THE760 – Introduction to Christian Ethics Block (Hybrid)
Fall 2013

Essential Information
Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at http://support.nts.edu.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- Handbook for Inclusive Language

Instructor Information
Professor: Henry W. Spaulding II, Ph.D. Email: hspauldi@mvnu.edu
Office: (740)397-9000 x 4100
Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Description
This course intends to show how Christian virtue arises materially from the theological/doctrinal convictions of the Christian faith. This course will show how philosophical ethics has helped to define theological ethics, but it will also show that the Christian virtues are more fully understood and practiced in light of the faith claims of the Church. Therefore, this course will argue that Christian doctrine and Christian virtue need to be understood together in Christian ethics. This course will assist in learning how to ‘formulate’ and ‘implement’ ethical norms within the Christian faith. This course will show how the Church has and should engage major moral/ethical concerns within the context of its witness of faith in the world and will explore a range of possible issues such as human sexuality, bioethics, justice, and war. This course should not be taken before the second year of the student’s seminary studies unless permission is given by the professor.

Course Narrative & Rationale
The relationship between morality/ethical reflection and the Christian faith is one of the most significant aspects of the Christian life and this course. The purpose of this course is to script
moral reflection within the theological trajectories of the Christian faith, especially the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. Toward that end the logic of this course will be to articulate the material relationship between theology and moral reflection. Specific moral challenges will be addressed in the course as a means for testing the methodology presented in the course.

**Degree Objectives**

1. Appropriate Scripture to personal and corporate life both in and beyond the Church.

2. Development of wisdom and discernment through engagement with the literature of the Christian faith through critical, scholarly study of the history and theology of Christianity and the application of that heritage to personal and corporate Christian Life.

3. Identify how key figures and movements from the history of Christianity shape theological discourse.

4. Appropriate the formative power of theology (whether systematic or historical) in shaping corporate and personal Christian life.

5. Apply theological convictions to personal and corporate life both in and beyond the Church.

6. Communicate effectively in written, spoken, artistic, and other forms.

7. Engage the holistic nature of the church in redemptive ministries of restoration.

8. Participate in the stewardship of creation.

**Course Outcomes**

The student should be able to:

1. Identify the major traditions of philosophical ethics [Theological Essays];

2. Identify the major tradition of Christian ethics [Theological Essays];

3. Understand the resources available for moral decision-making within the Judeo-Christian tradition [Moral Challenge Paper];

4. Bring the insights of moral theology to bear upon moral dilemmas [Moral Challenge Paper and Participation]; and

5. Think, read, and write critically [Book Review, Theological Essays, Moral Challenge Paper and Participation]
**Required Texts & Course Materials**


**Course Outline**

**October 22 (4:30-8:30 Central)**

Moral Theology?
- Hauerwas and Wells: 1-50
- Hays: 3-11

Challenges to Moral Reflection:
- Egoism
- Relativism/Pluralism
- Determinism
- Bad Morality

**October 29 (4:30-8:30 Central)**

The Major Contours of Western Philosophical Ethics
- Natural Rights
- Kantianism
- Utilitarianism
- Virtue Ethics

Practices:
- Prayer
- Truth telling
- Discernment
- Forgiveness
- Hospitality

**November 5 (4:30-8:30 Central)**

Biblical Ethics: Trajectories
- Hays: 13-214; 291-312
- Hauerwas and Wells: 141-155

Approaches to Christian Ethics
- Hays: 215-290
- Hauerwas and Wells: 209-221
November 12 (8:30-8:30 Central)
Divorce and Remarriage
    Hays: 347-378
    Hauerwas and Wells: 276-288; 468-480

Theological Essay #1 – November 15 by 11:55pm Central

November 19 (4:30-8:30 Central)
Homosexuality
    Hays: 379-406
    Hauerwas and Wells: 401-413

Book Review – November 22 by 11:55pm Central

November 26 (4:30-8:30 Central)
Bioethics
    Hays: 444-461
    Hauerwas and Wells: 250-262; 263-275

December 3 (4:30-8:30 Central)
Violence in Defense of Justice
    Hays: 317-346
    Hauerwas and Wells: 360-374

Moral Challenge Paper – December 6 by 11:55pm Central

December 10 (4:30-8:30 Central)
The Environment
    Hauerwas and Wells: 305-318

Theological Essay 2 – December 12 by 11:55pm

Course Assignments & Requirements
Theological Essays: Two theological essays will be given over the content of the course. Total possible points; 100. Criteria for evaluation: clarity of the description – 35 pts, strength of the critical analysis – 30 pts, reflection upon class lecture and assigned reading – 25 pts, and quality of writing – 10 pts. [Course Outcomes 1, 2, 5]

