

ETHICS 500 - Introduction to Christian Ethics
Fall, 2009
Instructor - Rev. Dr. Paula Sampson

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE:

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of Christian ethics. It will engage students through reading, seminar discussions and case study work in order to develop the ability to apply Christian belief to Christian action in the world in which they are living now.

COMPETENCIES:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical theory in general and Christian ethics in particular by explaining the major approaches to ethical thought and their biblical and philosophical foundations.
2. Identify the major elements of moral deliberation, with an emphasis on method, and connect them to Christian understandings of the good.
3. Illustrate via case study analysis development of a capacity to engage a moral dilemma and help others do likewise.
4. Describe the insights of personal ethical formation and their relationship to the Christian tradition and ministry to the community.
5. Articulate ways in which Christian thought and action can serve the wider community.

REQUIRED READING:

Somerville, Margaret. The Ethical Imagination: journeys of the human spirit. Anansi Press: Toronto, 2006. *

Gill, Robin, ed. The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001.

Stivers, Robert. Christian Ethics: a case method approach. Orbis: Maryknoll, N.Y., 1994.

Selections, as assigned, on reserve at VST library:

Wogaman, Readings in Christian Ethics: a historical sourcebook

Nelson, Moral Nexus: ethics of Christian identity and community

Cobb, Progressive Christians Speak: a different voice on faith and politics

EVALUATION:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of attendance and participation at morning seminars (25%), preliminary oral and written case study work (25%) and a 20-page paper presenting a detailed and integrated case study analysis (50%). (This paper is due at the end of spring semester).

* This book is to be read in its entirety before the course begins.

