

**ETH 650: Moral Theology Topics:
Disability, Difference, and Embodiment**

Tuesdays 9:30am-12:00pm

Location and Modality

Instructor: Rudolph P. Reyes II

Instructor contact information:

Stead 304 / rudolph.reyes@garrett.edu

Office hours: Via calendly (Posted on Moodle)

Updated: 8.8.22



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

This course examines disability from a disability studies and liberative ethics perspective. Special attention is given to disability texts and cultural production, to propose critical options that foster emancipatory practices by people of faith in the struggle for disability justice.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. identify implicit ethical assumptions about disability in society
2. critically examine your own ethical assumptions around disability
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 during student hours through calendly. The link will be posted on Moodle. I am available for in-person or zoom meetings. I can also stay a few minutes after the end of class.

Please note, I typically check my email from 9am to 5pm on weekdays. I do not check my email at all on the weekends to devote time to family, rest, and religious observances. 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 to 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; 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**.

Wellness Resources

Wellness Resources available to Garrett students are posted in the myGETS 'Community Life' section (login to myGETS required). They include Counseling and Spiritual Direction resources, discounted LA Fitness Gym membership, childcare grants information (pre-school aged children), and free local food access resources.

https://mygets.garrett.edu/ICS/Community_Life/Wellness_and_Health_Care/

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 a papers and participation. They are weighted as follows:

Paper 1	25%
Paper 2	25%
Paper 3	25%
Participation	25%

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 25% of your grade.

Discussion Notes

Students are required to write weekly one page double-space discussion notes that answer the questions under “Reading Criteria.” These discussion notes are based on the material and serve as a basis for class discussion and aid you in your paper. These discussion notes can be in the form of bullet points, sentences, full paragraphs or a mind map.

Reading Criteria:

Who is the author? What is the author's social location?

What is the author's thesis? (In one sentence)

The thesis question should be answered in one sentence: this is a valuable skill to practice that will enable you to process information efficiently and effectively.

What is the author's method and theory?

Method is the means by which the author conducts research. Is it history? Sociology? Literary criticism? If interdisciplinary, what are the composite disciplines? Theory is how the author explains the research findings.

How did this reading further your self-understanding of ethical issues?

Discuss the contributions the reading has made to your understanding of the topics in this class; or whether the reading has raised more questions than answers; if so, articulate those questions.

How did this reading further your understanding of this motif/topic?

In light of the reading and class lecture, suggest a specific act of justice you feel motivated to do?

Papers

There are three short conference papers (3 pages) for this course. These papers must address one or more readings for an assigned week. You will select the readings for your papers. These conference papers will start in week 3. Your paper will be presented to the class for discussion. A paper is worth 25% of your grade.

The purpose of these papers is to encourage deep engagement with the readings and encourage open discussion.

The paper grading rubrics and assignment alternatives will be announced in class and posted online.

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):

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	9/6	Intro Class / What is Disability?	
2	9/13	Models of Disability	Lennard J. Davis, Introduction in <i>Beginning with Disability</i> Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Becoming Disabled in <i>Beginning with Disability</i>

			Reassigning Meaning, Simi Linton in <i>Beginning with Disability</i>
3	9/20	Disability Rights / Disability Justice	Eiseland, “Barriers and bridges: relating the disability rights movement and religious organizations” in <i>Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice</i> Li, Lingyu, Helena Lourdes Donato-Sapp, Nirmala Erevelles, Lisette E. Torres, and Federico Waitoller. “A Kitchen-Table Talk Against Ableism: Disability Justice for Collective Liberation.” <i>Equity & Excellence in Education</i> 54, no. 4 (2021): 361–74. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2021.2047417 . 10 Principles of Disability Justice by Sins Invalid
4	9/27	Disability Intersections	Douglas C. Baynton, Disability and the justification of inequality in American history Ellen Samuels, My body, my closet: invisible disability and the limits of coming out. Nirmala Erevelles, <i>Disability and Race</i>
Disability Communities			
5	10/4	Physical Disabilities	Mia Mingus, Moving Toward the Ugly: A Politic Beyond Desirability Selections from Nancy Eiseland’s <i>The Disabled God: Toward a Liberation Theology of Disability</i>
6	10/11	Deaf	Selection from Hannah Lewis’ Deaf Liberation Theology
7	10/18	Chronic Illness / Pain	Susan Wendell, Unhealthy Disabled: Treating Chronic Illnesses as Disabilities Christine Miserandino, <i>The Spoon Theory</i> in <i>Beginning with Disability: A Primer</i>
8	10/25	Neurodiversity	Nick Walker, “Throw Away the Master’s Tools” Selections from Grant Macaskill, <i>Autism and the Church</i>

9	11/1	Mad (Psychiatric Disabilities)	Bradley Lewis, <i>A Mad Fight: Psychiatry and Disability Activism in Disability Studies Reader</i> Selections of Marcia Webb's <i>Toward a Theology of Psychological Disorder</i>
Issues in Disability, Difference, and Embodiment			
10	11/8	Time	Julie Cosenza, "The Crisis of Collage: Disability, Queerness, and Chrononormativity." <i>Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies</i> 14, no. 2 (2014): 155–63. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708613512272 . Ellen Samuels, Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time. https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v37i3.5824
11	11/15	Compulsory Embodiment	Kafer, Alison. "Compulsory Bodies: Reflections on Heterosexuality and Able-Bodiedness." <i>Journal of Women's History</i> 15, no. 3 (2003): 77–89. https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2003.0071 . Robert McRuer, Compulsory able-bodiedness and queer/disabled existence /
		Thanksgiving Break	No Class
12	11/29	Body as Metaphor and Materiality	Tanya Titchkosky, <i>Life with dead metaphors : impairment rhetoric in social justice praxis</i> Deborah Creamer, "Limits and Disability Theology" in <i>Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities</i>
13	12/6	Wild Card	