

California Lutheran University

Bachelor's Degree for Professionals

Religion 350 Exploring Christian Ethics

Fall 2016

August 29 – November 14

Class Day/Time: Thursday 6-9:30 pm

Class Room: Woodland hills 117

INSTRUCTOR

Rv. Rustin Comer MA, MTS, ABD

Office Hours: Thursday 4p – 6p (in room)

818.788.2653 (w)

818.429.7241 (text or cell)

Email: rcomer@callutheran.edu

DROP DATES

Monday, September 12: Last day to add; last day to drop (without a “W”)
Last day to drop without financial penalty (100% tuition charge
for classes dropped after this date

Monday, October 10: Last day to withdraw without academic penalty;

Course Description An introduction to contemporary Christian ethics; its relationship to the Bible and Christian communities; and thinking on such important personal and social issues as sexual behavior, human reproduction, racial and ethnic relations, the taking of human life, poverty and economic issues and the environment. Significant approaches to and issues in Christian ethics will be explored through readings, lectures, discussion debate and preparation of case studies on specific dilemmas

Textbooks/Required Readings

Moral Issues and Christian Responses 8th edition; Patricia Beattie Jung and Shannon Jung (MI)
Other articles will be posted on Blackboard

This course aims to meet these University and Religion Department student outcomes:

- Develop deeper critical thinking skills
- Integrate knowledge with ethical reflection
- Comprehend issues from disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives
- Grow in personal identity and values
- Articulate clearly and knowledgeably ethical theory and perspectives

- Articulate clearly and knowledgeably the role of religion in the manifold dimensions of social existence

Course objective:

- To become acquainted with a range of approaches of “doing” Christian Ethics.
- To learn about the process of moral decision-making from philosophical and Christian perspectives
- To enable students to clarify the core elements and methods of their personal ethics.

Course Assignments/Requirements

Attendance and Class Participation- (10%)

Careful close reading of course materials: To learn and insightfully participate in class, you will need to read carefully all the assigned reading. You should arrive to class having completed the reading assignments and prepared to ask and answer questions about the material.

Attendance and participation in class discussion: because of the format of this class, your presence and involvement at all class meetings are essential.

- You are permitted one absence during the semester-no questions asked. Additional absences and chronic tardiness (anything over 20 minutes) will result in lowering your grade. Anything more than two unexcused absences will result in a full letter grade deduction.
- During class discussion, it is not likely that we will agree on all issues. While rude and/or disrespectful behavior is not permitted, a multiplicity of perspectives provides opportunities for practicing the skill of agreeing and disagreeing with one another with respect and love.
- Cell phone should be silenced in class and if there is an emergency requiring your attention please make sure you handle those situations outside of the classroom.

Moral Autobiography: (20%) Experience is one of the most potent sources of moral/ethical deliberation- and it never comes raw. By the time we have labeled something as “experience” someone has already edited and interpreted it. Yet experience is key in shaping us as moral agents. In this brief 3-5 page moral autobiography, reflect on how your life experiences have shaped how you approach ethics. Define clearly what are your sources and norms. If you identify with a type of ethics we have discussed in class include that connection.

Midterm exam: (20%) The midterm exam is a take home exam. It will be a question based on an ethical issue you identify from a movie. The movie will be a student’s choice of **any one** of the following films. You will have adequate time after the exam question is distributed to watch the film again (or for the first time) if you’d like. Students may watch the film in groups, however the answer to the question must be your own. It will be three pages typed minimum. Here is the list you may choose from:

- Selma
- 12 years A Slave
- Silver Lining Play Book (mental health)
- Zero Dark 30
- Beasts of the Southern Wild
- Les Miserables

- Contagion
- Birdman
- The Imitation Game
- Whiplash
- Foxcatcher
- Brokeback Mountain
- Maria, Full of Grace
- Gattaca
- The Kids Are All Right
- American Sniper
- Or contact with me another option.

In Class Ethical Debate: (10%) At the end of the term we will divide the class into two teams on different sides of a current issue. Each team will be asked to present a reasoned argument on behalf of their sides position. Each team will be asked to provide a 2 page summary of their argument.

Ethics Journal:(15%) Our everyday experience is full of moral and ethic decisions. Each week students will be asked to keep a journal were they write about the moral decisions they face and how they chose to answer the moral question in the way they did. We will write the journal before class for 75 points of the grade then following each nights class you will be asked to comment on your previous journal to see if you have changed your mind in any way. The comment will be worth 25 points.

Final Exam: (25%) Students will be given a comprehensive final exam You can take it orally or in written format.

