



PROVIDENCE
— EST. 1972 —
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

LS5102 Ethics and Morality in Leadership Fall 2019

3 credit hours

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Course Description

This course surveys dominant theories in secular ethics, with an emphasis on the development of an evangelical Christian approach, followed by a discussion of current moral issues. The students' own moral reasoning will develop in conversation with Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), who ministered, trained pastors, and wrote his *Ethics* in the midst of extremely morally challenging circumstances.

Required Textbooks and Readings

Green, Clifford J., and Michael DeJonge, eds. *The Bonhoeffer Reader*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013. ISBN: 9780800699451.

Further online readings made available on Populi.

Course Goals

1. Identify various ethical theories at play in their own and other's reasoning.
2. Critique ethical theories.
3. Evaluate contemporary ethical issues in leadership.
4. Articulate an evangelical Christian approach to leadership ethics.
5. Plan safeguards for ethical practices in ministry.

Course Assignments

Ethical Theory Paper	15%	4 pages	Oct 4
Ministry Ethics Commentary	25%	6 pages	Oct 25
Leadership Ethics Paper	30%	8 pages	Nov 22
Bonhoeffer Paper	30%	10 pages	Dec 13

General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work

Formatting Papers

- Papers should be typed, double-spaced and follow the appropriate formatting guidelines (e.g. 1 inch margins).
- Follow either [Chicago Style](#) or the [Horizon Format Guide](#) consistently.
- Employ gender-inclusive language wherever possible and appropriate.
- Use a standard font (e.g., Arial, Calibri, Georgia, Tahoma, Times New Roman, Verdana).

- Use *italics* rather than underlining (including in the footnotes and bibliography).
- Use footnotes only, not endnotes.
- The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded and will receive a grade reduction.

Failure to follow these guidelines warrants a grade reduction.

Submitting Your Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via [Populi](#). This [video](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi (the link to the video is also available on the info tab of the Populi course page). I prefer submissions in MSWord format (.doc or .docx). When you submit electronic files, please name the file as follows: Steve Harris – Ministry Ethics Commentary.

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Assignment Descriptions

1. *Ethical Theory Paper*

This short paper involves an examination and critique of a major ethical theory and concepts as developed by one of its major proponents (e.g., Aristotle for virtue ethics; Kant for deontological ethics; J.S. Mill for utilitarianism; A.J. Ayer for emotivism). Using at least four (4) sources, the paper should present the ethical theory and its key concepts fairly before, in a further section, identifying at least three (3) possible critiques of the theory.

- **Related learning outcome(s):** #1, 2.
- **Assignment Length:** 4 pages / 1000 words (+/- 10%). **Due date:** Fri 4 Oct.

2. *Ministry Ethics Commentary*

Denominations often develop a statement of ethics for ministry leadership. We will give some time in class to reading and discussing one of these statements in class with a group. You will then write and submit a commentary of roughly six (6) pages on the statement. A commentary does not have the structure of a paper; rather, comments are either interspersed between lines from the original text or placed under headings from the original text. For example:

1. The minister should be ever conscious of their high and sacred calling. (2 Tim 4:1-5)

The minister of Jesus Christ should... (2-3 sentences)

2. The minister should give diligent attention to the personal practice of biblical disciplines (1 Tim 6:11-12), and to the personal development of the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23)

Biblical disciplines, such as ..., shape the person of the minister toward... (2-3 sentences)
— PAOC Ministerial Code of Ethics

1. Christlikeness principle

At the centre of Christian ministry is Christ himself... (5-6 sentences)

2. Relationship principle

Ministers are related to God and to others... (5-6 sentences)

— C&MA Call to Excellence

In your commentary, you should make clear how your approach to ministry leadership is an evangelical Christian one. Here our discussions in class about Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Bible and the Christian and Christian ethics should help you. You must also plan safeguards for leadership in relation to at least three (3) areas of potential moral failure in ministry practice.

- **Related learning outcome(s):** #4, 5.
- **Assignment Length:** 6 pages / 1500 words (+/- 10%). **Due date:** Fri 25 Oct.

3. *Leadership Ethics Paper*

Students will write a longer essay related to one or more ethical issues in leadership. Reflecting on one of their own experiences in leadership, whether of moral failure or moral success (or failure despite moral success), they will provide an extensive evaluation of the moral qualities inherent in the situation, and provide research-based suggestions for future leadership experiences. Students should draw on and cite at least six (6) sources. The structure of the paper should be as follows:

- a) Introduction.
- b) Description of the relevant leadership experience(s) (1.5-2 pages).
- c) Ethical analysis of the leadership situation (4 pages).
 - This should attend to as many moral concepts as are thought relevant to the situation. This may include not only analysis of particular decisions (e.g., responsibility, obligation, emotion, motive) but also attending to the larger moral context (e.g., moral formation of leadership, social norms, organizational rules).
- d) Provide research-based suggestions for future leadership situations (1.5-2 pages).
 - If a situation of moral failure, provide suggestions for rectification in the future.
 - If a situation of moral success, provide suggestions for application in future similar or dissimilar situations.
 - If a situation of failure despite moral success of leadership, provide suggestions for change in the wider moral context.
- e) Conclusion.

