

REL 4177/5549: Christian Social Ethics
Spring 2013

Tues. 4, 6 Matherly/Thurs. 4-5, 12 Matherly

Instructor: Anna Peterson

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-1:30, Thursdays 12:30-1:30, and by appointment.

DESCRIPTION

This class is recommended for students seeking a background in the foundational thinkers and texts of Western social thought. It will examine the ways influential Western thinkers have conceived of the relations among religion, ethics, and the social-political order. Readings will be from primary texts, both classic and more recent. We will begin with Plato and Aristotle, then move to early Christian thinkers, including Paul and Augustine. Readings continue through medieval, Reformation, and Enlightenment classics. The course finishes with modern works, focused on neo-orthodox Protestantism, post-Conciliar Roman Catholicism, and contemporary feminist ethics.

The course will focus on several main questions in social ethics. First, what does a good society look like? Second, what is the relationship between being a good person and participating in a good society? We will also look at the relationship between religious faith and public commitments, in particular in the context of religion's historical roles in Western society.

CLASS OBJECTIVES

1. Students will learn about major Western philosophical and theological thinkers since the classical period.
2. Students will learn about major issues in social ethics and the diverse approaches to them that have developed over time.
3. Students will improve their writing skills through a diverse set of assignments, both in and out of class.
4. Students will improve their oral presentation skills through class discussion and presentations.
5. Students will develop a better understanding of social ethics as a subfield, especially within Religious Studies.

POLICIES, RULES, EXPECTATIONS, AND RESOURCES

1. *Attendance and reading:* I expect you to attend all meetings of the class, barring extraordinary circumstances, and to come prepared to discuss the reading at each and every class meeting. Participation will be a significant percentage of your final grade in this class.
2. *Handing in Assignments:* Place all papers in my mailbox in the Religion Department, 107 Anderson Hall. DO NOT slip them under the door or leave them on the door of my office, the main department office, or the teaching assistant's office. Please also keep a dated electronic copy of all your papers until the semester is over.

3. *Late or Make-Up Assignments:* You may receive an extension on an assignment only in extraordinary circumstances *and* with prior approval from the instructor. If an extension is not granted, the assignment will be marked down ½ grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.
4. *Completion of All Assignments:* You must complete all written and oral assignments and fulfill the requirement for class participation in order to pass the course. I will not average a grade that is missing for any assignment or requirement. This includes the participation portion of your grade. A missing participation grade will result from poor attendance (missing more than a few classes).
5. *Common Courtesy:* Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Students who receive or make calls or messages during class will be asked to leave. You may not have a computer turned on in class unless you receive specific permission from the instructor. The instructor also reserves the right to ask any student engaging in disruptive behavior (e.g., whispering, reading a newspaper) to leave the class. Repeat violations of these rules will result in dismissal from the class.
6. *Honor Code:* On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. For more information about the definition of these terms and other aspects of the Honesty Guidelines, see <http://www.chem.ufl.edu/~itl/honor.html>. Any student demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in any assignment for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and the sanctions listed in paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code.
7. *Accommodation for Disabilities:* Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.
8. *Counseling Resources* available on campus for students:
 - a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575
 - b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171
 - c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
 - d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601
9. *Software Use:* All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

REQUIRED READINGS

Books

George Forell and James Childs, eds., *Christian Social Teachings* (Fortress Press, 2012 ed.)
Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*
Sharon Welch, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*
Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*

Additional Readings

Paul, “Letter to the Romans,” the Bible (New Revised Standard Version or Revised Standard Version), <http://www.devotions.net/bible/45romans.htm>
or <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/r/rsv/rsv-idx?type=DIV1&byte=5173534>

Saint Augustine, *City of God* (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.toc.html>)

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.toc.html>)

Aelred, *Spiritual Friendship* (on sakai)

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*
(http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html)

Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931)
(http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html)

Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965)
(http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)

Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* (1981)
(http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens_en.html)

U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (1985)

Walter Rauschenbusch, “Christianity and the Social Crisis”
(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/rausch-socialgospel.html>)

Gustavo Gutiérrez, “Notes for a Theology of Liberation.” *Theological Studies* 31, no. 2 (1970): 243-261.

Additional Readings for Graduate Students Only

Paul Tillich, *Love, Power and Justice*
Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*

WRITING REQUIREMENTS

1. Active participation in class discussions, based on careful reading of all assigned texts prior to each class (10% of grade).
2. Comments/questions (about one half page each) prepared for each class (20% of total grade)
3. First essay due Jan 31 by 4:00 pm (20%)
4. Second essay due March 10 by 4:00 pm (20%)
5. Rough draft of final paper due April 8 in class noon (grade combined with final version)
6. Final paper, due April 22 (30%)

SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/assignment</u>
Tues. 1/7	Introduction to the class
Thurs. 1/9	Forell, ch. 1-2: Biblical influences; also read Paul, "Letter to the Romans"
Tues. 1/14	Forell, Ch. 3-6: Early church
Thurs. 1/16	Forell, Ch. 7: Augustine
Tues. 1/21	Augustine, <i>City of God</i> (selections)
Thurs. 1/23	Forell, Ch. 8-9: Medieval Christianity
Tues. 1/28	Forell, Ch. 10: Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i>
Thurs. 1/30	Aelred, <i>Spiritual Friendship</i> (selections)
Friday, 1/31	** First essay due by 4:00 pm **
Tues. 2/4	The Reformation and Catholic/Counter Reformation
Thurs. 2/6	Forell, Ch. 12: Luther
Tues. 2/11	Forell, Ch. 13: Calvin
Thurs. 2/13	Forell, Ch. 14: Anabaptists
Tues. 2/18	Forell, Ch. 19-21: 18 th c. voices
Thurs. 2/20	Forell, Ch. 22-26: 19 th c. voices

Tues. 2/25	<i>Rerum Novarum</i> and <i>Quadragesimo Anno</i> : Roman Catholic social teaching
Thurs. 2/27	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> ; <i>Laborem Exercens</i> ; and <i>Economic Justice for All</i>
Spring break: March 3-7	
Mon., 3/10	Second essay due by 4:00 pm
Tues. 3/11	Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis"
Thurs. 3/13	Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i>
Tues. 3/18	Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i>
Thurs. 3/20	Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i>
Tues. 3/25	Forell, Ch. 32-34: Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy
Thurs. 3/27	Forell, Ch. 35-36: Feminist ethics
Tues. 4/1	Welch, <i>A Feminist Ethic of Risk</i>
Thurs. 4/3	Welch, <i>A Feminist Ethic of Risk</i>
Tues. 4/8	Welch, <i>A Feminist Ethic of Risk</i> ** Draft of paper due in class **
Thurs. 4/10	Forell, Ch. 37: Liberation theology and Justice Gutierrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation"
Tues. 4/15	Hauerwas, <i>A Community of Character</i>
Thurs. 4/17	Hauerwas, <i>A Community of Character</i>
Tues. 4/22	Hauerwas, <i>A Community of Character</i> ** Final paper due in class **