STUDENT WORKLOAD FOR A 4-CREDIT COURSE (50-MINUTE HOUR)

Activity	Instructor-Led Hours		Homework Hours		Remarks
	Weekly	Course	Weekly	Course	
Readings of Required Text			5	55	Over 11 weeks, uneven distribution
Weekly Classes	3 hr. 20 min.	36 hrs. 40 min.			
Discussion Journals	1 hr. 6 min.	12 hr.		24	Average, varies by student
Mid-Term paper		40 min.		15.5	Average, varies by student
Moral Autobiography		25.5		25.5	Average, varies by student
Final Exam Prep		40 min.		27.5	Average, varies by student
Total		50		147.5	

** In this chart the Carnegie Instructional Hours have already been converted to traditional clock hours; these are based on a 60-minute clock hour.

Grading

Grading scale	96-100	A	74-76.99	C
	90-95.99	A-	70-73.99	C-
	87-89.99	B+	67-69.99	D+
	84-86.99	B	64-66.99	D
	80-83.99	B-	60-63.99	D-
	77-79.99	C+	<60	F

Late assignments will be given a full letter grade deduction for every class period they are late. All papers (**including Journal entries**) are expected to be type written in 12-point font. Use of appropriate English is expected. Any “text speak” (ie. LOL) will be given deductions.

You may have an extra credit assignment but it must be asked for in writing by the third class (March 16). Extra Credit will consist of a 3 page paper on any of the key topics discussed in class and are due on the 4th of May. Extra credit can earn you up to 5 extra points applied to your final.

Attendance Policy Attendance is required in this course. Since ADEP is an accelerated program consisting of only 11 classes in this course, more than two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade. Students are expected to keep up to date on assigned readings and participate in class discussion. Please be aware that to be successful in this course you will need to plan 5 hours a week for your weekly class work.

Course Schedule (Activities/topics for each class meeting, including due dates for all assignments and exams)

September 1- Intro to course. Syllabus Ethics, what is it? Ethics and the Bible Early Christian ethics	Walter Brueggemann: “Biblical Authority” MI
September 8- Intro Continued: Sources & Norms Defining sources Defining Norms	The bible is transit -25 Neibhur- “The Meaning of Responsibility” letting go 96mi imitating god 76 MI and BLACKBOARD
September 15- Central Norms of Christian Ethics (JOURNAL) Love Justice	Stassen “Love and justice” blackboard Farley “How Shall We Love in a Postmodern World”blackboard Vacek “Eclipse of Love for God”49 MI and BLACKBOARD
September 22-Sexual Ethics	ELCA statement on human sexuality

<p>(JOURNAL) Sex, Singleness, Marriage and Family Homosexuality and the bible</p>	<p>Film “for the Bible Tells Me So” Sexual slavery on main street Cooper 136 Good Sex: Its Meaning and Morals Hollinger122 Love Your Enemy, Sex, Power, and Christian Ethics Karen Labacqz127 A betrothal proposal 144 No good divorce 152 Blessing same sex marriage 205 MI and BLACKBOARD</p>
<p>September 29-Biomedical ethics (JOURNAL) Abortion Genetic Engineering Euthenasia</p>	<p>ELCA Statement on abortion Fetal status 371 Kennan “the case for Physician-assisted Suicide?” 397 Still dying badly384 Assisted suicide 392 Contemplating morality- Podcast MI and BLACKBOARD</p>
<p>October 6- Ecological Ethics (MIDTERM)</p>	<p>“Martin-Schramm” Toward an Ethic Of Eco Justice” 259 The challenge of biocentrism 264 The earth-honoring faith 272 Poisoning the well 256 MI and BLACKBOARD</p>
<p>October 13- Prejudice and oppression (JOURNAL) Racial Tension Feminist ethics Liberation Ethics</p>	<p>Margaret Farley “Feminist Ethics” Obama and race in America 214 Whiteness 226 Wading through many sorrows Shawn Copeland 37 Cornel West “Race Matters” 221 Gutierrez “Liberation Theology, Introduction” Letter from a Birmingham Jail MLK jr Rights and wrongs 63 mi Lessons in mercy 91mi mujerista discourse 53 MI and BLACKBOARD</p>
<p>October 20- Issues of National Priority (MORAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY) Immigration Ethics of War Terrorism</p>	<p>Stassen “Just war, Nonviolence, & Just Peacemaking” Judeo Christian approach to comprehensive immigration reform 248 Cahill “Is this just war” Did 911 make us better 423 When the shooting stops 426 Courageous nonviolence 430 Imagining the immigrant 238 MI and BLACKBOARD</p>

