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or via Zoom by appointment

Trigger Warning

Ethics, by its very nature, deals with difficult situations and life's most complex experiences. Themes covered in this course may be challenging or upsetting for some students. It is the earnest intent of the instructor to foster a safe, compassionate learning environment for all students regardless of their ethical, moral, or religious (non)commitments.

Catalog Description

Examines the ethical implications of the Christian faith for the individual and community. Students will be engaged in a dialogue among Christian and non-Christian traditions of human dignity and social justice. Special emphasis will be placed on liberation from oppressive social structures, competing images of church and religion in society, and the assertion that humans are created in the image of God. Offered annually. Prerequisite: RE 103, RE 205, or RE 211. This course fulfills the General Education requirement for Formation in Faith.

Learning Outcomes

The structure, content, learning experiences, and pedagogical philosophy of this course are informed by:

- A. The Marianist Educational Philosophy: *Five Characteristics of a Marianist Education* (CME)
 - 1. Educate for formation in faith
 - 2. Provide an integral, quality education
 - 3. Educate in family spirit
 - 4. Educate for service, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation
 - 5. Educate for adaptation and change
- B. Education for Formation in Faith: *General Education Learning Outcome* (GELO)
The student will integrate faith and reason as complementary methods to explore questions of ultimate reality, leading to enhanced social awareness and service for peace and justice
- C. The Religious Studies Program: *Program Learning Outcomes* (PLO)
Upon completion of the undergraduate B.A. program in Religious Studies, students will be able to:
 - 1. Utilize the key concepts of Catholic theology in a critical reflection on integral human experience
 - 2. Engage in respectful dialogue on religious meaning in our globalized, multicultural society
 - 3. Employ Christian moral imagination in moral reasoning and decision making that affirms and/or challenges secular and cultural values
 - 4. Generate a substantive project that is animated by the Marianist Charism
- D. RE 308: Christian Ethics (3): *Course Learning Outcomes* (CLO)
Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students will be able to:
 - 1. Analyze the moral complexities of concrete situations and lived experience (GELO, PLO 1, and CME 4)
 - 2. Relate religious experience to ethical practice, particularly as informed by Catholic theological ethics (GELO, PLO 3, and CME 4)
 - 3. Appraise the contribution of principles of theological ethics to contemporary moral debate (GELO, PLO 3, and CME 5)
 - 4. Construct and defend an ethical argument relating to one's academic specialization or professional field employing methods of theological ethics (GELO, PLO 4, and CME 5)

Required Materials

Regular access to these materials is necessary for your success in our course. Please inform the instructor if you require assistance in accessing any of these materials.

1. Access to Internet-Capable Technology

Important information and materials have been posted onto our Canvas site and will be updated regularly.

2. Seminar Readings

All articles and documents below are available for download in .pdf format on our Canvas course site. Consult the course schedule on page 8 for reading assignments and the dates for their discussion in seminar session.

- a. Andolsen, Barbara Hilkert. "Agape in Feminist Ethics." *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 1981): 69-83.
- b. Aquino, Maria Pilar. *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993. (Introduction, chapters 1 and 2 only)
- c. Carroll, M. Daniel. "Seeking the Virtues Among the Prophets: The Book of Amos as a Test Case." *Ex Auditu* 17 (2001): 77-96.
- d. Childress, James F. "Just-War Theories: The Bases, Interrelations, Priorities, and Functions of Their Criteria." *Theological Studies* 39 (September 1978): 427-445.
- e. Francis. *Fratelli Tutti*, 2020.
- f. Heyer, Kristin E. "Social Sin and Immigration: Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors." *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 410-436.
- g. Hinman, Lawrence M. "The Ethics of Divine Commands." In *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing, 2012.
- h. Horsley, Richard. "Ethics and Exegesis: 'Love Your Enemies' and the Doctrine of Non-Violence." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 54, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 3-31.
- i. John XXIII. *Pacem in Terris*, 1963.
- j. John Paul II. *Veritatis Splendor*, 1993. (paragraphs 71-83 only)
- k. Kaveny, M. Cathleen. "Appropriation of Evil: Cooperation's Mirror Image." *Theological Studies* 61 (2000): 280-313.
- l. King, Jr., Martin Luther. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," 1963.
- m. Vatican II. *Dignitatis Humanae*, 1965.

