

Chaminade University of Honolulu

Spring Evening Session 1999

Course Outline

Pray

RELIGION 20020

Contemporary Issues in Christianity

Kaneohe MCBH
Saturdays 8:00-12:10
April 10 - June 12

Instructor:
Timothy Freeman, Ph.D.
Phone: 737-3059
E-mail: freeman@hawaii.edu

Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION

RELIGION 200: Contemporary Issues in Christianity (3 Credits)

Examines the contemporary social issues which confront the Christian community, the relevant Biblical and theological assumptions that Christianity brings to the debate on these issues, and the methods to bring about social change within the context of the Christian community.

REQUIRED TEXT

Moral Issues and Christian Response, Paul T. Jersild, Dale A. Johnson, Patricia Beattie Jung, and Shannon Jung, 6th. ed., Harcourt Brace Publishers., 1998.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce the student to the field of moral deliberation, or ethics, through an examination of a variety of contemporary ethical issues as seen from a number of Christian perspectives. At the end of the course the student will have an understanding of the fundamentals of ethical reasoning, and as well as the range of Christian response to such contemporary social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering and cloning, human sexuality, racism and sexism, the environment, capital punishment, violence, poverty, and war.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation: All students are expected to attend class regularly, read the assigned material, and actively engage in classroom discussions. If students miss classes, they are expected to develop a proposal for independent make-up activities.

Journal: Each student will keep a journal in a conventional pen and ink notebook. Journals should contain responses to required readings, film presentations, and classroom lectures and discussion. A reasonable amount of class time will be reserved for journal reflection.

Class Presentations: Each student will make two in class reports consisting of analysis and commentary on assigned readings and one final report consisting of a presentation of student essay.

Essay: Each student is required to write an essay of approximately five to seven typewritten pages on one of the contemporary moral issues covered in class.

GRADING CRITERIA

The final grade will be based on the essay (60%), class presentations (30%), and journal (10%).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All material submitted in fulfillment of the course requirements must be written by the registered student. While students are encouraged to consult sources outside the required reading of the course, they are also responsible for clearly stating the nature of their sources.

Course Schedule

Class 1: April 10

Introduction and Orientation

Part One: Taking a Stand

1. *Politics and the Church's Response to Social Issues*
2. *Foundations of Christian Moral Response*

Class 2: April 17

Part Two: Sexual Ethics

3. *Christian Perspectives on Sexual Intimacy, Commitment, and Pleasure*
4. *The Church and Family Values*

Class 3: April 24

Part Three: Issues of Prejudice and Oppression

5. *Racism: The Struggle Continues*
6. *Feminism in Church and Society*
7. *Heterosexism*

Class 4: May 1

Part Four: Issues of National Priority

8. *Immigration: Can We Have Open Borders*
9. *Caring For The Environment*

Class 5: May 8

Part Four: Issues of National Priority

10. *Violence and War in a Post-Communist World*

Class 6: May 15

Part Four: Issues of National Priority

11. *The Death Penalty*

Class 7: May 22

Part Five: Economic Issues

12. *Christianity and Consumer Lifestyles*
13. *Capitalism and Christian Values*
14. *Seeking Justive Between North and South*

Class 8: May 29

Part Six: Bioethical Issues

15. *Genetic Engineering and Cloning*
16. *Reproductive Technologies*

Class 9: June 5

Part Six: Bioethical Issues

17. *Abortion*
18. *Euthanasia/Assisted Death/Suicide*

Class 10: June 12

Final Reports