

Emmanuel Bible College In Alliance with Nazarene Bible College PHI3013: Philosophy and Christian Ethics

COURSE GENERAL INFORMATION:

Dates: Course Schedule – 15 weeks plus one week of finals

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR:

EBC Faculty

Instructor: EBC Faculty

Address: Online Curriculum

Phone: Home

Office

Cell Provide by Faculty

Fax

Email: Provided by Faculty

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A study of the major moral theories of western philosophy with particular attention given to intellectual, cultural, and philosophical influences. The course will include a survey of the philosophical task, the language of philosophical discourse, and treatment of several contemporary moral problems in light of the resources of western philosophy.

COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The following learning objectives will be achieved by this course:

- 1. State with clarity why a study of ethics is necessary and important for an effective lifestyle and ministry.
- 2. Develop a working understanding of and comfort with the terms related to a study of ethics within a philosophical framework.
- 3. Survey the historical and biblical development of philosophical and ethical thinking and application.
- 4. Analyze the nature of truth and its source of authority as suggested in the approaches taken by science, philosophy, and religion.
- 5. Appreciate the roles of the Christian Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, human conscience, and community environments in the formation of character.
- 6. Identify and apply at least four models of decision-making to life and ministerial issues of ethics.
- 7. Present a concise presentation of your assigned position.

The following are competencies for Ministry as outlined in the *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* that will be addressed in this course:

- Ability to reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving. (CP5)
- Ability to apply theological and philosophical ethics to nurture faithful living in the Christian community. (CH1)

- Ability to discern and make ethical decisions in the midst of a complex and/or paradoxical context within a Wesleyan framework. (CH2)
- Ability to practice a moral pastoral leadership, informed by philosophical and theological ethics.
 (CH3)
- Ability to practice holistic stewardship (mutual submission in gender relationships, sexual purity, marriage and family, personal finance, professional conduct, practicing Sabbath, etc.).
 (CH8)

COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. Reprint 1998, Wipf & Stock, 2003.

ISBN: 9781592443765

Cosgrove, Mark P. Foundations of Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview. Kregel Publications, 2006.

ISBN: 9780825424342

Note: Students are responsible to have the required textbooks prior to the first day of class. Students are also encouraged to begin reading the books in preparation for the class as soon as possible.

Bibliography

Anderson, J. Kerby. *Moral Dilemma*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson/Word Publishing, 1998. Print.

Birch, Bruce C. and Larry L Rasmussen. *Bible & Ethics in the Christian Life*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1989. Print.

Cobb, John B. Matters of Life and Death. Louisville: John Knox/Westminster Press, 1991. Print.

Koop, C. Everett and Timothy Johnson. *Let's Talk: An Honest Conversation on Critical Issues - Abortion, Euthanasia, AIDS, Health Care.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Press, 1992. Print.

Stott, John. *Decisive Issues Facing Christians Today*. Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1984. Print.

Tillman, William M., Jr., ed. *Understanding Christian Ethics: An Interpretative Approach*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1989. Print.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I. Reading

Students are expected to complete the assigned reading in time that the reading may inform the student's contribution to the discussion. Students are encouraged to read ahead as necessary in order to be prepared for each discussion.

II. Discussion Questions

Students will respond to questions each session. Be careful not to be too brief. It is expected that students will spend some time on each answer. You should anticipate any objections to your statements and try to answer those objections before someone objects. You can also consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it make? What follows from my own statements?"

III. Discourse Project:

In sessions 4-6, students will be paired and assigned to discuss a different ethical problem. See more detailed instructions on page 10 of this document.

The professor will give guidance in this assignment in order that each student will be able to follow the expected procedures. This is a major assignment and represents a significant part of your final grade.

IV. Final Examination:

Each student will complete a final exam. This exam will be open book and open notes and will require significant thought and content. The purpose of the exam is to allow the student to practice the application of ethical principles and decision-making skills to specific problems. The final exam will be submitted as a Word document. This is a major assignment and represents a significant part of your final grade. The Final Exam must be submitted on time for credit.