Student Requirements

1. Completion of Seminar Readings

Careful reading of all assigned materials in a timely, engaged, and conscientious manner is essential for mastery of course concepts. Readings are to be completed in advance so that students are ready to discuss them in the designated seminar session. Because ethics is a highly specialized field with its own methods and terms, you should allow yourself ample time to study and digest this challenging yet rewarding material.

2. Engagement Through Participation

Our learning community will be characterized by a spirit of collaborative learning. Class participation is a fundamental requirement. Four (4) instances of non-participation implies that the highest grade achievable is a "B." Six (6) or more instances of non-participation constitute grounds for a recommendation to withdraw from the course. Students must register absences via email to the instructor prior to the beginning of that class. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain materials from other students in the event of an absence.

3. Multiformat Weekly Quizzes

Students will undertake fourteen (14) weekly quizzes intended to ensure content mastery and aid student progress. Feedback from returned quizzes may also serve as an invaluable resource for future assignments.

4. Final Projects and Presentations

This course culminates in a practical application of course concepts and themes through a project-based assignment. It is designed to help cultivate a greater awareness of ethical issues in students' major field of study and to identify opportunities for meaningful ethical engagement of their academic and/or professional communities. Projects will be presented during finals week and may be undertaken either individually or collaboratively in groups of up to four (4) students. Please consult the final project prompt on page 6.

Credit Hour Policy

As established by the Chaminade University of Honolulu Credit Hour Policy, this three-credit hour course represents a minimum of 135 hours of student engagement over one 15-week semester. Students enrolled in this course are expected to satisfactorily complete:

1. 40.66 hours of regularly scheduled in-person classroom instruction (e.g., lectures on course themes, seminars on readings, collaborative group discussions, weekly quizzes, and finals presentations)
2. 24.00 hours of Final Project preparation (i.e., ideation, data collection, in situ immersive experiences, project refinement, and presentation development and revision)
3. 70.34 hours of ancillary work averaging 4.68 hours per week (e.g., course readings, quiz preparation, supplementary research and study, office hour visits and one-on-one support, optional reflection and clarification papers, and completion of additional assignments to address the unique needs of specific learning communities)

Assessment, Grading, and Late Work Policy

I do not ask that you *believe* the subject matter covered in our course – I ask that you *know* it. The final grade earned by a student will be highly influenced by consideration of their regular and active participation (40%), weekly quizzes (30%), and the final project (30%). Final grades awarded represent an assessment of the quality of a student's overall achievement and holistic performance in the course and are to be interpreted as follows:

- A Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative
- B Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner
- C Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter
- D Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite course work
- F Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given

Assignments, including weekly quizzes, cannot be made up at a later date except by discretion of instructor and with advance written permission.

Course Policies

The Free Exchange of Thought

The university has long been a privileged place for the exchange of ideas and positions. This implies both the freedom to express one's thoughts and the responsibility to hear and respect the thoughts of others. Religious freedom and freedom of the conscience are central concepts of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Students are encouraged to think about and question the concepts covered but will be assessed solely by an ability to adequately demonstrate understanding, appropriation, and synthesis of the course content and material.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism might be broadly defined as the misrepresentation of another's work or ideas as one's own. The abuse of generative AI is an important example. In the first instance of alleged plagiarism, the instructor and student will meet during office hours to review evidence supporting the allegation of plagiarism and to discuss proper citation techniques. Subsequent offenses will not be tolerated. Withdrawal from this course and/or other disciplinary actions will be considered and pursued to the fullest extent afforded by university policy.

