



for Theological Studies

Spring 2024/Main Campus
EH 3201
Shirin

EH3201 -- Introduction to Christian Ethics
Dr. Andrey Shirin
3 credits
Thursday, 8:05 – 10:00 pm.
Synchronous Online

DESCRIPTION: Introduction to Christian Ethics examines the subject of ethics from a Christian philosophical, theological, and biblical perspective. Can Christians offer an account of ethics that would speak to people in general? If so, which account is preferred that's grounded in our understanding of God and ourselves as created in the image of God. And what about ethics as understood and lived out by Christians in community that's informed by Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord? What kind of ethics would this be? We will attempt to understand as well as we can the ethical vision as laid out by the New Testament and the revelation of God in Christ.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY: It is hard to imagine a more pressing need for the church and for church's leaders than to understand the grounding and contours of ethics and issues of justice. On the one hand, given our pluralistic surroundings, it is important that we as Christians learn how to engage others who do not share our own theological frame of reference. Is such engagement even possible? On the other hand, given the church's own confusions about ethics and the relative superficiality of our theological self-understanding, it is important that Christian leaders be equipped with the requisite knowledge and perspective to lead our communities into a more faithful and informed witness to the reality of the new creation in Christ.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Through the successful completion of this course a student will be able to:

- Understand ethics and justice from a theologically and biblically grounded perspective. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 3.1.1
- Articulate for oneself and for one's community what "Christian Ethics" means and entails. 2.4.1, 2.4.2
- Examine and write on an ethical topic that engages either the public at large or the Christian community. 1.3.1, 2.4.1, 3.4.1

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *Ethics* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1995) ISBN-13: 978-0684815015, Kindle \$13.99.

Hays, Richard, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 1996) ISBN-13: 978-0060637965, \$15.97, Kindle \$18.49.

Hinga, Teresia, *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search For What Matters* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2017) \$45.00; Kindle 36.50.

Lovin, Robin W., *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011) ISBN-13: 978-0687467365, \$22.49; Kindle edition \$14.99.

Paris, Peter J., *African American Theological Ethics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016) ISBN-13: 978-0664232191, \$34.86, Kindle \$33.12.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT: In addition, every leader will submit the final paper, 3,750 – 5,000 words long. The thesis for the final paper should be clear, concise, debatable and related to some

online assignments. Substantial engagement with credible sources who disagree with the thesis is expected. The final paper should conform to the SBL of Style. Biblical exegesis is optional and should not exceed 20% of the paper. The final paper will be evaluated by how convincingly the student has demonstrated the correctness of the thesis, particularly by logical organization, mastery of the material and creativity, in that order. Logical organization: the ability to organize the paper into a clear and cogent thesis backed up with evidence, course material, other literature and observation. Mastery of the material: the ability to demonstrate understanding of the course material and other sources pertinent to the paper. Creativity: students are encouraged to infuse course material with creative ideas; however, that should not come at the expense of logical organization and mastery of the material. Leaders will present on their final papers the last day of the class. The presentation will be evaluated by the same criteria as the final paper. There will be grade penalty for not meeting due dates for assignments. Every late book report will take 1 point off the online portion grade, and the late submission of final paper will normally be penalized by 5 points on the 100-point grading scale. The instructor will do his best to answer emails within 24 hours. However, except for emergency situations, the instructor will not answer emails on weekends and holidays. The composition of the final grade will be as follows:

Attendance/Participation – 35%

Presentation – 20%

Final paper – 45%

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: This course is a requirement for the MDiv, MTS, and MCL programs and an elective for GCCL.

Note: This extended course description is a reliable guide to the course design but is subject to modification. Textbook prices are the list prices set by publishers, not necessarily the best available prices in the marketplace, and are subject to change.