

**ETH 500: Introduction to Christian Ethics**  
MTWTHF: 9:00am – 12:30pm (Central Time)  
Modality: Online-Synchronous  
Instructor: Rudolph P. Reyes II  
Instructor contact information:  
Stead 304 / rudolph.reyes@garrett.edu  
Office hours: By Appointment  
Updated: 10.31.22



*Note: This syllabus is a living document. It is subject to further change or revisions based on the learning outcomes of this course. Changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and through Moodle.*

### **Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to introduce you doing Christian ethics from the margins at the intersections. The first section of this course takes a thematic approach. It focuses on motifs as a heuristic to distinguish between different forms of ethical thinking and action. The second section of the course explores doing Christian ethics at the intersections and examines constructions of race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, and the environment.

### **Course Modality**

This course is an **online-synchronous** course. This means the course is fully online where all meeting times are live sessions with set meeting times; counts toward online course limits

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

As a result of the course, you will be able to:

1. identify implicit ethical assumptions of society
2. critically examine your own ethical assumptions
3. develop an understanding of ethics you can articulate and advocate as religious leaders
4. relate theoretical ethical perspectives to select issues in church and society

### **Contacting the Instructor**

You can set up a time to meet with me in person or online by email.

Please note that I typically check email between 9am and 5pm on weekdays. I do not check my email at all on the weekends or holidays to devote time to family, rest, and God. Messages received during these times will receive attention once I am back online. Otherwise, you can expect to receive a response to your message within 36 hours, often much sooner.

### **Seminary's Inclusivity/Diversity Statement**

“The basic commitments of the seminary to mutual love and searching for the truth in Christ lead to a principle that in the classroom and in course assignments, persons are always to be respected and ideas are to be freely discussed.... All participants in the teaching-learning process have an obligation to honor and respect varying perspectives on relevant issues.” (Access 19-20 Handbook, 9)

### **Inclusive Learning Environment**

I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official Garrett records, please let me know!
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.
- I am multiply neurodivergent and have used accommodations as a student, and I want you to tell me what you need best participate in class. I have focused on accessibility in the design of this course.

### **Academic Accommodations**

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to **providing the most accessible learning environment** as possible for students with disabilities. Should you anticipate or experience **disability-related barriers** in the academic setting, please contact Student Access to move forward with the established accommodation process (e: [student.access@garrett.edu](mailto:student.access@garrett.edu); p: 847- 467-5530). If you already have established accommodations with Student Access, please let me know as soon as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of the term, so we **can work together** to implement your disability accommodations. Disability information, including academic accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is **confidential under FERPA regulations**.

### **Required Readings and Materials**

Articles or chapters are provided as pdfs on Moodle or accessible online through Styberg Library.

### **Course Requirements**

Final grades are determined by papers and participation. They are weighted as follows:

Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	25%
Paper 3	25%
Participation	30 %

### **Participation in Learning Community**

Students are expected to attend and come prepared for class through reading the material and offer their insights, confusions, and interests based on the readings. Participation is worth 30% of your grade. Reading criteria and rubric for participation are posted on Moodle.

### **Papers**

There are three papers for this course. These papers build off one another. Paper 1 is a 3-page double space paper. Paper 2 and 3 are 5-page double space papers each. The paper topics and grading rubrics are posted on Moodle.

### **Basis for course grades**

Final course grade is based upon the follow scale:

A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D	60-69%
F	59% and below

### Class Schedule (Topics and Readings):

Day	Date	Topic	Reading
Mon	1/9	Intro to Christian Ethics /  Deliberative Motifs	Grace Ji-Sun Kim and Susan M. Shaw, "Biography as Intersectional Theology" in <i>Intersectional Theology: an Introductory Guide</i>  Grace Kao, <i>Grounding Human Rights in a Pluralist World</i> , 1-10.  Ismael García, <i>Dignidad</i> , 35-44
Tu	1/10	Virtue Motif	Melanie L. Harris, "Doing the Work: Building a Womanist Virtue Ethic" "Take Back Your Life: Virtues to Live By," in <i>Gifts of Virtue, Alice Walker, and Womanist Ethics</i> .
Wed	1/11	Relational Motifs	Riggs, Marcia. "What Do Nineteenth-Century Reformers Have to Say to Twentieth-Century Liberations?" in <i>Awake, Arise, and Act: A Womanist Call for Black Liberation</i> .  Ismael García, <i>Dignidad</i> , 53-64
Th	1/12	Liberative Motif	Miguel De La Torre, "Doing Latina/o Ethics from the Margins of Empire: Liberating the Colonized Mind." <i>Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics</i> 33, no. 2 (2013): 3-20.  Emilie M Townes, "Ethics as an art of doing the work our souls must have" in <i>Womanist Theological Ethics: A Reader</i>
Fri	1/13	Hermeneutical Circle / Race	Miguel De La Torre, "The Liberation of Ethics" in <i>Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins</i> .  Choi, Ki Joo (KC). "Asian American Christian Ethics: The State of the Discipline." <i>Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics</i> 38.2 (2018): 33-44.  Douglas, Kelly Brown. "Stop the Violence: Breaking the Cycle of Anti-Black Violence." <i>Interpretation (Richmond)</i> 71.4 (2017): 398-407.
Mon	1/16	MLK Day	No Class

Tu	1/17	Ability	<p>Creamer, Deborah. "Understanding Disability" in <i>Disability and Christian Theology Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities</i>.</p> <p>Walker, "Throw Away the Master's Tools"</p>
Wed	1/18	Gender / Sexuality	<p>Emilie M Townes, "The Womanist Dancing Mind," in <i>Deeper Shades of Purple: Womanism in Religion and Society</i>. Ed. Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas, New York: New York University Press, 2006.</p> <p>Jeanette Rodriguez, "Latina Activists: Toward an Inclusive Spirituality of Being in the World" In <i>A Reader in Latina Feminist Theology: Religion and Justice</i>.</p> <p>West, Traci C. "Black Bisexual Queering of Anti-VIOLENCE Christian Ethics." <i>Modern believing</i> 60, no. 1 (2019): 15–28.</p>
Th	1/19	Class	<p>Keri Day, "The Myth of Progress" in <i>Religious Resistance to Neoliberalism</i></p> <p>Joerg Rieger, "Welcome to the Great American Middle Class: From the American Dream to Deep Solidarity," in <i>Theological Perspectives for Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness</i></p>
Fri	1/20	Ecology	<p>Melanie L. Harris, "Ecowomanism: Black Women, Religion, and the Environment." <i>The Black scholar</i> 46, no. 3 (2016): 27–39.</p> <p>Grace Y. Kao, "The Universal versus the Particular in Ecofeminist Ethics." <i>The Journal of religious ethics</i> 38, no. 4 (2010): 616–637.</p>
			<b>All Papers Due Monday Feb. 6, 2023</b>