Style, Language, and Grammar

All work must be submitted in legible and intelligible Standard American English (AmE) or 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (by prior arrangement with instructor) according to the generally accepted standards of those languages. The Turabian style of citation and paper formatting has been traditionally preferred in philosophical and theological disciplines. Students may choose to use a different citation method (APA, MLA, etc.) so long as it is utilized accurately and consistently. Exceptions for the above guidelines may be made in consultation with the instructor for free academic expression in other formats (e.g., spoken word, song, dance, or visual art) as appropriate. In all cases, the judicious use of equitable, gender-inclusive language must always be observed.

Classroom Decorum and the Use of Electronic Devices

Please remain seated for the duration of the course and refrain from distracting behavior including extraneous speaking. The instructor will regularly pause to invite your questions; please reserve them until asked. Student-parents unable to secure childcare are welcome to bring their children to class on an emergency basis. Please monitor children so that they are not disruptive to others on campus. Our class sessions will conclude on time; there is no need to pack your belongings ahead of the session end. The use of electronic devices during periods of instruction, especially photographic retention, and audiovisual recording of intellectual property, is strictly prohibited unless permission is granted by instructor.

Office Hours

Office hours are an invaluable opportunity to build a stronger sense of university community, deepen one's knowledge, and form more nurturing relationships with faculty in an individualized format. In-person office hours are offered as posted and are subject to change. Students may schedule a private Zoom meeting if preferred. Students are highly encouraged to schedule an appointment through email to secure availability.

Instructor and Student Communication

All written communication between the instructor and student must take place through official Chaminade University email addresses or through our Canvas course site. Please do not contact the instructor through other electronic media including personal email addresses. It is imperative that you check your email on a regular basis as important information (e.g., emergency class cancellations, feedback or academic progress reports, or requests to meet during office hours) will be conveyed there.

University Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Student should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor's Chaminade email address, calling the instructor's campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor's division office. It is the instructor's prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade. Unexcused absences equivalent to more than a week of classes may lead to a grade reduction for the course. Any unexcused absence of two consecutive weeks or more may result in being withdrawn from the course by the instructor, although the instructor is not required to withdraw students in that scenario. Repeated absences put students at risk of failing grades. Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade University of Honolulu ADA Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes. Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor's discretion.

Academic Conduct Policy

Campus life is a unique situation requiring the full cooperation of each individual. For many, Chaminade is not only a school, but a home and a place of work as well. That makes it a community environment in which the actions of one student may directly affect other students. Therefore, each person must exercise a high degree of responsibility. Any community must have standards of conduct and rules by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students' rights and campus values. Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University's jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated.

Student with Disabilities Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008). Students are responsible for contacting Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2–3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kōkua 'Ike via email at ada@chaminade.edu each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator.

Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice of Nondiscrimination

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website. On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at [CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES](#).

The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the [Campus Incident Report form](#). Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: [Notice of Nondiscrimination](#).

“The uncertainty of history and the painful convergences in the ascending path of the human community direct us to sacred history; there God has revealed himself to us, and made known to us, as it is brought progressively to realization, his plan of liberation and salvation which is once and for all fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.”

Iustitia in Mundo 6

I. Project Prompt

Written by the 1971 Synod of Bishops, *Iustitia in Mundo* (“Justice in the World”) is an analysis of the most difficult issues confronting their milieu. In response, the Synod proposed a set of challenging initiatives for decisive ethical action inspired by the experience of Jesus the Christ.

You – as individuals or in small groups up to four (4) students – are invited to undertake the same project within the context of your academic discipline or professional interest.