V. Session Reflection Assignment

Submit a 500-word minimum referenced reflection on the key items addressed during the session and how they apply to your education, life, or ministry. The written reflection is to address the following questions:

- What is the most significant thing you learned this session?
- What previous experiences relate to what you read and learned?
- How has what you learned changed your thinking about this session's topic(s)?
- How will you use the knowledge gained this session in your life or ministry?
- [Optional] What additional information would you like concerning this session's topic(s)?

To score well, the reflection assignment must:

- cite references from the assigned reading for the session's learning experiences
- include suggested real-world applications of the course material

COURSE EVALUATION:

Grading Points

Assignments	
	Points
Session Assignments:	
Session Reflection	40
Discussion/Participation	30
TOTAL EACH SESSION	70
Course Level Assignments:	
Discussion Questions (Sessions One through Five)	150
Discussion Questions (Session Six)	20
Discourse Project (Sessions Four, Five, Six)	300
Final Exam (Session Six)	110
TOTAL COURSE LEVEL ASSIGNMENTS:	580
TOTAL ALL ASSIGNMENTS	1000

Grade Scale

Standard	d Grade Scal	e Based on	Percentage (of Points Earned
Α	В	С	D	F
A 93	B+ 87	C+ 77	D+ 67	F 59 or less
A- 90	B 83	C 73	D 63	
	B- 80	C- 70	D- 60	

Note: Ministerial students who are completing courses in preparation for ordination are expected to demonstrate at least a moderate level of understanding of the course materials. Individual Studies Boards may choose not to accept any class for which a student scores a final grade below a "C."

COURSE SCHEDULE:

I. Session One - Thinking about Thinking

- Learning Objectives
 - State with clarity why a study of ethics is necessary and important for an effective lifestyle and ministry.
 - Analyze the nature of truth and its source of authority as suggested in the approaches taken by science, philosophy, and religion.

Reading

- Cosgrove, Mark P. Foundations of Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview. (Part III: Introduction, pages 151-155; Part I: Introduction through Chapter 5, pages 13-63)
- Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. (Chapters Preface-1, pages 1-16)

Discussion Questions

- Respond to three of the following questions, each with a 300- to 500-word essay. Identify which question you are answering within the body of the note. Be careful not to be too brief. I expect you to spend some time for each answer. You should anticipate any objections to your statements and try to answer those objections before someone objects. You can also consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it make? What follows from my own statements?"
 - To practice composing a worldview, write a thorough paragraph that would define the Christian worldview in your thinking. Be careful to outline essentials and to define your terms clearly.
 - On p. 13, Cosgrove quotes Nancy Barcus saying, "Without Christian thinkers much will be left unsaid, for there is no one else to say it." Why do you believe that statement to be true? What gets left out, if there are not Christians to articulate it?
 - Cosgrove shares his story of how he became convinced of the truth of Christianity on pp. 151-155. When and how did you become convinced of the truth of Christianity? Is your acceptance of Christianity based on reason, emotion, or both?
 - **REQUIRED. You must answer this question:** Discuss the difference between an Assumption and an Inference and give an example of each. What makes an argument both sound and cogent?
- Session Reflection

II. Session Two - Thinking as a Christian

- Learning Objectives
 - Survey the historical and biblical development of philosophical and ethical thinking and application.
 - Analyze the nature of truth and its source of authority as suggested in the approaches taken by science, philosophy, and religion.

