for Pro-life Feminism" (12 pages)

Frederick Bauerschmidt, "Being Baptized: Bodies and Abortion" (13 pages)

Tom Reynolds, "Theology and Disability: Changing the Conversation" (16 pages)

### Further Reading (28 pages)

Beverly Wildung Harrison and Shirley Cloyes, "Theology and Morality of Procreative Choice" (20 pages)

Philippa Foot, "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect" (8 pages)

## **Class 7 End of Life: Alzheimer's, Dying, and Euthanasia**

### Required Reading (49 pages)

Gilbert Meilaender, "Euthanasia and Christian Vision" (11 pages)

David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God*, Ch. 1 (22 pages)

Timothy Jackson, "Euthanasia and Capital Punishment" (16 pages)

### Further Reading (17 pages)

Stanley Hauerwas and Richard Bondi, "Memory, Community, and the Reasons for Living: Reflections on Suicide and Euthanasia" (15 pages)

## **Class 8 Power and Violence: Politics, Military Service, and Complicity**

### Required Reading (54 pages)

Tertullian, "Concerning Military Service" (1 pages)

Augustine, "Letter 189 to Boniface" (3 pages)

Augustine, *City of God*, XIX.15 and XIX.24 (3 pages)

Walter Rauschenbusch, "The Kingdom of God" (9 pages)

H. Richard Niebuhr, "The Grace of Doing Nothing" (4 pages)

Reinhold Niebuhr, "Must We Do Nothing?" (4 pages)

Reinhold Niebuhr, "Democracy, Secularism, and Christianity" (4 pages)

Elizabeth Anscombe, "The Justice of the Present War Examined" (10 pages)

Paul Ramsey, "Justice in War" (7 pages)

Michael Baxter and Lisa Cahill, "Is This Just War?" (4 pages)

John Howard Yoder, "Five Practices Before the World" (5 pages)

### Further Reading (17 pages)

Harro Hopfl, "Introduction," *Luther and Calvin: On Secular Authority* (17 pages)

James Davidson Hunter, *To Change the World*, Essay II, Chapter 3 (21 pages)

Dorothy Day, "Our Country Passes from Undeclared War to Declared War" (3 pages)

## **Additional Topic: Ecology and Economy**

### Further Reading (68 pages)

Clement of Alexandria, "Who is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?" (11 pages)

John Wesley, "The Use of Money" (11 pages)

Martin Luther King, Jr., "I See the Promised Land" (3 pages)

Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Poverty: Solidarity and Protest" (3 pages)

Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" (11 pages)

Wendell Berry, "Christianity and the Survival of Creation" (16 pages)

Michael Hanby, "Interceding: Giving Grief to Management" (13 pages)

## *Evaluation*

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### Requirements

Attendance and Participation	16%
Weekly Reading Précis	14%
Short Essay	30%
Long Essay	40%

1. Both **attendance** and **participation** will count towards your grade.
2. Each week after the first week a short **reading summary and response** will be expected, no more than one page. You may be asked to read your comments in class. Each précis is worth 2%.
3. Your **short essay** should identify a challenge for contemporary Christians in the theories, sources, methods, and history we will discuss in the first half of the course. 1,250 to 1,500 words, with at least 3 sources, due XXX.
4. Your **long essay** will address the challenge of Christian ethics in terms of a particular case, issue, or subject. Your topic and an provisional outline, with bibliography, must be approved by the instructors. 2,500-3,000 words, due XXX via e-mail to both instructors.

All assignments must be submitted with 1” margins, 12 pt. font, double spaced at the beginning of the class when they are due to be considered on time. Assignments received on time will be graded and returned promptly. Assignments received late without a pre-arranged extension will be graded only in exceptional circumstances, and without detailed comments or feedback.

### Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value.
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation.
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension).
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value.
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty.
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value.

## Policy on Assignment Extensions

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office. **One percentage point per day will be deducted from the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.**

## Course grades

Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

## *Policies*

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### Accessibility

Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

### Plagiarism

Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: [http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

### Other academic offences

TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

## **Writing Style**

The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.