

REL 460 Moral Values in Religious Education

Winter 2018-2019

Course Outline

Class Meeting Time and Location: January 18, February 1, February 15, March 8, March 15, April 5, 2019 from 8:30-11:20 a.m. and 1:15-4:05 p.m..

Room: St. Francis

Instructor: Sr. Zoe Bernatsky SSMI
Office: Newman Theological College Second Floor Room 2-07
Office Hours: Thursday afternoon and by appointment
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Course Description (from NTC Academic Calendar):

The basic elements of moral theology since Vatican II. Biblical and theological themes that define the person in Christ. The Christian meaning of sin, virtue, conscience, law, and moral discernment. The Christian experience of conversion and reconciliation in the way of discipleship.

Nature of the Course

This course will introduce the participants to the field of moral theology, particularly as practiced within the Catholic Church. The sources of Catholic moral theology will be explored in some depth: Scripture, Tradition, Magisterial Teaching, Reason, and Human Experience. The goal of the course will be to explore the meaning of moral decision-making and behavior, in particular as disciples of Christ. Moral theory will be applied to numerous contemporary topics of importance to the Catholic community and to society.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course you will be able to demonstrate the following competencies.

MRE Goal: Theological Instruction - The course shall offer students instruction in the major areas of Catholic.

- 1.1. Understand basic terms and concepts related to the field of moral theology including human anthropology, sin, virtue, conscience and moral discernment.
- 1.2. Account for the manner in which stability and change in moral theology both reflects and influences the life of the Church.

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- 1.3. Become conversant with Catholic social teaching, bioethics and sexual ethics and articulate common challenges related to moral education.
 2. **MRE Goal: Cultural Context** - The program shall foster a capacity to discern and engage the cultural context as it impacts moral decision-making and Catholic education.
 - 2.1. Understand the historical development of moral theology and the role of scripture, tradition, reason and experience historically and in the present day.
 - 2.2. Explain the distinction and the complementarity that exists between knowledge attained through the use of moral theory, the empirical method and technology.
 - 2.3. Articulate challenges related to forming Christian disciples who are able to make ethical decisions based on an integrated life of faith and identify interventions to address these concerns.
 3. **MRE Goal Personal and Spiritual Formation** - The program shall offer students with opportunities to grow in their spiritual life and in their vocation as Catholic educators and witnesses to the Gospel.
 - 3.1. Understand the role of spirituality and Christian discipleship in ethical formation and apply this to personally and professionally
 - 3.2. Integrate moral theology in a way that supports your human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation.

Course Assignments and Evaluation:

1. Reflection paper (700 words) on practicing the presence of Jesus to be emailed by Jan. 28, 2018. 20% of final grade. More detailed directions will be given in class.
2. Engaged participation: 10% of final grade.

“THINK PIECE”: 30% of final grade. Due March 8.

THINK PIECE:

You will join up to three of your colleagues in a study group. You may submit the final assignment together or individually. If you submit together, each student will receive the same grade. For each submission (group or individual), identify the members of your group. The purpose of the group is to give its members the opportunity to create a community of learning:

- A. By explaining to one another their critical analysis and interpretation of concepts from the course in relationship to a contemporary issue (MRE and Course Objective #1 and 2).
- B. By sorting out theoretical implication of the cultural context (why is this a problem now) (MRE and Course Objectives #1 and 2).
- C. By sharing personal insights on the way in which concepts from the course and this issue particularly challenge you in terms of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation (MRE and Course Objective #3).

- D. Submit a 1000 word assignment individually, or as a group.
- Identify a contemporary news piece or issue (attach article if possible). Summarize the issue and explain why it is important today. – 5 marks)
 - Interpret how the news piece illustrates, applies, or relates to 3-5 key concepts from the course. (10 marks)
 - Describe how the issue challenges you personally, professionally, spiritually, intellectually and offer a Christian moral response to the issue. (10 marks)
 - Describe the benefits and limitations of your experience as a learning community. (2.5 marks)
 - Style: grammar, punctuation etc. (2.5 points)

3. Final Exam April 5 (or Take Home Exam: Research paper 15 pages): 40% of final grade

Please note. If you write a final paper and would like to have it back after the course, or if you would like to have your final exam back, please hand in to me a large, stamped, self-addressed manila envelope.