Reading

- Cosgrove, Mark P. Foundations of Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview. (Part I: Chapter 6 through Part II: Chapter 8, pages 64-106)
- Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. (Chapters 2-3, pages 17-37)

Discussion Questions

- Respond to three of the following questions, each with a 300- to 500-word essay. Identify which question you are answering within the body of the note. Be careful to not be too brief. I expect you to spend some time for each answer. You should anticipate any objections to your statements and try to answer those objections. You can also consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it make? What follows from my statements?"
 - REQUIRED: Someone in your ministry context asks the question: "Why Be Moral?" Explain how one of the textbook readings in Cosgrove or Dunning would assist you in giving a good answer. Reference Dunning chapters 2 or 3 in your essay.
 - From the discussions in Cosgrove, compare two of the worldviews that he discussed and their relative strengths and weaknesses.
 - Out of the lecture: "Movements and Trends in Western Thought: Part 1" note section II. Synthetic Christian Philosophy. Citing at least one thinker or movement featured in the lecture, summarize his philosophy, noting especially key words for describing it. Then briefly describe whether or not you believe that this person's philosophy is at all compatible with a Christian worldview. Be sure that you do some background research beyond the lecture to formulate your answer. Many internet sites will be helpful in constructing your understanding. If you need help to remember what is encapsulated in the idea of worldview, see Cosgrove Chapter 1.
 - Out of the lecture: "Movements and Trends in Western Thought: Part 1" note section III. The Enlightenment 1650 until 1850. Citing at least one thinker or movement featured in the lecture, summarize his philosophy, noting especially key words for describing it. Then briefly describe whether or not you believe that this person's philosophy is at all compatible with a Christian worldview. Be sure that you do some background research beyond the lecture to formulate your answer. Many internet sites will be helpful in constructing your understanding. If you need help to remember what is encapsulated in the idea of worldview, see Cosgrove Chapter 1.
- Session Reflection

III. Session Three - The Context and Authority for Christian Ethics

Learning Objectives

- Survey the historical and biblical development of philosophical and ethical thinking and application.
- Analyze the nature of truth and its source of authority as suggested in the approaches taken by science, philosophy and religion.

Reading

- Cosgrove, Mark P. Foundations of Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview. (Part II: Chapter 9 through Part III: Chapter 13, pages 107-166)
- Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. (Chapters 4-5, pages 41-61)

• Discussion Questions

- Respond to each of the following questions with a 300- to 500-word essay. Identify which question you are answering within the body of the note. Be careful not to be too brief. I expect you to spend some time for each answer. You should anticipate any objections to your statements and try to answer those objections. You can also consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it make? What follows from my statements?"
 - From the discussions in Cosgrove, compare two of the worldviews that he discussed and their relative strengths and weaknesses.
 - Out of the lecture: "Movements and Trends in Western Thought: Part 2" note section IV. Modern to Postmodern 1850 to present. Citing at least one thinker or movement featured in the lecture, summarize his philosophy, noting especially key words for describing it. Then briefly describe whether or not you believe that this person's philosophy is at all compatible with a Christian worldview. Be sure that you do some background research beyond the lecture to formulate your answer. Many internet sites will be helpful in constructing your understanding.
 - Summarize Dunning's discussion of how the *Imago Dei* was damaged by sin and how it is restored in sanctification.
- Session Reflection

IV. Session Four - Ethical Decision-Making

- Learning Objectives
 - Appreciate the roles of the Christian Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, human conscience, and community environments in the formation of character.
 - Identify and apply at least four models of decision-making to life and ministerial issues of ethics.
 - Present a concise presentation of your assigned position.

Reading

• Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. (Chapters 6-7, pages 63-84)

Discussion Questions

- Respond to both of the following questions with a 300- to 500-word essay. I expect
 you to spend some time on the answer. You should anticipate any objections to your
 statements and try to answer those objections before someone objects. You can also
 consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it
 make? What follows from my own statements?"
 - In which of Niebuhr's Christ and Culture categories would you place Dunning's concept of Christian Ethics for a "people of God?" (See page 63).