<p>October 27 - Economic Issues (JOURNAL / extra credit) Greed Capitalism Conumption Globalizaton</p>	<p>Just a little bit more 292 Sufficient Sustainable Livelihood For all-ELCA Still hungry 345 Just deserts: Beyond the free market 317 Shopping for justice 336 Just a little bit more 292 When generosity is not enough 303</p> <p>MI and BLACKBOARD</p>
<p>November 3- Classroom Debate (JOURNAL)(</p>	
<p>November 10- Final</p>	

Course Evaluations Statement All course evaluations are conducted online. Your feedback is important to us. You will receive an email message reminding you when the website is open for your feedback. The link is: <http://courseval.callutheran.edu>

Disability Statement

California Lutheran University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations in compliance with ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to students with documented disabilities. If you are a student requesting accommodations for this course, please contact your professor at the beginning of the semester and register with the Disability Support Services Coordinator, Wendy Jimenez, for the facilitation and verification of need. The Disability Support Services Coordinator is located in the Center for Student Success Office at 3259 Pioneer Street, and can be contacted by calling 805.493.3878 or emailing wjimene@callutheran.edu

Statement on Academic Honesty The educational programs of California Lutheran University are designed and dedicated to achieve academic excellence, honesty and integrity at every level of student life. Part of CLU’s dedication to academic excellence is our commitment to academic honesty. Students, faculty, staff and administration share the responsibility for maintaining high levels of scholarship on campus. Any behavior or act which might be defined as “deceitful” or “dishonest” will meet with appropriate disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal from the University, suspension, grade F in a course or various forms of academic probation. Policies and procedures regarding academic honesty are contained in the faculty and student handbooks.

Plagiarism, cheating, unethical computer use and facilitation of academic dishonest are examples of behavior which will result in disciplinary sanctions. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- word for word copying without using quotation marks or presenting the work as yours
- using the ideas or work of others without acknowledgement
- not citing quoted material. Students must cite sources for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge.

Standards of Student Conduct Statements:

- [Student Life Handbook](#)

- [Academic Honesty Statement](#)

Pearson Library

Pearson Library provides access to scholarly books, journals, ebooks, and databases of full text articles from scholarly journals. To begin using these materials, visit the library web page

<http://www.callutheran.edu/library>

There are many ways to contact Pearson Library for research assistance, no matter where you are!

- Email Yvonne Wilber (Professionals liaison) at ywilber@callutheran.edu
- General Library email: CLUlibrary@callutheran.edu
- Library main phone: 805.493.3250
- Text us your question: 805.493.3867
- Get more help at: <http://www.callutheran.edu/library/help/>

CLU Writing Center

The Writing Center provides 1:1 writing consultations, in-person and online, with trained undergraduate and graduate writing consultants. We welcome all writing-related projects at any stage of the writing process across the diverse disciplines of study at Cal Lutheran. The Writing Center also hosts writing workshops, provides in-class visits, facilitates writing groups, and offers a writer's studio option for longer, sustained projects. Services suit writers of all levels, including traditional undergraduates, graduate students from all fields, all English language learners, and accomplished scholars alike. All members of the Cal Lutheran community with an @callutheran.edu email address are welcome to make use of our services. For more information, please visit at www.callutheran.edu/writing_center or call 805.493.3257. Please schedule appointments online through MyCLU Blackboard with the yellow "The Writing Center" icon in "Tools," or stop by The Writing Center itself, located in the Darling Collaboration Suite of Pearson Library.

University Harassment Policy

Be civil to each other, both on- and offline. For information on the University's **student harassment policy and rights**, please go to the following link:

[Student Life Handbook](#)

Sexual Misconduct

California Lutheran University does not tolerate any degree of sexual misconduct on or off-campus. We encourage you to report if you know of, or have been the victim of, sexual harassment, misconduct, and/or assault. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify Cal Lutheran's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. More information about your options for reporting can be found at:

<http://www.callutheran.edu/title-ix/>

Veterans Resources

If you are a veteran, military member, or a family member of a veteran or military member, please refer to Cal Lutheran's Veterans Resources webpage for important

information: <http://www.callutheran.edu/veterans/> . Also, if you are a veteran receiving benefits and you are struggling in a class, you most likely qualify for free tutoring. Please contact the Veterans Coordinator, Jenn Zimmerman, veterans@callutheran.edu or 805.493.3648, for more information.

Help Desk

Students may contact the Help Desk about telephone, network, wireless network, software questions password problems, hardware problems, and general consultation (i.e. you cannot log into your MyCLU portal, or you are having problems with Blackboard). Please email specific details about your problems to helpdesk@callutheran.edu, click on the following link for more information http://www.callutheran.edu/iss/technology_services/helpdesk.php or call: 805.493.3698

Final Note

This syllabus is subject to change. Every effort will be made to alert students to changes that occur in a timely manner.