



*To develop Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world.*

**TH 526 Christian Ethics**  
May Intensive, 2019

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. David Williams  
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**SCHEDULE:** Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30 (all work must be submitted within 8 weeks of end of class)

**CREDITS:** 3 [~90 hours of work outside of class time]

**DESCRIPTION:** A study drawing on the biblical and theological resources of the Christian tradition for the development of Christian ethical reflection and the formation of Christian character in a post-Christian context.

**COURSE TARGET ASSIGNMENTS:** This course directly corresponds to the following 12 target assignments found in Outcome 6 of both the MTS and M.Div. degrees:

**6A. Significance of Jesus in Christian Ethics**

**Target:** Understands and displays the significance of Jesus in Christian ethics.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Short writing assignment #3, class participation, and topic essay.

**6B. Scripture and Ethical Formation**

**Target:** Understands the role of Scripture in ethical formation.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Short writing assignment #4, Scripture and Ethics project, and topic essay.

**6C. Cultural Formation/Deformation**

**Target:** Exhibits familiarity with how cultural practices shape one's character and develop strategies to resist the deforming aspects of those practices.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Short writing assignment #1, #2, #5, and personal transformation project.

**6D. Intellectual Formation/Deformation**

**Target:** Exhibits familiarity with the particular ways in which reductionism and individualism shape one's character and develops strategies to resist the deforming aspects of those intellectual tendencies.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Short writing assignment #2 and #5.

**6E. Vocational Formation/Deformation**

**Target:** Exhibits familiarity with how vocational practices shape one's character and develop strategies to resist the deforming aspects of those practices.

**Corresponding Assignment:** Personal Transformation project

**6F. Worship and Worldliness**

**Target:** Exhibits familiarity with how Christian worship forms communities that can resist the deforming aspects of cultural, political, and economic structures.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Final exam response.

**6G. General Forms of Ethical Reasoning**

**Target:** Understands the general forms of ethical reasoning.

**Corresponding Assignment:** Short writing assignment #5

**6H. Rediscovery of Virtue in Ethical reasoning**

**Target:** Displays a familiarity with and understanding of ethical reasoning through the development of narrative, practices, and traditions.

**Corresponding Assignment:** Topic essay.

**6I. Resisting the Nietzschean Temptation**

**Target:** Articulates an understanding of the need for and the process of resisting the ‘Nietzschean temptation’ in ethical reasoning.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Topic essay.

**6J. Encountering Moral Otherness**

**Target:** Understands moral reasoning of persons who are of different cultural, religious, or political positions.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Topic essay.

**6K. Moral Reasoning in Everyday Life**

**Target:** Demonstrates an ability to appropriately respond to an issue of critical concern in light of narrative, practices, tradition, and virtues.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Topic essay.

**6L. Power Dynamics and Sexual Ethics**

**Target:** Articulates a statement of sexual ethics with attention to power in one’s context.

**Corresponding Assignments:** Final exam response.

**TEXTBOOK:** Students are responsible for ordering required textbooks from the retailer of their choice. Textbooks need to be in hand (or accessible via an electronic format) by the first class session. The textbooks required for this course are:

David P. Gushee and Glen H. Stassen. *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*. **Second Edition** (Eerdmans, 2016) – *KE*

**Other Required Readings (available for download on the Pathwright course page):**

Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of The New Testament*. *MVNT* (Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 13)

Stanley Hauerwas, “The Interpretation of Scripture: Why Discipleship is Required.”

James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love*. (Chapters 1-2)

Samuel Wells & Benjamin Quash, “Authority and the Bible.”

Jonathan R. Wilson, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World*. 1st Edition *LFFW* (Chapters 2-4)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World*. 2nd Edition *LFFW* (Chapter 4)

**REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION:**

This course syllabus is essentially a contract between the faculty and the participant. As a result, you are expected to carefully read the entire syllabus and be familiar with everything contained therein. Failure to precisely follow all assignment deadlines contained in this syllabus may result in a lower overall grade (for those taking the course for credit) or additional work within a target or an outcome (for Kairos Project participants). All participants are under the requirements and deadlines of the syllabus.