- On p. 66, Dunning quotes Lawrence Toombs as follows: "The Law has its significance, then, only in the context of a relationship established by Yahweh with his people through an unexpected and gracious act of deliverance." Explain what Toombs meant and how Dunning applies his quote to the business of Christian Ethics.
- Session Reflection
- Discourse Project

V. Session Five - Ethical Dilemmas and Their Answers

- Learning Objectives
 - Appreciate the roles of the Christian Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, human conscience, and community environments in the formation of character.
 - Identify and apply at least four models of decision-making to life and ministerial issues of ethics.
 - Present a concise presentation of your assigned position.
- Reading
 - Dunning, Ray H. Reflecting the Divine Image: Christian Ethics in Wesleyan Perspective. (Chapters 8-13, pages 85-137)
- Discussion Questions
 - Respond to both of the following questions with a 300- to 500-word essay. I expect
 you to spend some time on the answer. You should anticipate any objections to your
 statements and try to answer those objections before someone objects. You can also
 consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it
 make? What follows from my own statements?"
 - On page 53, Dunning identifies his own ethical system as the "Ethics for the People of God." In your reading, he began to elaborate on what it means. Reflect on Dunning's Creation Ethic and Stelting's model for ethical decisionmaking. How might you apply these principles to your own morality and to evaluate the choices of others?
 - Dunning argues that the church is the best place for the ethics of Christ to be realized and expressed. Why does he say that and how is it best expressed?
- Session Reflection
- Discourse Project

VI. Session Six - The Practice of Christian Ethics

- Learning Objectives
 - Appreciate the roles of the Christian Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, human conscience, and community environments in the formation of character.
 - Identify and apply at least four models of decision-making to life and ministerial issues of ethics.
 - Present a concise presentation of your assigned position.
- Reading
 - Cosgrove, Mark P. Foundations of Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview. (Part III: Chapter 14 through Chapter 15, pages 167-182)
- Discussion Questions
 - Respond to the following question with a 500- to 700-word essay. I expect you to spend some time on the answer. You should anticipate any objections to your

statements and try to answer those objections before someone objects. You can also consider your own answer and ask yourself, "If this is true, what difference does it make? What follows from my own statements?"

- On p. 158, Cosgrove states, "Christian theism is a rational, highly defensible world and life view." Assuming that he is correct, write your defense of Christian theism (borrowing from Cosgrove and Dunning is expected).
- Session Reflection
- Discourse Project
- Final Exam

COURSE POLICIES:

Student Learning Information

Accessibility

As applicable to student requests

Academic Honesty:

Honesty in all academic endeavors is vital as an expression of the Christian life. It is expected that *your school here's* students will not participate in cheating, fraud, plagiarism*, or other forms of academic dishonesty, nor encourage or condone such behavior by permitting it and/or allowing it to go unreported. *(Plagiarism is presenting another's words or ideas as one's own without properly crediting the original source.)

Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of moral and academic integrity. The minimum penalty for academic dishonesty will be a failing grade for the respective assignment. More stringent measures may include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, or disciplinary suspension, depending on the severity of the offense.

• Time Expectations:

As discussed during first class meeting

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend each session. Excused absences are at the discretion of the instructor. Every two sessions of unexcused absence will result in a one letter grade reduction in the student's final earned grade.

Change of Enrollment:

Add/drop period will be explained during the first class session

MLA/APA Style:

Students are expected to follow the MLA style for written works.

School Information:

Student information as provided through the student's academic portal at ebcministry.edu

Philosophy and Christian Ethics Discourse Project

The purpose of this project is to allow the students to have the opportunity to study, in depth, a current ethical issue and to practice the arts of discourse and argument.

For this project, the students will be assigned to teams of two (or three) and a topic which will be the topic for their study and discourse for the three parts of the assignment. During the first session of the discourse (session 4 of the class) student A will prepare an argument in favor of the assigned resolution and student B will prepare an argument opposed to the resolution. These papers should be 1000-1500 words in length. This portion of the project is to be formatted in accordance with MLA style and then submitted to the class through <u>Turnitin.com</u>. The papers will be well-researched and well-reasoned. During this phase of the project, all Biblical and theological arguments are to be avoided. Once posted, other students are welcome to respond to the argument of the paper.

During the second part of the project (session 5 of the class) the students are to switch positions and argue the other side of the question in the same fashion. This portion of the project is to be formatted in accordance with MLA style.

