I. Course Description
This course assists students to reflect on moral issues through the perspective of Christian faith and discipleship, by developing responses and practices of justice that bear witness to the full scope of the kingdom of God when applied to a variety of ethical concerns.

Prerequisite – CHT5520 (Christian Theology for the Kingdom of God)

II. Student Learning Outcomes
As a result of this course, students will be able to:
1. Not assessed in this course.
2. Establish communal and personal disciplines that nourish Christian spiritual and moral formation.
3. Not assessed in this course.
4. Demonstrate critical theological reflection that is biblically faithful, historically grounded, contextually relevant, and integrated with life and ministry.
5. Develop ongoing moral and just practices that bear witness to the full scope of the kingdom of God.
6. Exhibit effective ministry skills relevant to intended areas of service.

III. Course Requirements
A. Textbooks and Other Materials
ISBN: 978-1-60899-865-4


Full-Text Journal Articles (posted to Blackboard):

Bell, Daniel. “Can a War Against Terror be Just? Or What is Just War Good For?” in Cross Currents 56 no 1 (Spring 2006): 34-45.


Corbin Reuschling, Wyndy. “Means and Ends in 2 Peter 1:3-11: The Theological and Moral Significance of Theosis,” in Journal of Theological Interpretation 8.2 (Fall 2014): 275-286 (restricted e-copy will be provided).


**B. Attendance**

According to the *Student Handbook*, attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours (2 weeks) will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

*If you miss more than 6 hours of course time you will forfeit the percentage of the grade earned for course participation (except in extenuating circumstances that you have discussed with the professor). Additional absences may result in a request to withdraw from the course.*

**A Note About Classroom Etiquette:** The ability and willingness to “be fully present” is an important habit and disposition in ministry where we need to “be fully present” to God, parishioners, clients, counselees, friends, family members, tasks, etc. Please see our course as an opportunity to practice being fully present to God and to each other by minimizing distractions and focusing on the tasks at hand. Please bring all of your materials to class. Please turn off cell phones and other devices that connect you with the outside world while in class. And please resist the temptation to log in, check email, surf the web, and stay on-
line on your computers unless asked to do so for our conversations in class. As my eyes go
to and fro throughout the class, I reserve the right to ask you to “disconnect” if it seems that
technology has a distracting, distancing or disruptive effect on you and on others.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

1. Weekly Reading Reports: It is assumed by the professor that you will come prepared
to each class, having read the assigned material in its entirety, so that you can fully and
wisely participate in the discussions. Your preparedness will primary be demonstrated
via your reading reports, enabling you to process the reading material and reflect on its
significance for nourishing spiritual and moral practices. There are three sections to the
reading report: summary of readings, questions you want to raise, and implications for
your own formation and ministry practices. Starting with Week 2 through Week 14,
please log in to Blackboard to the designated folder/link and post your weekly
reflections and questions on the readings. Your postings on Blackboard will be a
primary means by which you demonstrate you have read and interacted with the
material. This posting is required before the start of class. Your readings reports will
be assessed accordingly:

   • Completion of all elements - √+
   • Completion of most of the readings (under 80%), adequate summary, questions posted,
     and some self-reflection - √
   • Little or poor demonstration of the readings (under 50%) and inadequate summary - √-
   • Failure to submit a reading report (note: reading reports submitted after the start of
     class will not be accepted for credit) – 0

2. Mid-Term Assignment: The mid-term assignment with specific instructions will be
available on Blackboard on January 29 and is due to Blackboard by Wednesday,
February 26 by the start of class. The mid-term is designed to give you an opportunity
to interact with and apply the course material on the foundations and sources of
Christian ethics for the purpose of establishing normative frameworks for moral
deliberation. The successful completion of the mid-term will depend on your
understanding, familiarity and critical interaction with and use of the assigned reading
material, the focus of lectures and class discussions from Weeks 1 through 7 in your
responses to the questions.