Course Texts – Required Reading

David Bohr. *Catholic Moral Tradition: "In Christ, a New Creation,"* revised edition. (Huntington, IN, Our Sunday Visitor Inc., 1999)

Ed Kinerk Personal Encounters With Jesus Christ in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 48/3 Autumn 2016, 1-29. (<https://jesuitonlinelibrary.bc.edu/?a=d&d=sis20160901-01&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->).

Other reading to be handed out in class or accessed online.

Available online:

Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor* (The Splendor of Truth).

Pope Francis, *Laudato si* (On Care For Our Common Home)

Pope Francis, *Amoris laetitia* (The Joy of Love)

Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* (Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World)

Pope Francis, *Gaudete et exultate* (Apostolic Exhortation on the Call to Holiness in Today's World)

Course Requirements:

- Attendance: Please notify Professor by email if you will be absent from any class. Each unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade for participation by 2.5%. Habitual lateness will be considered as absence.

2. Pre-class reading is required in order to contribute to class discussion. Come prepared for respectful discussion. Treat all material from classroom discussion as confidential.
3. Pedagogical Commitments
 - a. Reflection paper is directed at evaluation of MRE and Course Objective #3.
 - b. Class participation is directed towards evaluation of all MRE and Course Objectives.
 - c. “Think Piece” is directed at all MRE and Course Objectives.
 - d. Final Exam is directed at all the Objectives, but largely Objectives # 1 and 2.

Course Schedule:

2. **January 18:** Review of Syllabus, Best/Worse Class Experiences,

Introduction and Part 1 Beginning and Background

Articles to handed out at class:

David Hollenbach, “Catholic Ethics in a World Church: A US View” in *Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church: The Plenary Papers from the First Cross-cultural Conference on Catholic Theological Ethics* (New York: Continuum,)

Kenneth Melchin, “The Challenge of World Poverty” in *Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church: The Plenary Papers from the First Cross-cultural Conference on Catholic Theological Ethics* (New York: Continuum,)

Sebastian Mier, “Hope in the Midst of Enormous Challenges in Mexico” in *Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church: The Plenary Papers from the First Cross-cultural Conference on Catholic Theological Ethics* (New York: Continuum,)

What are the problems they are concerned with? How does Moral Theology/Christian Ethics fit into this? What answers do the authors suggest.

A. Pope Francis’s Vision of the Church

Why the analogy of the Church as a field hospital?

What is the purpose of ministry in the Gospel?

What is the purpose of morality? How does Pope Francis shift, challenge, or deepen your understanding of morality in the life of the Church?

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2013/09/30/big-heart-open-god-interview-pope-francis>

Gaudete et exsultate: The Call to Holiness in Today's World

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20180319_gaudete-et-exsultate.html

Kenda Creasy Dean, "Faith, Nice and Easy: The Almost-Christian formation of Teens" in *Christian Century* August 10, 2010, 22-27.

<http://www.reformedinstitute.org/images/Documents/FaithDean.pdf>

- B. What is Christian Ethics? (Servais Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*) (Lecture or handout)
- C. Biblical Foundations (CMT, Chapter 1) (Old Testament, New Testament)
- D. Ed Kinerk Personal Encounters With Jesus Christ Studies in the Spiritualities of Jesuits 48/3 Autumn 2016, 1-29.
<https://jesuitonlinelibrary.bc.edu/?a=d&d=sis20160901-01&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->

Assignment: Try to put the article into practice and write a reflection paper on this experience (Maximum 700 words) Due January 28th. 20% of grade.

3. February 1: Fundamental Elements Part II

- A. Historical Perspectives (CMT, Chapter 2) (for additional background knowledge also see Phillip Sheldrake, *The History of Spirituality*.)
- B. Christian Anthropology (CMT, Chapter 3) (Reflective and Positivist Approaches to Knowledge: How to avoid prioritizing one over the other)
- C. "After life-When am I dead?"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3hMtUK317M>
- D. Conversion (CMT, Chapter 4)
- E. THINK PIECE (Begin to consider a topic) India, Africa, Brazil, (article to be circulated) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
<http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/MMIWG-Executive-Summary-ENG.pdf>

4. February 15 Fundamental Elements (Continued)

- A. Discipleship (CMT, Chapter 5): Faith, Hope and Love (Come to class with 3 points for discussion)
- B. The Law of Christ (CMT, Chapter 6)
- C. Conscience (CMT, chapter 7)
- D. THINK PIECE (Due Feb. 28th).