- a. First, identify a contemporary ethical issue in your academic or professional field. Drawing upon your knowledge, skills, and experience, provide an analysis of why and how it is problematic for your academic/professional specialization. (e.g., the professional risks of *whistleblowing* in investigative journalism for Communications majors; questions regarding *exemptions* from vaccine mandates for Nursing majors; the *appropriation* of indigenous intellectual property for Fine Arts minors, etc.)
- b. Next, draw upon two (2) or more concepts of Christian Ethics to show how it can be a resource for the process of liberation from the “oppressive situation” that you have identified and analyzed. Your engagement of the concepts should provide a compelling account of why Christian Ethics is relevant for addressing the ethical issue facing your academic or professional field today. (e.g., the importance of the *conscience* in journalistic whistleblowing; why the *magisterium* is important for affirming vaccine mandates for the common good; how the concept of *social sin* helps to reveal hidden exploitative colonial structures in popular culture, etc.)

II. Presentation Guidelines

You will present your project to our class according to the Finals schedule below. Projects may be shared through your choice of medium: hands-on demonstration, research paper, a short documentary, a PowerPoint presentation, a collection of vlogs, or in any other creative way that would best present your work.

- a. Individuals must be present to present on the presentation day
- b. Groups may choose to appoint a spokesperson for the presentation or jointly present the project

At the conclusion of your presentation, you will briefly field and answer questions from your classmates and the instructor about your project. Presentations and Question and Answers should approximate, but must not exceed, 12 minutes. Materials associated with your project, such as slideshows, videos, or papers, must be submitted to the instructor by the end of the examination period during which you had presented.

RE 308 SPRING 2025 FINALS SCHEDULE

Section	RE 308-01-1 (MWF 8:30am – 9:20am)	RE 308-02-1 (MWF 9:30am – 10:20am)
Final	Thursday, May 1, 8:30am – 10:30am	Monday, April 28, 11:00am – 1:00pm

	Superior (5)	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Poor (2)	Fail (0)
Academic or Professional Ethical Issue	Ethical issue is clearly identified as an essential and urgent issue in one's own academic or professional field, analyzed and presented to clearly demonstrate why and how it is problematic for one's academic or professional community	Ethical issue is conveyed as a legitimate question in one's academic or professional field, clearly demonstrating why and how it is problematic for one's academic or professional community	Ethical issue is peripherally related to one's academic or professional field or is slightly underdeveloped	Ethical issue is not discernably related to one's academic or professional field or is backed by unreliable data from questionable sources (e.g., "trust me bro" and/or Wikipedia)	Issue is not an ethical issue or is largely to entirely misrepresented
Concept of Christian Ethics	Concept of Christian Ethics is presented with exceptional precision, nuance and sophistication befitting advanced academic discourse	Concept of Christian Ethics is well presented with facility and depth of understanding	Concept of Christian Ethics is presented in a way that demonstrates proficiency of understanding	Concept of Christian Ethics is largely accurate but is not adequately representative of course content	Concept of Christian Ethics is misappropriated, misrepresented, incomplete, or missing entirely
Integration	Integration between ethical issue and concept of Christian Ethics provides a clear and compelling account of how the field of Christian Ethics might be a resource for the process of liberation from the "oppressive situation"	Integration between ethical issue and concept of Christian Ethics displays strong conceptual facility and excellent interdisciplinary innovation	Integration between ethical issue and concept of Christian Ethics is present but must be developed more fully	Integration between ethical issue and concept of Christian Ethics is weak, tangential, or marginal	Integration between ethical issue and concept of Christian Ethics is egregiously inaccurate or missing
Presentation of Project	Presentation is engaging, creative, exceeding university-level quality, meeting the required duration of 12 minutes (+/- 2 minutes)	Presentation is clear and accessible, at university-level standards, and approximates 12 minutes in length (+/- 4 minutes)	Presentation is acceptable for university-level standards but does not approximate 12 minutes in length (+/- 5 minutes)	Presentation is hard to follow, unclear in its essential elements, and/or does not approximate 12 minutes in length (+/- 6 minutes)	Presentation is largely incoherent to entirely incomprehensible, and/or does not approximate 12 minutes in length (+/- 7 minutes)
Q & A Session	Responses to questions demonstrate thoughtfulness and a superior grasp of course principles as they relate to one's academic or professional community	Responses to questions demonstrate an excellent grasp of course principles as they relate to one's academic or professional community	Responses to questions demonstrate a competence of course principles as they relate to one's academic or professional community	Responses to questions display some grasp of course principles as they relate to one's academic or professional community	Unable to respond to the most elementary of questions in any coherent manner