The third part (session 6 of the class) the students are to collaborate together to arrive at a single response paper that reflects a Biblical and Wesleyan resolution to the question. Similarly, this paper is expected to be 1000-1500 words in length and should demonstrate careful research and careful reasoning. The students will post a single paper which represents the efforts of the team. This final project is to be formatted in accordance with MLA style.

Each phase of the project will be awarded up to 100 points (300 points for the total project). Research sources should be indicated with notes (text or footnotes) and bibliographic citation. The texts are also useful sources of information for this project and should be referenced appropriately.

Student papers will be evaluated for the quality and clarity of their argument, the quality of their support, how convincing their argument is and the quality of their writing style. These papers should be written as though they were to appear as an article in a professional magazine and should follow the standards of formal writing. The writer should assume that the audience for his/her article is well-educated and secular. The article should be posted in the body of your reply to the class discussion and not as an attachment.

Topics for the discourse are as follows. Students should indicate a first and second choice preference to the instructor's personal email address. I will assign topics and teams on a "first come, first served" basis and will do my best to assign you the topic of your choice.

Warfare

Resolved, that war is often a justifiable response to save innocent victims from evil governments or regimes or in order to protect the security of one's own nation.

II. Genetics

Resolved, that medical and scientific manipulation of genetic material is permissible in all forms, including human and embryonic, as a means of advancing knowledge and seeking greater health and wellness for humanity.

III. Death with Dignity

Resolved, that an individual has the right to decide when and how they should die without governmental or organizational interference.

IV. The Environment

Resolved, that humans have the right to explore and exploit the natural environment for their own use and benefit without restriction.

V. Politics

Resolved, that it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that each citizen is afforded access to basic human needs such as health care, housing and food for their entire life.

VI. Abortion Rights

Resolved, that the right to reproductive choice is a fundamental right of a woman and should not be restricted. Therefore, the right to abortion is a personal choice that must be made by the mother and access to abortion must not be restricted by law or by the financial situation of the mother.

Further Clarification

The Discourse Project for this class is an exercise in careful thinking and clear argumentation. It has been my experience that most of the students in this class have a lot of background in Biblical Exegesis, but very little background in writing and defending what amounts to a mini-thesis. This document is intended to clarify my expectations regarding your Discourse Project.

First of all, please note that the discourse project is an exercise in ethical argument. I am looking for you to make an ethics case, not just a general case. Thus, the rightness or wrongness on the topic is the issue.

Secondly, I am looking for an argument. Many students merely give me a collection of unrelated facts about the topic. Those who do, do not score well. I expect there to be a thesis and for it to be defended. Your argument should stand, with or without the facts that support it. The data is support for or needed information that helps to advance the argument. The data is not the argument. Create a thesis and an outline before writing and you will be more successful.

Thirdly, even though you might not agree with the argument that you gave, it is part of the project that you continue to defend your position. When people post comments and questions to your position paper, I expect for you to respond from within the position that you posted. You will have a chance to clarify your real views in part three.

Remember that no reference to religion or Scripture is allowed in the first two papers. I know it is difficult to separate yourself from your theocentric perspective, but doing so will be helpful to you in the end. You'll have to trust me on that point.

If you have any questions, please ask. An example of an opening paragraph with thesis and outline is below:

Discourse Project Sample

Resolution: Resolved that prayer should be restored as a daily part of the curriculum in public schools.

Position: Negative.

In 1962, a most wonderful event took place in the United States. In that year, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed the oppressive practice of compulsory prayer in the public schools. That position was

reaffirmed as recently as 1992. Today, however, there is a movement sponsored by the so-called Christian Coalition seeking to reverse the wise decision of the courts, requiring the restoration of the practice of prayer in public schools. This proposal, should it succeed, would be an ethical violation of American children and their families because it would be an imposition by the State upon the fundamental rights and liberties of individuals and their families. The rationale behind the rejection of this proposal to restore prayer in the public school affirms the value of the Constitutional principle opposing the establishment of religion by the government, recognizes that religion is an essentially private matter to be established by the individual family unit, understands that any attempt to support public prayer would be coercive, thereby violating the fundamental rights to self-determination, and recognizes the oppressive means it would impose to support an arcane belief in a deity.