Moral Challenge Paper: Each student will write a thoughtful and informative essay on a moral problem that confronts the Christian, especially those engaged in ministry. It is essential that this essay reflect an understanding of the resources and issues discussed in the class. It should also reflect a grasp of the moral issues as they impact the Church. The essay should reflect good writing and good argument. Total possible points; 150. Criteria for evaluation: description of the problem – 50 points, analysis of the problem through the Christian narrative – 50 points,
reflection upon the issues and persons discussed in class – 15 points, analysis of the impact upon the Church – 25 points, and writing – 10 points. [Course Outcomes 3, 4, 5]

**Book Review:** Each student will do a critical analysis of Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character.* The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect on the importance of his proposal and assess its significance for Wesleyan-holiness moral reflection. The following questions should be addressed in the course of the review: a) what is the significance of the “Ten Theses Toward the Reform of Christian Social Ethics”, b) what is the theological and intellectual significance of referring to the church as a story formed community?, c) how Christology an ethical concern? d) how is the authority of scripture a moral concern? e) what is Hauerwas’ take on liberal democracy? f) how should Christian convictions be understood?, g) what does it mean to say that virtue centers on an agent’s being? h) why is the self best understood as a narrative?, i) what is the nature of the crisis in the family according to Hauerwas?, j) how does Hauerwas deal with chastity? , and k) how abortion a religious issues? Total possible points; 125. Criteria for evaluation: grasp of content – 50 pts, grasp of theological issues – 35 pts, connection to material covered in class – 25 pts, force of the argument and writing – 15 pts. [Course Outcome 5]

**Participation:** The quality of this class is dependent upon the active participation of each member of the class. A student can participate in class in two ways: a) comments/question made in class and b) Moodle discussion. This assignment will be 100 points. Half of the points will be awarded on November 16 and the second half on December 14. Criteria for evaluation: Degree of insight in questions/comments – 50 pts; Connection of comments/questions to assigned reading – 25 pts; and Spread of comments/questions over the semester – 25 points. All participation must be completed by December 14 @ 11:55pm. [Course Outcomes 4, 5]

**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

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<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-face Class Sessions</td>
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<td>Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assignments and Learning Activities</td>
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<td>Exams &amp; Quizzes</td>
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**Method for Submitting Assignments**
All assignments are to be submitted through Moodle.

**Form and Style Expectations**
It is expected that all work use Turabian as a guide for writing.

**Inclusive Language**
NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

**Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams**
1. No work will be accepted after December 13.
2. All late work will be reduced by 20%.

**Course Grading**
- Theological Essay 1 (100 points) 17%
- Theological Essay 2 (100 points) 17%
- Book Review (125 points) 22%
- Moral Challenge Paper (150) 27%
- Participation (100 points) 17%

**Grading Scale**
- A  575-517
- B  516-460
- C  459-402
- D  401-345
- F  344-000

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

**Class Attendance**
Attendance is required at each session for the entire session. If an absence is unavoidable and the professor approves, additional and significant work may be assigned to compensate for the absence. The student may also be required to withdraw from the class with no refund of tuition.

**Audio and Video Recordings**
In order to foster a safe learning environment in which various viewpoints are respected, audio or video recordings or transcripts thereof by students is prohibited without the permission of the faculty member in charge of the course. If permission is granted, redistribution of these recordings or transcripts thereof outside the scope of the course is prohibited.
Students enrolling in videoconferencing courses or participating in certain synchronous Moodle activities should be aware that their images and voices will be transmitted digitally through the videoconferencing equipment and may be recorded. Continued enrollment in these courses constitutes willingness to participate in the class with these conditions. If you have privacy concerns, please discuss your enrollment with the Registrar.

**Course Calendar**

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Bad Morality |
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Kantianism  
Utilitarianism  
Virtue Ethics  
Practices:  
Prayer  
Truth telling  
Discernment  
Forgiveness  
Hospitality |
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Hays: 317-346  
Hauerwas and Wells: 360-374 |
| Dec 10 | 8   | **The Environment**  
Hauerwas and Wells: 305-318  
Theological Essay 2 – December 12 by 11:55pm |

**Bibliography**