Date	Day	Session	Content
1/6	M	1.a	<i>Lectio Brevis</i> : Course Introduction
1/8	W	1.b	Lecture: Examining Three Methods of Western Philosophical Ethics
1/10	F	1.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz I
1/13	M	2.a	Lecture: Navigating the Interface of Philosophical Ethics and Religious Ethics
1/15	W	2.b	Seminar: Hinman, "The Ethics of Divine Commands"
1/17	F	2.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz II
1/20	M	x	Fr. William Joseph Chaminade and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Holiday
1/22	W	3.a	Lecture: Identifying the Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics
1/24	F	3.b	Seminar and Evaluation: Andolsen, " <i>Agape</i> in Feminist Ethics" and Weekly Quiz III
1/27	M	4.a	Lecture: The (Ab)Uses of Scripture for Ethics
1/29	W	4.b	Seminar: Horsley, "Ethics and Exegesis"
1/31	F	4.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz IV
2/3	M	5.a	Lecture: Perspectives on the Nature of Human Freedom
2/5	W	5.b	Seminar: Aquino, <i>Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America</i> (sel.)
2/7	F	5.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz V
2/10	M	6.a	Lecture: The Three Dimensions of the Conscience
2/12	W	6.b	Seminar: King, <i>Letter from a Birmingham Jail</i> and Vatican II, <i>Dignitatis Humanae</i>
2/14	F	6.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz VI
2/17	M	x	Presidents' Day – Holiday
2/19	W	7.a	Lecture: Examining the Causal Structure of the Moral Act
2/21	F	7.b	Seminar and Evaluation: John Paul II, <i>Veritatis Splendor</i> (paragraphs 71-83) and Quiz VII
2/24	M	8.a	Lecture: Finding Happiness in Virtue and Beatitude
2/26	W	8.b	Seminar: Carroll, "Seeking the Virtues"
2/28	F	8.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz VIII
3/3	M	9.a	Lecture: Frustrating Fulfillment by Vice and Sin
3/5	W	9.b	Seminar: Heyer, "Social Sin and Immigration"
3/7	F	9.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz IX
3/10	M	10.a	Lecture: The Natural Law Tradition
3/12	W	10.b	Seminar: John XXIII, <i>Pacem in Terris</i>
3/14	F	10.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz X
3/17	M	x	Spring Break – Holiday
3/19	W	x	Spring Break – Holiday
3/21	F	x	Spring Break – Holiday
3/24	M	11.a	Lecture: Clarifying the Principle of Double Effect
3/26	W	x	Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole Day – Holiday
3/28	F	11.c	Seminar and Evaluation: Childress, "Just-War Theories" and Weekly Quiz XI
3/31	M	12.a	Lecture: Probing Problems on the Problem of Evil
4/2	W	12.b	Seminar: Kaveny, "Appropriation of Evil: Cooperation's Mirror Image"
4/4	F	12.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz XII
4/7	M	13.a	Lecture: Prioritizing the Dignity of Creation
4/9	W	13.b	Seminar: Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i>
4/11	F	13.c	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz XIII
4/14	M	14.a	Lecture: Contemporary Moral Puzzles
4/16	W	14.b	Evaluation: Case Study and Weekly Quiz XIV
4/18	F	x	Good Friday – Holiday
4/21	M	15.a	Course Conclusion: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today
4/23	W	15.b	Final Project Consult and Preparation I
4/25	F	15.c	Final Project Consult and Preparation II