



# COURSE OUTLINES

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## **INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

(Survey course)

A survey course that discusses five major conflicts in both non-religious and Christian ethics. These include debates about: utilitarianism and deontology; whether leaders should be morally pure or compromising; the relative importance of intentions and actions; the possibility of collective responsibility; and whether individuals have particular duties to certain others. It encourages students to think about the religious resources leveraged in these debates. Each debate is also paired with an ethical difficulty, such as the allocation of lifesaving resources during the COVID pandemic, the prevalence of implicit bias, and reparations for colonialism to concretize the discussion. The course also prepares students for ethical leadership by having them practice developing public-facing communication on such issues.

## **RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

(Survey course)

This course surveys cases of religiously motivated social change, including abolitionism, Indian anti-colonialism, the American civil rights movement, liberation theologians' activism against poverty in Latin America, and religious resistance under socialist regimes. It discusses the models developed by social theorists like Marx and Weber to understand and interpret religious movements. In the course, students are prompted to pay attention to the particular religious resources that have been employed for the benefit of social movements, such as theological reasoning, textual interpretation, liturgies and rituals, and sacred spaces.

## **FEMINIST AND WOMANIST ETHICS**

(Undergraduate seminar,  
could be adapted  
as a survey course)

The first half of this course foregrounds the kinds of tools that feminist and womanist religious ethicists have used to convey and motivate concerns for justice. These ethicists often carefully attend to experience, embodiment, and the everyday to support their work. They also critically assess prevailing scriptural interpretations and religious concepts. In the second half of the course, students apply these religious tools to particular issues in women's rights: reproductive justice, sexual harassment, women's exclusion from church leadership, racial inequality, and the oppression of queer women. For a final project, students are invited to compose a work of art—another tool often found in feminist ethicists' toolboxes—that imagines the world as it might be, in addition to a short addendum that interprets their artwork.

## **POLITICS AND THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE**

(Undergraduate seminar)

This course looks at classic concepts in political theory—freedom, legitimacy, authority, equality, and citizenship—and explores texts in the Christian Bible that speak to those concepts. It also surveys Western political theorists' invocation of such texts. This integration allows students to introduce political thinkers like Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, DuBois, Lorde, and Spivak in conversation with the authors of the religious texts that many Americans believe to be authoritative. Students are not required to have political theory backgrounds to take the course, nor to have familiarity with the Christian tradition.

## **UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMIC INJUSTICE**

(Undergraduate seminar)

Systemic injustice is a term often used, but not often well understood. In this course, we think about what is systemic about systemic injustice, how that complicates what we might think about moral responsibility, and what religious resources can be leveraged to amend systemic wrongs. A major assignment for students in the course is to develop a pedagogical project to help non-experts understand the value of thinking systemically. Students will also be invited to integrate social science and history to develop strategies for addressing particular cases of systemic injustice, such as food insecurity, wealth inequality, environmental degradation, and mass incarceration.

## **REPARATIVE ETHICS**

(Graduate seminar)

This course foregrounds philosophical questions surrounding reparations. What does reparations principally seek to address? In cases of historical injustice, how ought reparations be made? How ought the burden of reparative costs be distributed? Who ought to be eligible to receive reparative remuneration? It surveys the burgeoning literature on reparations, including works by Roy Brooks, William Darity and Kristen Mullen, Tommie Shelby, and Olufemi O. Taiwo. It also allows students to consider their own institution's obligation to engage in reparative projects, in conversation with similar reckonings happening in academic institutions nationwide.