3. Course Integration Assignment (Interpretive, Normative, Practical and Fundamental
Tasks): This integrative assignment will provide an opportunity for you to identify and
reflect on an experience in the past or present in which you were/are presented with an
opportunity for moral deliberation and ethical action. If you are not able to identify an
issue from your context and experience, the instructor will provide you with a case
study. You will have opportunity to work on this paper throughout the semester,
integrating what you are learning about the interpretive, normative, practical, and
fundamental tasks of Christian ethics with your own real life work in your case study.

   a. Part I: Interpretive Task (Due February 5 to Blackboard by the start of class) -
      Write a 4-6 page paper on the situation on which you are reflecting, including the
      following:
- **Describe** the situation in as much detail as possible as well as the background and any events leading up to it.
- **Name** the significant persons (or groups) involved and any other pertinent facts.
- **Identify** the moral dimensions of the situation such as trigger events, conflicting moral claims and obligations, harms and goods at stake, moral perceptions, character failure and flaw.

b. **Part II: Normative and Practical Tasks (Due March 25 to Blackboard by the start of class)** – You are functioning as a moral guide and leader in this case study and will now begin a response to the situation you described in Part I. Revise the paper you submitted for the Interpretive Task, paying careful attention to the professor’s comments. Expand your revised paper by adding another 4-6 pages (in one document) in which you:
- **Describe and use** the ethical resources available to you in understanding and responding to the situation from a biblical and theological standpoint.
- **Draw** upon Scripture, theological frameworks, any pertinent historical and/or denominational resources and contemporary insights, and wisdom you have gleaned from the course readings to create a coherent moral framework that addresses the issue(s) you identified in Part I. Please be explicit in using the sources of Christian ethics.

Note: In this part of your case study you will be establishing the moral framework that will guide you in the decisions, responses, strategies, and proposals you will offer in the third part of your paper.

c. **Part III: Fundamental Task (Final Integration Assignment Due April 22 to Blackboard by the start of class)** - Revise Parts I and II. Expand your revised paper by adding another 2-3 pages for Part III which you:
- *(If writing about a past experience)* **Analyze and evaluate** your response to the situation. What did you learn from the experience? What might you do differently if you face a similar situation in the future?
- *(If writing about a present challenge)* **Make** an action plan for what you plan to do and what you expect or hope to happen.
- **In either case, pay specific attention** to the Christian virtues and Christian practices that are important in resolving the situation pertinent for your case. How might the congregation (or other Christian body or faith community) implement practices that would be helpful to others in similar situations in the future that embody the goodness and justice of God’s kingdom?

The Final Integration Assignment should be approximately 10-15 pages, doubled spaced with one inch margins following the most recent edition of Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers*, with proper citation of the sources you have used in this case study.

4. **Team Case Study**: Over the course of the semester you will be working as a team on a contemporary ethical issue. Topics will be generated in a large group discussion, some will be suggested by the professor, and teams will be formed based on interest and equitable distribution of people needed for good, functioning teams. The purposes of this team project are as follows:
b. To apply the concepts in the course to a specific, contemporary ethical issue.
c. To develop skills in ethical analysis and reflection.

d. To participate in and model the role of moral discourse, deliberation and discernment in the context of Christian community.

e. To present transforming initiatives, alternatives and responses from a Christian ethical perspective.

Time will be provided in the context of the class sessions for your team to work on this project, but time outside of class may also be necessary. Please attend to the following in your team work:

a. **Interpretive Task**: A clear identification and description of the issue you are addressing and why this should concern us.

b. **Normative and Practical Tasks**: A clear use of how the sources of Christian ethics (Scripture, theology, tradition, reason and other sources of wisdom) guide us and orient our thinking and reflection on this issue.

c. **Fundamental Tasks**: A proposal, suggestions, alternatives, possibilities, etc., for how we might faithfully respond to this issue in our actions and practices.

Your team will prepare for a 20 minute presentation (scheduled on Weeks 13, 14, or 15). In order for all groups to be fairly and equally heard, your group is expected to stick with the 20 minutes allotted for your presentation (this does not include discussion time which will hopefully follow your presentation). Presentations can be in the form of role play, debate, question and answer, lecture, group discussion, etc., clearly demonstrating the process of moral deliberation outlined above. The grade earned (10%) will be earned by all team members.

5. **Important Reminders**: The abilities to organize workloads and schedules, to meet deadlines and fulfill commitments are important competencies and expectations for Christian leadership and ministry. Therefore, please keep in mind the following:

   - It is expected and assumed that you will turn in assignments on the due dates listed in the syllabus. **There is a 2-point deduction for each day an assignment is late.** Assignments submitted more than one week late will not be accepted for earning credit.
   - There will be no extensions or incompletes granted except in extenuating circumstances (such as a death in the family).