Below is the structure of the paragraph above: (I do not want you to show your outline like this, this example is designed to clarify the structure of the previous paragraph).

Thesis: This proposal, should it succeed, would be an ethical violation of American children and their families because it would be an imposition by the State upon the fundamental rights and liberties of individuals and their families.

Outline:

- I. The US Constitution opposes governmental establishment of religion.
- II. Religion is a private matter reserved to the individual and the family unit.
- III. Prayer in schools violates the right to self-determination.
- IV. Prayer in school is oppressive.

APPENDIX ONE

A Student's Guide to the Student Academic Portfolio (for those interested in NBC transfer credit)

The Student Academic Portfolio program at Nazarene Bible College is a way by which a student may be granted college credit for learning completed at an Alliance District Training Center. This guide sheet will define the Student Academic Portfolio and explain the process for compiling and submitting a portfolio for academic credit.

- The Student Academic Portfolio is a well-organized compilation of course materials (exams, papers, projects, class notes, etc.) that demonstrates academic work was college level quality and the content and extent of learning was enough to be acceptable as college credit.
- The purpose of the *Student Academic Portfolio* is to persuade college officials to grant college credit for the work you completed and the learning you gained.
- > Students who enroll in and successfully complete at least one 3-credit-hour course at NBC will be eligible to submit a portfolio for evaluation.

Getting started is easy! Set up a binder at the beginning of each class and build your *Portfolio* as you go! Your instructors are available to offer help and advice, and the following check list will guide you through the process.

How to	BUILD A PORTFOLIO					
	Purchase binder large enough to hold all course materials.					
	Set up the following 5 sections/tabs:					
	 FINAL GRADE The instructor will give you a grade sheet at the end of class that verifies your final grade and number of course credits 					
	 2. COURSE SYLLABUS (which must provide the following) a. Instructor qualifications b. The course title and description c. The course purpose and objectives d. A list of textbooks and other curricular material used in appropriate bibliographical form e. The course requirements and some idea of the instructor's criteria for assigning grades f. Seat time – the number of periods the class met and the length of each period 					
	 ASSIGNMENTS Research papers, reports, projects, etc. (appropriately titled and dated) produced by the student (original and graded). Arrange in <u>chronological</u> order according to the class schedule in the syllabus. 					
	4. Exams/Tests/Quizzes – original and graded					
	5. CLASS NOTES – the student's class notes and any handouts received in class					
	Include a contents page at the beginning of the binder					
	Remember, the more complete your Portfolio, the more likely it is that you will receive the credit. It should be organized in a neat and professional manner. This will help convince the evaluator that the contents are valuable and worth attention.					
How to	SUBMIT A PORTFOLIO					
	Become an NBC student. To get started, complete an Admission Application Form at www.nbc.edu.					
	Enroll in and successfully complete (with a grade of "C" or higher) at least one 3-credit-hour course online.					
	After successfully completing the course, submit your <i>Student Academic Portfolio</i> to the address below. It is strongly suggested that you send it by a delivery method that can be tracked (FedEx, UPS, etc.). Mrs. Cheryl Graves Nazarene Bible College Alliance for Ministry Education 17001 Prairie Star Parkway Suite 300 Lenexa, KS 66220					
	Include a cover letter asking that your portfolio be evaluated for the granting of college credit.					
	Include payment of the \$40 evaluation fee for each <i>Portfolio</i> submitted.					
	Your Portfolio will be evaluated by an NBC professor, and you will be advised of the result of that evaluation.					
	If accepted for college credit, send the \$20 posting fee and credit will be placed on an official NBC transcript with a notation that credit was granted by "portfolio evaluation." All credit granted through this process will be honored toward a degree at NBC.					