TS 635: Christian Ethics
CGR 1301† Tuesdays from 1:00-3:50 PM
Winter 2017 (revised 3 January 2017)

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Conrad Grebel University College
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Course Description

This course will provide an examination of the basis, scope and dynamics of Christian ethics, exploring the interplay between Christian thought and practice in the context of contemporary issues facing church and society. Questions to be addressed include: How should we engage the realm of politics? How should we seek to address racial and economic injustice? How should we respond to the impact of technology on society and the environment?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the term, students should be able to:
(1) use the basic vocabulary of Christian moral discourse with greater ease and precision in a variety of contexts, including personal, ecclesial, and societal realms;
(2) situate ethical arguments in concrete communities of interpretation, while being attentive to persons thereby included or excluded;
(3) engage effectively with people of different theological and ethical perspectives; and
(4) draw upon their knowledge and skills in ethical discernment in the pursuit of a faithful and creative moral response to the concrete issues they encounter in their daily lives.

More generally, the activities and assignments in this course are intended to further student progress toward all aspects of the MTS program’s mission:
(1) Develop skills in effective writing, speaking, reading, listening, and teaching.
(2) Demonstrate knowledge of Christianity from a variety of disciplinary, theological, contextual, and experiential perspectives.
(3) Engage scholarship in the relevant fields of theological studies through research and critical analysis of primary sources and contemporary scholarly debates.
(4) Interpret Christian traditions in light of present contexts.
(5) Engage issues of justice and peace, and attend to voices of the marginalized.
(6) Nurture personal formation through practices such as self-reflection, openness to others, leadership training, faith development, and participation in a community of learning.
(7) Enhance the capacity for life-long learning.

† I would like to acknowledge that this class will be meeting on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Conrad Grebel University College is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.
Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>See Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Position statement (3 p.)</td>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Book review (4 p.)</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Public statement (2 p.)</td>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Seminar presentation</td>
<td>Mar. 21 or 28</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Research paper (15-20 p.)</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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Additional Assignment Instructions

Detailed instructions will be provided for each individual assignment. They must be uploaded to the appropriate Waterloo LEARN dropbox by noon on the due date. Late assignments will be assessed an automatic penalty of 3% per calendar day if alternate arrangements have not been made.


Readings

Assigned readings for each class are highlighted in the weekly course outline and course bibliography that follows. Beyond the one required text, all can be accessed electronically.

Class Participation

The success of a graduate seminar depends upon your active engagement. Indicators of engagement include:

- Grasp of assigned readings. Together we will be attempting to nurture a deep approach to reading, finding meaning in the text by analyzing the arguments, making connections to more familiar concepts and principles, and then drawing on these insights to solve problems.
- Quality of questions and responses. Students should come to class prepared to raise questions related to the assigned reading. Of course, active and informed participation is characterized not only by the number and quality of spoken observations, but also by attentive listening.
- Contribution to cultivating a community of learning. In class discussions, students are encouraged to be honest, tactful, and sensitive. It is not likely that we all will agree on all issues, but each person should be respected.
- Throughout the semester I will be making connections to relevant current events, as well as campus and community activities. In order to help make this practice meaningful, you are encouraged to send me news items and announcements on a regular basis, either by e-mail, or by passing along a printed copy prior to the start of class.

Attendance and participation in all classes is expected—if you must be absent, please let me know in advance. I reserve the right to deduct up to 5% for non-participation in class.
Additional Course Policies

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/standards-and-policies/academic-integrity-policy/) for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/policies/71). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/policies/71).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/policies/70), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/policies/72).

**Note for students with disabilities:** The [AccessAbility Services](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessibility/) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Weekly Course Outline**

The following outline will be revised on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in reading assignments and refinements to the course schedule. All changes will be announced in advance in class and the syllabus will be updated on Waterloo LEARN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 3</td>
<td>Course introduction</td>
<td>Wells (2006)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Assignment</td>
<td>Additional Notes</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>God and community</td>
<td>Cunningham, ch. 2, 3, and Interlude 1; Brooks (2015), Introduction and ch. 1</td>
<td>*Position statement due Jan. 17: Book Launch: Robert Suderman’s <em>Re-Imagining the Church</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>Stories and maps</td>
<td>Cunningham, ch. 4, and 5; Smith (2016), ch. 1</td>
<td>Jan. 25: Grebel Gallery Exhibit launch: <em>Tesatawiyat</em> (Come in)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Virtues; Book review presentations</td>
<td>Cunningham, ch. 7, 8, and Interlude 2; Haidt (2008)</td>
<td>*Book review due</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>No class (Reading Week)</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 14</td>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Cunningham, ch. 14, 15</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mar. 21</td>
<td>Seminar paper presentations</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>*Seminar presentation due Mar. 21: Film Screening: “The Age of Consequences”</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>Seminar paper presentations</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>*Seminar presentation due</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>*Research paper due Apr. 4: International Mine Awareness Day</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Assigned Reading Bibliography

**Primary Text:**

**Additional Sources:**
  [https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism#t-1020583](https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism#t-1020583)