

Syllabus for  
**GTHE 661—Introduction to Christian Ethics**  
3 Credit Hours  
Spring 2016

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examines the moral life and the biblical, theological, and methodological ethic of the Christian Way. Traces theories of philosophical ethics and leads to the distinctive Christian ethic. Examines Christian principles and procedures for decision-making, as they relate to practical life problems.

Prerequisites: None.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- A. Learn to become conversant in the field of ethics.
- B. Explore a living and working definition of Christian ethics.
- C. Learn how to consistently practice Christian ethics within personal life and ministry.
- D. Learn to communicate Christian ethics to the global Christian community.
- E. Learn to determine the Christian ethic by contrasting it with general naturalistic ethics.
- F. Explore the Christian ethic within the biblical and theological dynamic from which Christian principles for daily living and decision-making are worked out.
- G. Learn how to make personal decisions and seek social involvement consistent with Christian ethics.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Discuss the importance of establishing an informed, living, workable, and ethical way of life that is based upon Christian commitment and is applicable personally and in the community.
- B. Discuss critically the theological positions that undergird crisis experiences that require ethical solutions.
- C. Analyze and discuss contemporary social issues affecting the church within a globalized society based upon biblical, theological, and ethical principles.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required Materials

1. Textbooks

Fletcher, Joseph. *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Library of Theological Ethics) (Paperback). Philadelphia: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1966. ISBN: 9780664257613

Hollinger, Dennis P. *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. ISBN: 9780801025631

Rae, Scott B. *Moral Choices*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009 3rd ed. ISBN: 9780310291091

2. Other  
None

B. Optional Materials

1. Textbooks  
None
2. Other  
None

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. University Policies and Procedures

1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
2. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence are charged a late exam fee.
3. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, electronic, video, multimedia, or computer software. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating involve both lying and stealing and are violations of ORU's Honor Code: "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments." Plagiarism is usually defined as copying someone else's ideas, words, or sentence structure and submitting them as one's own. Other forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) the following:
  - a. Submitting another's work as one's own or colluding with someone else and submitting that work as though it were his or hers;
  - b. Failing to meet group assignment or project requirements while claiming to have done so;
  - c. Failing to cite sources used in a paper;
  - d. Creating results for experiments, observations, interviews, or projects that were not done;
  - e. Receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments.By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means. Penalties for any of the above infractions may result in disciplinary action including failing the assignment or failing the course or expulsion from the University, as determined by department and University guidelines.
4. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
5. Students are to be in compliance with university, school, and departmental policies regarding Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the WPA handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.

- a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting an ePortfolio artifact is a zero for that assignment.
  - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.
- B. Graduate School of Theology and Ministry Policies and Procedures
  - 1. **Completion of Assignments**  
 Assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date are penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.** All work turned in two weeks after the assignment deadline is received but is granted a grade of zero for that assignment. **No work** is accepted after the final date of regular classes.
  - 2. **Incompletes**
    - a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the academic committee by written petition that student's work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete are excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
    - b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval one week prior to the end of normal classes. **The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete.** The petition must be approved by the academic committee of the Graduate School of Theology and Ministry. Students are expected to continue all course work until an incomplete is granted.
  - 3. **Examinations**
    - a. Early examinations **are not** allowed. Late examinations without grade penalty are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams or a sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician).
    - b. A Petition for Late Examination must be submitted to the academic dean's office. A **\$15 fee**, plus proper documentation, must accompany the petition. The academic committee reviews each petition and grade penalties are assessed. (Late exam fee is not a grade penalty.)
    - c. Students taking late exams should expect alternate versions of the original exams.
    - d. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**
  - 4. **Attendance**  
 The administration and faculty of the Graduate School of Theology and Ministry believe that class attendance is crucial in order for students to receive impartation, spiritual formation, and a community experience. Therefore, the Official Attendance Policy for the GSTM is as follows:
    - a. Students will receive one letter grade reduction after missing more than two weeks of classes.
    - b. Students who miss more than one month of classes will fail the course.

- c. **The absences allowed prior to a grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses and are not designed for indiscriminate use.**
- d. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official university business and has received approval in advance from the university administration.
- e. Students are expected to be prompt for classes.
- f. Students are expected to remain for the entire class session.
- g. Leaving early without permission constitutes an absence.
- 5. The Disability Service Center, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, assures that no qualified individual with a disability will be denied reasonable accommodations based upon the individual's needs. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Service Center and properly register for these services. For more information, call 918.495.7018 or go to [www.studentresources.oru.edu](http://www.studentresources.oru.edu).