5. March 8

Virtue, Sin and the Human Act (CMT Chapter 8)

Part III Special Questions

A. Sexual Ethics in the Catholic Tradition (CMT Chapter 9)

i. Amoris Laetitia: The Joy of Love

https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf

6. March 15

A. Bioethics (CMT, Chapter 10)

B. Catholic Social Teaching (CMT Chapter 11)

i. Death Penalty <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/10/11/pope-francis-death-penalty-contrary-gospel>

Optional Other Issues

- A. AI
- B. Transplantation, Xenotransplantation
- C. Genetics
- D. Resource Allocation – Justice
- E. Healthcare for the Poor
- F. Social Context (mental health)

April 5

A. Application (self, others to whom you are responsible, and the world)

B. Gaudete et exultate: The Call to Holiness in Today's World

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations

C. Presentations on Final papers

D. Across the Desert and the Sea <https://www.revealnews.org/episodes/across-the-desert-and-the-sea/>

General Academic Information

Late Submission Policy.

In the case of severe illness or personal or family emergency please contact professor to request an extension. If no extension given, assignments will be penalized by 5% per day the assignment is late.

Course Attendance

No credit will be given for a course if the student has been absent, for any reason whatever, from one-third or more of the lectures and/or seminars scheduled for the term. Likewise, no credit will be given if term assignments or other assignments are or remain incomplete.

Leave of Absence and Policy for Incompletes

Extensions to an incomplete grade may be granted in extenuating circumstances, but may not exceed 16 weeks following the end of the course. Students who fail to complete course work by the agreed deadline will have a grade assigned which is based on work completed.

Academic Integrity

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) are subject to an appropriate penalty. The grade "F" may be assigned to a student guilty of such acts by the professor of the course in which the infraction occurred. A second offense against academic integrity renders the student liable to automatic dismissal from NTC. Further details are available in the Student Handbook in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Grievances

Students may appeal grades received; the procedure is outlined in the Student Handbook in the Grade Appeal Policy. For other grievances, students will refer to the Student Grievances Policy also outlined in the Student Handbook.

NOTE: The GPA is computed on the basis of cumulative grade point (letter) values, not percentage values. All courses are included in this calculation except those exceeding degree requirements and/or received as transfer credits from other recognized institutions.

Grading System

Undergraduate Studies C.Th., Dip.Th., B.Th.			Graduate Studies M.T.S., M.Div., M.Th., G.C.C.S.A., M.R.E.		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0	Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0		A	4.0
	A-	3.7		A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3	Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0		B	3.0
	B-	2.7		B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3	Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0		C	2.0
	C-	1.7		C-	1.7
Marginal	D+	1.3			
	D	1.0			
Fail	F	0.0	Fail	D+	1.3
				D	1.0
				F	0.0

Written Assignments - Style and Format

Newman Theological College requires that all written work be submitted in acceptable academic format and style. Please note the following regulations:

Regulations

Research papers, book reports, article summaries, reflection papers, and essays should be double-spaced, printed on one side only, and submitted on white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

A standard type style, such as Times New Roman, with a 12-point font size, must be used. The instructor will specify the most recent edition of the style manual to be used:

7. Kate Turabian, "A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
8. Joseph Gibaldi & William Ahters, eds., "MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers" (New York: Modern Language Association of America).
9. American Psychological Association "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (Washington: APA Publications).

Copies of these standard references may be purchased in the NTC bookstore.

Ignorance of standard form is not considered an acceptable excuse for deviation from required standards of format and style.

Academic Regulations

The following Academic Regulations are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Changes in Registration: Add/Drop/Withdraw Notice
- Course Work
- Final Examination Schedule
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Inclusive Language

Related Academic Matters

The following Related Academic Matters are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Grade Reports & Posting
- Glossary of Academic Terms

Other Related Policies

The following policies are located in the Student Handbook for your reference:

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy

Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior consent of the instructor. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Services, contact Doreen Bloos at 780-392-2450 ext. 2212; Email doreen.bloos@newman.edu.