- **Related learning outcome(s):** #3.
- **Assignment Length:** 8 pages / 2000 words (+/- 10%). **Due date:** Fri 22 Nov.

4. *Bonhoeffer Paper*

Through the course, students will become acquainted with the life and writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), among the most important Christian ethicists of the twentieth century. They will watch and discuss a documentary on his life and thought, and discuss important ideas from his works during lectures. Finally, they will write a paper on Bonhoeffer's theological ethics. In preparation for this paper, students must read the following selections, all found in *The Bonhoeffer Reader*:

- 4. "Jesus Christ and the Essence of Christianity" on Christ and ethics (57-73)
- 18. "Thy Kingdom Come! The Prayer of the Church-Community for God's Kingdom on Earth" (340-51) on prayer and this-worldliness
- 19. "Christ and Peace" (352-56) on peace between individuals and nations
- 29. *Discipleship* (455-513) on following Jesus' call and command

- 30. *Life Together* (514-61) on moral formation in Christian community
- 31. *Prayerbook of the Bible* (562-67) on praying the Psalms with Christ
- 33. “Christ, Reality, and Good. Christ, Church and World” (594-612) on the distinctiveness of Christian ethics
- 34. “Ultimate and Penultimate Things” (613-630) on the value of earthly life
- 36. “History and Good [2]” (636-66) on concrete, responsible action
- 38. “The Concrete Commandment and the Divine Mandates” (685-98) on the command of Jesus in relation to the Church
- 39. “Theological Position Paper on State and Church” (699-716) on government
- 44. *Letters and Papers from Prison* (763-66, 770 [“Trust”])

Also in preparation for this paper, students must undertake the practice of meditating on scripture in line with the model provided by Bonhoeffer for his seminary students. One of Bonhoeffer’s key ethical claims is that we must always hear the Word of God anew in order to obey it. First, read Bonhoeffer’s “Guide to Scripture Meditation” on Populi. Then meditate according to Bonhoeffer’s instructions on the following passages in the weeks after the module. It is important, as Bonhoeffer emphasizes, that all of us together meditate on the same passages for half an hour before work (6:30-7am Mon-Thurs, if possible):

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| • 16-19 Sept | Psalm 1 |
| • 23-26 Sept | Psalm 119:1-16 |
| • 30 Sept-3 Oct | Isaiah 58 |
| • 7-10 Oct | Matthew 5:1-12 |
| • 14-17 Oct | Romans 8:1-15 |

Students will sign a Reading & Practice Report certifying that they have completed *all* the required readings and have been faithful in *all* the required practices.

The structure of the paper should be as follows:

- Introduction.
- Description of Bonhoeffer’s ethics (5-6 pages).
 - Give an extensive and accurate account of Bonhoeffer’s evangelical Christian approach to ethics.
 - Draw on *all* twelve (12) of the required readings listed above.
- Reflection on Bonhoeffer’s communal practice of scriptural meditation (2 pages).
 - Reflect on your experience of leadership formation according to Bonhoeffer’s requirements for his seminary students.
 - Reflect on how your practice of scriptural meditation relates to Bonhoeffer’s ethics as you described it in the first part of the paper.
- Assess at least three (3) ways in which studying Bonhoeffer has changed the way you think about ethics. (1.5-2 pages)
 - Make use of the short in-class essay from the first day of the module to compare (include a copy of the in-class essay with submission).
 - Are there any ways in which you would critique or modify Bonhoeffer’s ethics?
- Conclusion.

- **Related learning outcomes:** #4.
- **Assignment Length:** 10 pages / 2500 words (+/- 10%). **Due date:** Fri 13 Dec.

Course Timeline

Module Week

- Mon 9 Sept Introduction
Introductory lecture on ethics
Bonhoeffer (2003) documentary by Martin Doblmeier + discussion
- Tues 10 Sept Lecture on Christian ethics
Jesus Christ and Christian ethics
The Holy Spirit and Christian ethics
The Church and Christian ethics
- Wed 11 Sept The Bible and Christian ethics
The Christian and Christian ethics
In-class reflection on the Bible and ethics
Abortion, disability and human personhood
- Thurs 12 Sept Society, family and friendship
* Chapel
Government and war
Animals and technology
- Fri 13 Sept The end of life: euthanasia and martyrdom
Review of course
Ministry Ethics Commentary group work

Assignment Schedule

- Fri 4 Oct Ethical Theory Paper
Fri 25 Oct Ministry Ethics Commentary
Fri 22 Nov Leadership Ethics Paper
Fri 13 Dec Bonhoeffer Paper

Grading

A+	97-100%	C+	77-79%
A	93-96%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-79%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
		F	<60%