C. Course Policies and Procedures

- 1. Evaluation Procedures
  - a. Grading:
 

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Quizzes                | 10% |
| Ethical Position Paper | 30% |
| Midterm Exam           | 30% |
| Final Exam             | 30% |
  - b. Grading scale:
    - A=90-100%
    - B=80-89%
    - C=70-79%
    - D=60-69%
    - F=59% and below
  - c. Class paper is to be submitted electronically via the D2L dropbox. No printed papers will be accepted.
- 2. ePortfolio Requirements
  - a. All students entering the seminary are required to enroll in PRF 059—ePortfolio: Whole Person Assessment, which provides specific training to develop skills needed to create an ePortfolio.
  - b. ePortfolio requirements for this course:
    - i. All students, regardless of degree program, must submit the Ethical Position Paper for GTHE 661 to the course professor on ePortfolio, on the same date the assignment is also due in class.
    - ii. Failure to correctly submit designated artifact assignments on time to the course professor on ePortfolio will result in an Incomplete grade for the course. When a student submits the missing artifact to the professor on ePortfolio, he or she may fill out a Change of Grade Request with all relevant information and submit it to the course professor for approval and final grade change.
- 3. Other Policies and/or Procedures
  - a. The course consists of collateral reading of the text, lectures, and discussions. It is vital that students participate in discussion and dialogue.
  - b. Course requirements do not necessarily constitute requirements for an

approved incomplete grade. Make-up exams are comprehensive, without reviews. Late exams will receive a 10% grade reduction.

- c. Please do not eat in class.
- d. Quizzes cannot be made up.
- e. All assignments should be submitted electronically on D2L.

## VI. COURSE CALENDAR (Subject to adjustment)

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Assignment</b>                       | <b>Hollinger</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1           | Social Contract                         |                  |
| 2           | Fletcher 1 <sup>st</sup> Part           |                  |
| 3           | Fletcher 2 <sup>nd</sup> Part           |                  |
| 4           | Rae, Ch. 1                              | Part I           |
| 5           | Rae, Ch. 2                              |                  |
|             | <b>Paper Topics Approved</b>            |                  |
| 6           | Rae, Ch. 3                              | Part II          |
| 7           | Rae, Ch. 4                              |                  |
| 8           | Rae, Ch. 5                              |                  |
|             | <b>Midterm Exam</b>                     | Part III         |
| 9           | Rae, Ch. 6                              |                  |
|             | <b>Spring Break</b>                     |                  |
| 10          | Rae, Ch. 7                              |                  |
| 11          | Rae, Chs. 8-9                           |                  |
| 12          | <b>Papers Due</b>                       | Part IV          |
|             | Rae, Ch. 10                             |                  |
| 13          | Rae, Ch. 11                             |                  |
| 14          | Rae, Ch. 12                             |                  |
| 15          | Review                                  |                  |
|             | <b>Final Exam</b> (university schedule) |                  |

**Inventory for Student Learning Outcomes  
Graduate School of Theology and Ministry**

**Master of Divinity**  
**GTHE 661—Introduction to Christian Ethics**      **Dr. James Breckinridge, Instructor**

**Spring 2016**

This course contributes to student learning outcomes for the Master of Divinity degree as indicated below:

**Significant Contribution**—Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

**Moderate Contribution**—Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

**Minimal Contribution**—Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

**No Contribution**—Does not address the outcome.

| Degree Program Outcomes |                                                                                                                                                       | Significant Contribution | Moderate Contribution | Minimal Contribution | No Contribution |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>1</b>                | <b>Old Testament Scripture in Cultural/Historical Context</b>                                                                                         |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Articulate a foundational knowledge of the historical/theological content of Scripture with application to selected contemporary situations.          | X                        |                       |                      |                 |
| <b>2</b>                | <b>Exegetical Tools to Translate/Analyze Biblical Text</b>                                                                                            |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Interpret the biblical writings in the Greek and/or Hebrew languages using critical exegetical tools, and write a hermeneutical and exegetical paper. |                          |                       |                      | X               |
| <b>3</b>                | <b>Biblical/Theological Basis for Ministry Strategies</b>                                                                                             |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Present practical ministry strategies utilizing biblical and theological principles.                                                                  |                          | X                     |                      |                 |
| <b>4</b>                | <b>Christian Ethics for Social Issues</b>                                                                                                             |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Analyze and discuss contemporary social issues affecting the Church and society based upon biblical, theological, and ethical principles.             | X                        |                       |                      |                 |
| <b>5</b>                | <b>Theology and Theory of Ministry</b>                                                                                                                |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Develop and articulate a theology and theory of ministry that is relevant to the student's background and calling.                                    |                          | X                     |                      |                 |
| <b>6</b>                | <b>Skills for Contemporary Ministry</b>                                                                                                               |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Demonstrate skills for contemporary ministry within a variety of traditions, churches, and cross-cultural contexts.                                   | X                        |                       |                      |                 |
| <b>7</b>                | <b>Knowledge of History of Christianity</b>                                                                                                           |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Present a basic knowledge of the history of Christianity.                                                                                             |                          |                       | X                    |                 |
| <b>8</b>                | <b>Knowledge of Christian Theology/Doctrines</b>                                                                                                      |                          |                       |                      |                 |
|                         | Exhibit a basic knowledge of theology and Christian doctrines.                                                                                        |                          |                       | X                    |                 |