D. **Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Reports</td>
<td>#2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Assignment</td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts I and II of the Case Study (combined in 2\textsuperscript{nd} rewrite)</td>
<td>#4 and #5</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project</td>
<td>#6</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Integrative Case Study</td>
<td>#5 and #6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## IV. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Lecture/Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>Readings: Miles, Introduction and chapter 1; Corbin Reuschling, Introduction; King, chapter 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2      | January 22   | The Sources of Christian Ethics: Scripture | Readings: Spohn, chapter 1, Corbin Reuschling, chapters 1 and 2  
| 3      | January 29   | The Sources Christian Ethics: Theology | Readings: Spohn, chapters 2 – 4  
                       |                           | Journal Article: Corbin Reuschling, “Means and Ends in 2 Peter 1:3-11”; Hynson, “The Church and Social Transformation” |
| 4      | February 5   | The Sources of Christian Ethics: Historical Perspectives and Traditions | Readings: Spohn, chapter 5; King, chapters 2 - 4  
                       |                           | Journal Article: Spotts, “Possibilities of the Hebrew Sabbath…..”  
                       |                           | *Case Study – Interpretive Task (Part I) Due |
| 5      | February 12  | The Church as Moral Community: Worship, Witness and Discipleship | Readings: Spohn, chapters 6 – 8; Miles, chapter 2; Corbin Reuschling, chapters 3 and 4 |
| 6      | February 19  | The Church as a Shalomic Community    | Readings: King, chapter 5  
| 7      | February 26  | The Church as Moral Community: Political Engagement | Readings: Corbin Reuschling, chapter 6; King, chapters 6-8;  
                       |                           | *Mid-Term Assignment Due |
| 8      | March 4      | The Church as Moral Community: Stewardship of Creation, Resources and Work | Readings: Corbin Reuschling, chapter 5 ; Miles, chapter 3; King, chapters 9 and 10  
<pre><code>                   |                           | Journal Article: Srokosz, “God’s Story” |
</code></pre>
<p>|        | March 9-13   | Spring Break!                        |                                                       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|9  | March 18 | The Church as Moral Community: Race, Gender and Ethnicity | **Readings:** King, chapter 11  
|10 | March 25 | The Church as Moral Community: War, Peace and Reconciliation | **Readings:** King, chapter 15  
**Journal Articles:** Bell, “Can a War Against Terror be Just?”; Boone, “Moral Injury”  
*Case Study – Part I (revised) with Part II (normative task) due* |
|11 | April 1  | The Church as Moral Community: Human Sexuality    | **Readings:** Miles, chapter 4; King, chapter 12  
**Journal Articles:** Rubio, “Jesus, Paul and Family Values”; Wheeler, “Creation, Community, Discipleship”; Davies, “Clergy Sexual Malfeasance” |
|12 | April 8  | The Church as Moral Community: Life and Death     | **Readings:** King, chapter 13  
**Journal Article:** Verhey, “Health and Healing in Memory of Jesus” |
|13 | April 15 | Dimensions of Moral Leadership                   | **Readings:** Miles, chapter 5; King, 14  
**Journal Article:** Birch, “Reclaiming Prophetic Leadership” |
|14 | April 22 | Open session for discussion                      | **Final Case Study Due** |
|15 | April 29 | Wrapping Up                                      |                                                                                   |

**V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning**

There are many good sources and opportunities for continuing the work and reflection you have done in this class. The bibliography posted to Blackboard provides suggested readings in particular areas which you may find helpful, along with these suggestions:
- Join a local ministerial association (or start one!) to provide a place where you can seek moral guidance and wisdom from other Christian leaders.
- Subscribe to the Hastings Center (www.the hastingscenter.org) or the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity (https://cbhd.org/) for updated information and resources on biomedical ethics and pastoral practices.

**VI. Seminary Guidelines**

**A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy**

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary’s core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect
ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one’s own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one’s own capabilities to achieve one’s fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the Student Handbook.

B. The Seminary Writing Consultation Service
The Seminary Writing Consultation Service can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person.

To schedule an email appointment, visit Writing Center Online and select “Seminary Student Appointments” from the drop down schedule menu.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations
It is Ashland University’s goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

E. ATS Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>92-96</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>86-88</td>
<td>Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>71-73</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>68-70</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>65-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Below 65</td>
<td></td>
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Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. **Selected Bibliography or References** will be posted to Blackboard.