

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

ETHC 323

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC ETHICS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to ethical theory to compliment public policy studies. It approaches the subject by way of historical exploration of moral philosophy, integrating areas of Western philosophy of religion, social and political philosophy as necessary. It surveys Western ethical thought by reading selected figures representative of Western ethical traditions. The selected traditions will highlight theoretical developments critical to the ethical dimension of public policy, including virtue theory, utilitarianism, deontological theory, natural law, as well as contemporary theories. Students will interact with the primary writings from representative ethical thinkers. They will explore the differing conceptions of morality with respect to their scope, purpose, and content. In addition, the course will trace the interactions of Western ethical thought with Christian theistic ethics.

RATIONALE

Operating from a sound, biblical foundation for ethics includes understanding the historical context of many of the competing ethical theories that have arisen and been developed by various thinkers, particularly as part of Western civilization.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. RECOMMENDED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Clark, Kelly James, and Anne Poortenga. *The Story of Ethics: Fulfilling Our Human Nature*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, 2003. ISBN: 9780130978400.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Office

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Develop a critical appreciation for the conceptual connections in moral philosophy between metaphysics, natural theology (i.e. philosophy of religion), and morality.
- B. Explain the representative schools of ethical thought germane to public policy, including virtue theory, consequentialism, and deontological theory, as they develop in historical context.
- C. Analyze how the traditional moral conscience and its substantive ideas developed in the West.
- D. Cultivate a critical ability to evaluate the differences between secular and religious morality.
- E. Create a conceptual “toolbox” of ideas, sources, methods, and principles to use in analyzing ethical issues and to defend the involvement of moral beliefs in culturally sensitive public policy arguments.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations

B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

C. Discussion Board Forums (5)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to provide a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be 400–500 words, include at least 5 references, and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 classmates’ threads. Each reply must be 200–250 words and must include at least 1 reference to the course readings and at least 1 Scripture reference.

D. Ethical Analysis Papers (3)

The student will write 3 research-based essays in current Turabian format that focus on the topics outlined within the course. Essays 1 and 2 will each be 4 pages and include at least 1 primary and scholarly source, and 3 biblical references. Essay 3 will be 7–10 pages and will trace and analyze the question “Why be moral?” as discussed by the student’s choice of 4 philosophers found in the textbook *Why Be Good?* Essay 3 will include 8 scholarly and primary source references, and at least 4 biblical references.

VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (5 at 100 pts ea)	500
Ethical Analysis Papers (2 at 150 pts ea, 1 at 200 pts)	500
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 900–1010 B = 800–899 C = 700–799 D = 600–699 F = 0–599

C. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

ETHC 323

Textbooks: Banner, *Christian Ethics: A Brief History* (2009).
 MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics* (1998).
 Mitchell & Lucas, *Engagement with Plato's Republic* (2003).
 Richter, *Why Be Good? A Historical Introduction to Ethics* (2008).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	MacIntyre: chs. 2–6 Mitchell & Lucas: chs. 1–3 Richter: Introduction, ch. 1 3 presentations	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1	10 0 100
2	MacIntyre: chs. 7–8 Mitchell & Lucas: chs. 8–9, 11 Richter: ch. 2 2 presentations 1 website	DB Forum 2	100
3	Banner: Introduction, chs. 1–3 MacIntyre: ch. 9 Richter: chs. 3–4 3 presentations 3 websites	Ethical Analysis Paper 1	150
4	Banner: ch. 4 MacIntyre: ch. 10 2 presentations 3 websites	DB Forum 3	100
5	MacIntyre: chs. 11–13 Richter: ch. 5 4 presentations 2 websites	DB Forum 4	100
6	Banner: ch. 5 MacIntyre: ch. 14 Richter: chs. 6–7 5 presentations 4 websites	Ethical Analysis Paper 2	150
7	Banner: ch. 6 MacIntyre: chs. 15–17 Richter: chs. 8–9 1 presentation 4 websites	Ethical Analysis Paper 3	200
8	Banner: chs. 7–8 MacIntyre: ch. 18	DB Forum 5	100

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
	Richter: ch. 10 2 presentations 6 websites		
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week (except Module/Week 1) begins on Tuesday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Monday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.