

**Course of Study Extension School
Indiana Conference, United Methodist Church
University of Indianapolis
Fall 2022: September 9-10, October 8, and November 12**

COS 424: Ethics

This course introduces the biblical and theological bases for Christian behavior, emphasizing the pastoral skills needed for moral leadership in the congregation and community.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to articulate a biblical and theological basis for ethical thinking and moral behavior and distinguish major approaches to ethical reasoning.
2. Students will be able to comprehend the relationship between their personal stories, pastoral vocation, local contexts, and responsibility as moral leaders.
3. Students will be able to develop a Christian framework for moral reason and action and apply it to the use of power and the setting of boundaries in ministry.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with and make use of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church as a resource for ethical reflection and action.

These course objectives have been developed and approved by the Council of Course of study Directors.

Instructor Information

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The best way to contact me is by email. I check it daily. If you want or need to speak in person, we can set up a time to converse by phone.

Books

Required:

1. *The Bible*
2. Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011) ISBN-13: 978-0-687-46736-5
3. Patricia Beattie Jung & Darryl W. Stephens, *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013) ISBN 978-0-8006-9943-7
4. William H. Willimon, *Calling & Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000) ISBN-13: 978-0-6870-9033-4
5. Rebekah L. Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Augsburg Fortress Press, 1999) ISBN 0800 631 366

Required Reference Book:

1. *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2016* (United Methodist Publishing House, 2016),
<https://www.cokesbury.com/book-of-discipline-book-of-resolutions-free-versions>

Recommended (Optional: You do not have to purchase these books, but they are recommended as you build your library):

1. Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: Harper One, 1996) ISBN 978-0-06-063796-5
2. Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, 2nd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) ISBN 978-0199739371

Recommended (Free Online):

1. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm>
2. Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*,
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/5682/5682-h/5682-h.htm>
3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*,
http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/WeirdWildWeb/courses/wphil/readings/wphil_rdg09_nic_homacheanethics_entire.htm

If you like, you can email me, and I will reply with the links to the recommended reading.

Requirements for the Course

1. Attend class regularly. More than one class absence means failing the course.
2. Read and study the assigned material prior to class. I will proceed with the assumption that you have done so.
3. There will be three papers and one presentation. The papers will be four to six pages.

Instructions for the Written Assignments

1. The papers will be due one week before class, that is, the Saturday before class. This will give me time to read your work and provide some feedback. The easiest way to submit written assignments is to email them to me in Word or PDF format. You may also mail them or drop them off in person. If you choose to drop them off, contact me so that we can make arrangements. You may turn the assignments in early.
2. Follow the lengths stated for each writing assignment. Use complete and grammatically correct sentences. Double space, use a Times New Roman with a 12 font, and one inch margins.
3. Use your own words. Do not quote extensively from other authors. If you do quote, paraphrase, or use another author's ideas, then be sure to credit the author(s). Be sure to use quotation marks for quotes. To credit, that is, cite a source do so like this for a book (Lovin, p. 32), like this for *The Book of Resolutions* (BR, p. 114), and like this for the Bible (Gen 12:18). If you use a work that is not one of our texts, then you will have to provide full bibliographic information.
4. Use a cover page, including the course number, name of the course, your name, and the date the paper is due. The cover page does not count as a page. In other words, a cover page and three pages of text do not add up to a four page paper—it is a three page paper. The same is true of an end note page and a bibliography page. Staple the pages together if you mail them or drop them off.
5. Here is a great source for all things having to do with writing, Purdue Owl:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

Grading

Grading is the traditional letter grades, A, A-, B+, B, B-... F. The papers will be equally weighted.

Plagiarism

Using other people's language or intellectual property without acknowledgement or documentation, whether from a book, journal, teacher, sermon service, another student or lectionary aid is stealing. Otherwise known as plagiarism, this is obviously unacceptable behavior and will usually result in failure of the course with notification sent to the Conference Course of Study Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. Again, I refer you to Purdue Owl.

Assignments

Due September 3, 2022

In Chapter Three (pp. 45-66) Lovin introduces four Christian stances, synergy, integrity, realism, and liberation. Compare and contrast these stances. With which stance do you identify and why?

Due September 9-10, 2022

Read:

Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues*

Optional Reading:

The following are not required. They are optional. If you do decide to read one or more of them, do not spend a lot of time on them.

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chapter 1

Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, First Section

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books I & II

In class we will get an overview of some of the major ethical theories.

Due October 1, 2022

Choose a chapter of *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*. Write a paper that does the following: address what the author is saying and what the author uses to support his/her idea(s), then take a critical look at what the author has written, e.g., where is the author right or wrong and why, what is the logical consequence of what the author has written, what part of the essay is weak and why, what part of the essay is strong and why, etc. You will be leading the discussion of the chapter you choose.

Due October 8, 2022

Read:

Patricia Beattie Jung & Darryl W. Stephens, *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*.

In class you will lead the discussion of the chapter you chose.

Due November 5, 2022

Consider the following statement: Being a pastor or, the pastoral office, is itself a moral matter. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Write a paper defending your position. Consider Willimon's book as well as the Social Principles/*Discipline* of the UMC.

This paper should be an argumentative paper, that is, make the case for your position. Another way to put the matter is to give the reason(s) you come to the conclusion(s) you do. The paper is an exercise in theological ethics, so use your best thinking.

Due November 12, 2022

Read:

Continue Patricia Beattie Jung & Darryl W. Stephens, *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*, if necessary.

William H. Willimon, *Calling & Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000)

Rebekah L. Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Augsburg Fortress Press, 1999)

In class we will finish the readings and presentations from Jung and Stephens, if necessary. We will also discuss the books by Willimon and Miles.

Disclaimer

The instructor reserves the right to alter the type and sequence of activities scheduled for this course.