**The assignment values are as follows:**

Class Sessions		
Reading, Reflecting, and Engaging		40 hours
6 Shorter Writing Assignments	(24% of grade)	6 hours
Scripture and Ethics project	(22% of grade)	10 hours
Topic essay/presentation	(24% of grade)	20 hours
Personal Transformation Project	(15% of grade)	6 hours
Final Exam	(15% of grade)	<u>8 hours</u>
		90 hours

**Course Requirements:**

1. Class Sessions: students are expected to attend and participate in all the class sessions.
2. Reading and Reflecting: students are expected to actively read and reflect on all the assigned reading for the class and to bring questions to class that arise from the reading.
3. On a regular basis students will be asked to submit short written assignments on a topic or question provided by the instructor for the day. Details for this assignment are on the Moodle course page. These assignments are to be typed and submitted to me in an acceptable electronic format.
4. Scripture and Ethics project. Details for this assignment are on the Moodle course page.
5. Topic essay project. Details for this assignment are on the Moodle course page.
6. Personal Transformation Project: Details for this assignment are on the Moodle course page.
7. Final Exam: There will be a final exam which will be a comprehensive integrative exam over all the material covered in the class.

**FINAL REMARKS:**

*Pathwright.*

Taylor Seminary is switching our online platform away from *Moodle* onto *Pathwright*. You get to be the pilot cohort for this project! We will be very interested in hearing how this new platform works and how we can make it better. After I have built the course on the new platform I will send you a link to set up your account and give you access to the course page. The link in my email will walk you through what you need to do to use this new platform. If you have any problems, don't hesitate to contact me.

*Formatting.*

All studies and papers should be typed and formatted according to the Society of Biblical Literature writing style as outlined in the Seminary's *Guidelines for Research Writing in Religion & Theology (SBL)*. For the full stylesheet, please refer to Patrick H. Alexander, et al., ed., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) which is in Reading Room.

*Research Language.*

You should employ acceptable research language for your paper which is not too informal yet reads inclusively. Avoid the use of gender specific language (e.g., Do not refer to "man" generically or to "mankind," "men," "he"; rather use "humankind," "humanity," "person," etc.)

*Plagiarism.*

Academic honesty and integrity is essential to the academic enterprise and the Seminary community. All written work submitted *must* be your own. *Guidelines for Research Writing* defines plagiarism as the failure to give credit where credit is due: “To plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written something original which in fact you have borrowed from another without acknowledging that other person's work” (*Guide for Research and Writing*, 2016, p. 11-13). If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, or include direct quotations in your written assignments, you must acknowledge your source(s) properly by in-text citation or footnote. It is also wrong to copy another person's work or to submit an assignment previously handed in for credit in another course. **Students guilty of plagiarism may receive a grade of zero for the assignment and may be brought to the attention of the Seminary's Academic Committee.**

*Course Withdrawal Policy*

After the period for which tuition refunds are available, a “W” will be placed on the transcript of a student who withdraws from any course. Beyond those dates, an “F” will be recorded on the student's transcript.

**COURSE OUTLINE:  
(Subject to change)**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading:</b>
Monday:	Introduction to the Course Why is it hard to disagree about ethics? Can rationality be restored to ethical discourse?	None
Tuesday:	Ethical Rationality and the Christian Scriptures Jesus and the Story of God	<i>KE</i> chapters 1-4 <i>MVNT</i> chapters 9-11
Wednesday:	The Sermon on the Mount and Christian Discipleship	<i>KE</i> chapters 5-6 <i>MVNT</i> chapter 13 Wells & Quash
Thursday:	Proclamation & Life	<i>KE</i> chapters 7-10, 22 James K. A. Smith (all) Stanley Hauerwas
Friday:	Mission & Context	Wilson, <i>LFFW</i> (all)