

ETH 500: Introduction to Christian Ethics

Tuesdays 9:00am – 12:00pm

Location TBA / Hybrid

Instructor: Rudolph P. Reyes II

Instructor contact information:

Stead 304 / office phone / rudolph.reyes@garrett.edu

Office hours: Via calendly (link will be sent out before 1st class)

Updated: 01/03/2022



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 a hybrid course, which means it is a blended course with in-person and online components for all students. This class will be 50% in person and 50% online. The online component of this course is synchronous meetings, which means we will meet online via zoom. *Due to the fluid nature of the pandemic when class meets in person or via zoom may shift. You will be notified if a in person class shifts to zoom.*

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. identify ethical and theological assumptions implicit in the moral life of persons and communities.
2. examine critically their own ethical assumptions as well as prevailing ethical assumptions in faith communities and society.
3. develop an understanding of ethics which they can articulate and advocate with critical awareness as religious leaders.
4. relate theoretical ethical perspectives to select issues in church and society, especially those germane to pastoral practice.

Contacting the Instructor

You can set up a time to meet with me during student hours through calendly. I will send a link before the first week of class.

Please note that I do not typically check email between 5pm to 9am 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 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**.

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 portfolio and participation. They are weighted as follows:

Participation	
Facilitation	10%
Discussion Notes	20%
Total	30%

Portfolio	
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	20%
Paper 3	20%
Final Self-Reflection	10%
Total	70%

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.

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:

What is the author's social location?

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

What is the author's method and theory?

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

How did this reading further your understanding of this particular intersection? (This question is for the intersections section of the course)

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

Facilitation

You are asked to facilitate a discussion based off one of the readings using the discussion notes as your guide.

Portfolio

The portfolio is made up of one 3-page paper and two 5-page papers double spaced and a final self-reflection. These paper topics and grading rubrics 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/ Mode	Topic	Reading
1	2/1 (Zoom)	Intro to Christian Ethics	
2	2/8 (Zoom)	Sources of Christian Ethics	Ada María Isasi-Díaz, “Lo Cotidiano: Everyday Struggles in Hispanas/Latinas' Lives” in <i>La lucha continúes : mujerista theology</i> Katie G. Cannon, “Moral Wisdom in the Black Women’s Literary Tradition” in <i>Katie's Canon : Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community</i>
Motifs			

3	2/15 (In person)	Liberative Motif	Miguel A. 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.
4	2/22 (In person)	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> . Emilie Townes, "Searching for Paradise in a World of Theme Parks: A Womanist Ethics of Care and Healing" in <i>Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethic of Care</i> . New York: Continuum, 1998.
5	3/1 (zoom)	Virtue Motif	Melanie L. Harris, "Doing the Work: Building a Womanist Virtue Ethic." in <i>Gifts of Virtue, Alice Walker, and Womanist Ethics</i> , 59–87.
6	3/8 (In person)	Deliberative Motifs	Ismael García, <i>Dignidad</i> , 28-44
Doing Christian Ethics at the Intersections			
7	3/15 (zoom)	Hermeneutical Circle	De La Torre, Miguel. "The Liberation of Ethics" in <i>Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins</i> . Kim, Grace Ji-Sun and Susan M. Shaw, "Introduction to Intersectionality" in <i>Intersectional Theology: an Introductory Guide</i> Paper #2 Due
No Class	3/22	Spring Break	
8	3/29 (in person)	Race	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.
9	4/5 (zoom)	Ability	Creamer, Deborah. "Understanding Disability" in <i>Disability and Christian Theology Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities</i> .

			Walker, "Throw Away the Master's Tools"
10	4/12 (in person)	Gender	Emilie M Townes, "Ethics as an art of doing the work our souls must have" in <i>Womanist Theological Ethics: A Reader</i>
11	4/19 (zoom)	Sexuality	Ellison, Marvin. "Why Do We Have to Keep Talking about Sex All the Time" in <i>Making Love Just: Sexual Ethics for Perplexing Times</i> . West, Traci C. "Black Bisexual Queering of Anti-VIOLENCE Christian Ethics." <i>Modern believing</i> 60, no. 1 (2019): 15–28.
12	4/26 (in person)	Class	Day. Keri. "The Myth of Progress" in <i>Religious Resistance to Neoliberalism</i> Paper #3 Due
13	5/3 (in person)	Ecology	Harris, Melanie L. "Ecowomanism: Black Women, Religion, and the Environment." <i>The Black scholar</i> 46, no. 3 (2016): 27–39. Final Reflection Due