

CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY OF HONOLULU Winter 1999

Course: RE 200,¹⁰ Contemporary Issues in Christianity
RE20050

Instructor: Stephen Coffey

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Times: Thursday, 5:30, Barber's Point; Friday, 5:30, Schofield Barracks

Description: This course is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to examine contemporary social issues which the Christian community encounters. The framework for ethical reflection that the student will develop will be based on relevant biblical and theological assumptions that Christianity brings to the debate on these social issues along with the methodologies that bring about social change within the context of the Christian community.

Required Text: Jersild et al, ed., *Moral Issues and Christian Response*, 6th edition.

Objectives:

1. To understand theology in relationship to interpreting our experiences and our world in order to cope with the challenges of post-modern life;
2. To understand contemporary methods of moral reasoning and to apply them to moral issues today;
3. To discover and examine key ideas and enduring insights in the field of theological ethics which can direct personal growth and love of neighbor;
4. To develop an attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible ethic in dealing with the contemporary questions which engage our attention;
5. To situate moral theology and theological ethics in the context of growth in our relationship with God, Christ, and the Church.

Requirements:

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| 1. Assigned readings and presentation | 25% |
| 2. Mid-term exam | 25% |
| 3. Paper | 25% |
| 4. Final Exam | 25% |

Attendance: Students are expected to attend each session and must inform instructor of absences, if known beforehand.

Presentation and Paper: Each student is required to give a class presentation on any contemporary social issue. The presentation should be ten minutes in length with an outline turned in prior to the presentation. The presentation should include an ethical framework, the identification of the issue, how it relates to the Christian community, and possible solutions. The theme and subject matter of the paper will be the same as the verbal presentation and will be due on the last day of class. The length shall be 10 pages. Bring a large manila envelope, stamped and addressed for return of your paper.

Method: Each session will include: 1) lecture; 2) media; 3) discussion of readings; and 4) student presentation.

Calendar:

- 1. January 14/15** Course Introduction and Expectations
Lecture: Introduction to Moral Theology
Video
Read: Introduction and Part I, pp. XI-53
- 2. January 21/22** Lecture: Conscience and Moral Formation
Discussion: Politics and the Church's Response
Foundations of Christian Moral Response
Read: Part II, pp. 57-101
- 3. January 28/29** Lecture: Moral Values
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Sexual Ethics and Family Values
Read: Chapters 5 and 6, pp. 105-155
- 4. February 4/5** Lecture: Moral Norms and Law
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Racism and Feminism
Read: Chapters 7 and 8, pp. 158-205
- 5. February 11/12** Lecture: Moral Intentionality
Mid-Term Exam
Discussion/Presentation: Homosexuality and Immigration
Read: Chapters 9 and 10, pp. 206-248
- 6. February 18/19** Lecture: The Godward Life
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Environment and War
Read: Chapters 11 and 12, 249-290

- 7. February 25/26** Lecture: Virtue and Sin in the Moral Life
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Death Penalty and Consumerism
Read: Chapters 13 and 14, pp. 291-339
- 8. March 4/5** Lecture: Trends in Contemporary Social Ethics
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Capitalism and Economic Justice
Read: Chapters 15 and 16, pp. 343-383.
- 9. March 11/12** Lecture: Trends in Medical Ethics
Video
Discussion/Presentation: Genetic/Reproductive Technologies
Read: Chapters 17 and 18, pp. 384-431
- 10. March 18/19** Discussion/Presentation: Abortion and Euthanasia
Course Outcomes and Summary
Final Exam