

School of Theology and Ministry  
Seattle University  
901 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, PO Box 222000  
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Spring Quarter 2014

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**STMM 504-01 Christian Ethics (C)**

Classroom: HUNT 100

Prerequisites:

**INSTRUCTOR**

**Brian J. Matz, Ph.D.**

Office: (Building and Room)

Office Hours: (incl. by appointment)

Office Phone:

SU Email:

**Texts and Materials**

- David Matzko McCarthy, ed., *The Heart of Catholic Social Teaching: Its Origins and Contemporary Significance* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009). ISBN: 9781587432484.
- Bernard Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008). ISBN: 9781570757563.
- Richard M. Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989). ISBN: 9780809130665.
- William C. Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008). ISBN: 9781587432231.

**Course Description**

- Official course number and description as listed in the *Seattle University Catalog* available here: <http://catalog.seattleu.edu/content.php?catoid=18&navoid=1314>.
- Course Goals and Objectives
  - READ: Students will learn how to read conceptual, theoretical texts pertaining to social and fundamental ethics and to comprehend the ideas and arguments therein.
  - WRITE: Students will learn to express theoretical concepts and practical arguments in written form.
  - THINK: Students will learn critical thinking skills necessary to making and responding to socio-ethical and moral arguments.
  - SPEAK: Students will learn rhetorical skills through class discussion and debate.
- Learning Outcomes: MAPS
  - LO1: Ability to draw critically and constructively on Christian moral traditions to lead toward a more just and sustainable world.
  - LO2: Ability to lead from spiritual depth toward practice for justice and wholeness in the world.

**Course Requirements**

- 10% Attendance (for more on attendance, see below "Policies")
- 15% Participation (associated with LO1 above; regular and repeated contribution of your own ideas and questions that further the educational process in both the class and small-group discussions).

- 40% Two writing assignments (associated with LO1 and LO2 above; one each completed in advance of our weekend classes; see course schedule below for more information)
- 35% Final project (associated with LO2 above). For further details, see the end of the course schedule below.
  
- Assessment and grading criteria for written assignments and exams
  - **A range (90-100)** = *Superior, exceptional, outstanding* with evidence of critical, informed and creative theological inquiry that deepens a student's understanding of ethical concepts. The student demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical errors, are presupposed in this grade.
  - **B range (80-89.9)** = *Good*, ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that deepens the student's understanding of ethical concepts. This also means the student has produced an assignment that is generally free from material, structural and grammatical errors.
  - **C range (70-79.9)** = *Acceptable*, satisfactory ability to describe overall picture and essential concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors; nor is nuanced reasoning demonstrated.
  - **D range (60-69.9)** = *Poor*, below normal expectation. Reasoning is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.
  - **F (0-59.9)** = *Unsatisfactory*. The student either 1) failed to turn in the assignment; or 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; or 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort, or 4) committed plagiarism or 5) was involved in cheating.

### Policies

- Due to the compressed nature of our course schedule, it is imperative that students attend all class sessions on all four class days for successful completion of the course. That said, students who need to miss a class session for something beyond their control should do their best to notify the instructor at their earliest possible convenience. A student who will miss more than four class sessions *for any reason* should opt either for the prudential action of withdrawing from the course or to accept that the attendance grade (10% of the overall course grade) will be substantially reduced.
- The two written assignments will be collected by the professor at the start of the first class session on each of the two Saturdays of the course. Written assignments will not be accepted late.
- Academic Honesty (including plagiarism): The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the academic policy regarding Academic Integrity as indicated on the Seattle University Registrar website, as noted in the box below.
- Disability: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, please see related note in the box below.

## University Resources and Policies

### Academic Resources

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>)
  - (This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)
- Academic Integrity Tutorial (found on Angel and SU Online)

### Academic Policies on Registrar website (<https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/academics/performance/>)

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy (only for those professional programs to which it applies)

### Notice for students concerning Disabilities

*If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.*

## Schedule of Course Activities

DATE/TIME	Lecture Topic
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### ***Saturday-Sunday, April 5-6, 2014***

Assignment to be completed before arriving for this weekend's classes:

Reading: Bernard Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought*

David McCarthy, *The Hearth of Catholic Social Teaching*

Writing: Select one of the international organizations listed in Brady's book on p. 51 and select one Catholic-affiliated social justice organization in your local community. Using online and/or other resources, describe how both of these organizations reflect Catholic social teaching in action. You may compare and/or contrast the organizations in your paper.

Paper should be no more than five pages (double-spaced; 12-point font or smaller)

Please plan to turn in a printed copy of the paper at the start of the first class session on Saturday, April 5. I want to grade these papers the evening of April 5 and return them to you on Sunday, April 6.

*Saturday, April 5*

8:30-9:45	Overview of Catholic social ethics
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-11:15	Early history of Catholic social ethics
11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Human dignity
12:30-1:30	Lunch Break
1:30-2:45	Justice, Part I
2:45-3:00	Break
3:00-4:30	Justice, Part II

*Sunday, April 6*

8:30-9:45	Common good
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-11:15	Solidarity
11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Subsidiarity
12:30-1:30	Lunch Break
1:30-2:45	Case studies
2:45-3:00	Break
3:00-4:00	Case studies, personal action

***Saturday-Sunday, May 17-18, 2014***

Assignment for this weekend's classes:

Reading: Richard Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality*

William Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*

Writing: After reading Gula's and Mattison's books, consider a moral dilemma you are now or once faced. What would the natural law tradition (cf. Gula's book) have to say about how you should resolve this moral dilemma? What would a virtue ethics approach (cf. Mattison's book) have to say about how you should resolve this same dilemma? Compare and contrast what you understand, at this point in your studies, to be the merits and potential difficulties with making moral decisions on the basis of these two approaches.

Paper should be no more than five pages (double-spaced; 12-point font or smaller)

Please plan to turn in a printed copy of the paper at the start of the first class session on Saturday, April 5. I want to grade these papers the evening of April 5 and return them to you on Sunday, April 6.

*Saturday, May 17*

8:30-9:45	Overview of Catholic fundamental ethics
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-11:15	Early history of Catholic fundamental ethics
11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Intention
12:30-1:30	Lunch Break
1:30-2:45	Conscience
2:45-3:00	Break
3:00-4:30	Sin

*Sunday, May 18*

8:30-9:45	Natural law tradition, Part I
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-11:15	Natural law tradition, Part II
11:15-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Virtue ethics, Part I
12:30-1:30	Lunch Break

1:30-2:45	Virtue ethics, Part I
2:45-3:00	Break
3:00-4:00	Case studies

***Monday, June 2, 2014***

Final Project Due by 5pm today – please send it to me via email (bmatz@carroll.edu) as one PDF file.

Prepare two things:

(1) a “bulletin insert” that communicates the basic tenets of either social ethics or fundamental ethics. This should be prepared with an interest in its aesthetic appeal and its capacity to communicate big ideas in a compact manner. You may want to use a program like PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher or the equivalent Mac-based programs.

(2) Next, assuming you have an opportunity to lead a one-hour parish-based class on one of these topics, prepare a handout you would distribute to the class. This would have more information than the bulletin insert, but it should also, based on the order in which you present the material, indicate how you would teach the material to others. If, in fact, you do teach others the material, I would be delighted to receive some further comments from you about that experience.