

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

RELT 373-A -3 credit hours

Southern Adventist University
School of Religion
Online

Summer Semester, 2025

Jun 2nd - July 27th 2025

Instructor: Dr. Reginald Horton, Ph.D., D.Min, MFT,
MDiv

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Course Description

A foundation course in moral decision making in the fields of bio-ethics, social ethics, and personal ethics. The objective is to discover timeless norms by which to make basic ethical decisions across the professional spectrum. These norms are then applied to issues relevant to the student. Limited to students required to take Ethics for their program or students with Junior/Senior class standing.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe major ethical systems and be able to recognize and evaluate these systems in daily situations.
2. Articulate a position on the major ethical issues of the day that is:
 - a. Consistent with Christian Scripture
 - b. Persuasive to a secular audience without explicit reliance on Scripture
3. Experience greater clarity and confidence in moral thinking and decision making.
4. Apply ethical thinking skills to the profession of nursing.

Course Texts

- Any translation of the Holy Bible
- Rae, Scott B. *Moral Choices Introducing Christian Ethics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016. ISBN 978-0-310-52118-1

Course Requirements

Participation and respectful conduct are important in the learning process. The student is expected to exhibit mature behavior by being punctual and by refraining from disturbing and distracting others in the class. A lack of appropriate behavior will affect the final grade.

Attendance policy requires consistent attendance, especially when one session equals three regular class periods. One unexcused absence will affect a borderline grade. Two unexcused absences will affect a letter grade. After three unexcused absences, the instructor will ask the student to withdraw from the class. Attendance will be excused only for illness, some work-related conflicts (at instructor's discretion), and emergencies and tragedy in the family.

An “Incomplete” (“I” grade) will not be given due to excessive work/study. It will only be given for prolonged illness late in the semester or family tragedy during examination week.

Academic honesty is expected. If the instructor suspects a student of academic dishonesty he will confront the student. In established cases of academic dishonesty the first offense will result in a failing grade for the assignment. The second offense will result in failing the class. See the *Southern Adventist University 2016-2017 Catalog* (<http://www.southern.edu/administration/records/catalogs.html>) for details of the university’s academic honesty policies.

The use of cellular telephones in class is not permitted for either outgoing or incoming calls, for text messaging or for image transmission. Cell phones should be switched off before class and not turned on until the class is ended. The use of computers and tablets for note-taking purposes is normally permitted. However, use of computers during class time for other purposes, such as communication, recreation or work for other classes is not permitted.

Notice of Accommodation for Special Needs

In keeping with the University’s policy, if you are a student who believes you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge, (*i.e. physical, learning, psychological, ADHD or other type*), you are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at 423-236-2544 or stop by Lynn Wood Hall, Room 1082. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and cannot be implemented until faculty or staff members have received the official Letter of Accommodation from DSS. Specific details of disabilities remain confidential between students and DSS unless a student chooses to disclose or there is legitimate academic need for disclosure, which is on a case-by-case basis. For further details, visit the Disability Support Services website at www.southern.edu/disabilitysupport.

Accommodations for disabilities are available only as recommended by Disability Support Services. Students whose accommodations are approved will be provided confidential letters which students should review and discuss with their professors in relation to particular course requirements.

Accessing Online Information for this Class

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties with Eclass please contact the Eclass Support Supervisor at 423.236.2086 or via email eclasshelp@southern.edu.

Greg Merchant, Support Supervisor

Email: eclasshelp@southern.edu

Office: 423.236.2086

Course Website: <http://eclass.e.southern.edu> Here you will find an online version of the syllabus, class handouts, assignments, gradebook, and links to a variety of resources (particular in terms of class activities and projects), and access to course email. (Eclass support: 423-236- 2086.) **Logging in to Eclass:** There are two ways that you can log in to your online course: First, the E- class (Moodle) link will appear on your Southern Access account <http://access.southern.edu>. Secondly, you can go directly to E-class and enter your user name and password <http://eclass.e.southern.edu>. If one method does not work, try the second method to access your course(s).

System requirements can be found at

<https://www.southern.edu/online/Pages/systemrequirements.aspx>

Grading

The following percentages will be used for final grades:

92-100%	A	75-79%	C+
90-91%	A-	68-74%	C
87-89%	B+	65-67%	C-
82-86%	B	55-64%	D
80-81%	B-	<54%	F

This class will have no quizzes or tests.

8 class lectures	x	1 hours	=	8 hours
16 assignments	x	8 hours*	=	128 hours

TOTAL 136 hours

Presentation	60 pts
Chapter Readings 10pts x 12 Chapters	80 pts
Posts	80 pts
Lecture Review	80 pts
Research Paper	130 pts

TOTAL 430 pts

*(*note: 6 hours of study/assignments per week is the university standard for a 3 credit class)*

Hours for Class & Assignments

Hours earned for class attendance will be recorded by various methods of in-class assignments, projects, and attendance taking.

Hours earned for weekly assignments will be recorded by turning in written reports on the reading, writing, and reflection projects. The only grade given to these projects will be based on the number of hours invested. Each project is designed to take about 4 hours. No extra credit is given for spending more than 4 hours, but students also need not fear turning in an “unfinished project” if they have spent 4 hours working on it. Students who complete a project in less than 4 hours will have the responsibility to continue their reading, research, writing, and reflection on that topic in order to reach the required 4 hours.

Honor System for Reporting Hours

Each student is on her/his honor to report honestly and accurately the actual number of focused, undistracted (e.g. watching a movie or TV while apparently doing the project, etc.) hours spent on the assignment.

At the end of each assignment, this sentence must be written, completed with information of # of hours, and digitally signed:

“I have honestly read, reflected, and written on this project with focus and minimal distraction for _____ hours.” _____ (signed)

Due Dates & Times

All assignments must be submitted to e-class before 4:00 p.m. on the date due.

Possibility for Making Up Missed Hours (assignments)

If a student fails to reach the 4 hour “A-goal” in a given week, there is opportunity for making up the missed hours. The hours may be made up at a ratio of 2:1 (2 hours of reading, writing, and reflection for every 1 missed hour). The student will have the remainder of the semester to earn the missed hours. The project to earn missed hours must be negotiated with the instructor and reported in written form according to the agreement between the instructor and student.

Notice of Accountability...

If a student turns in late work, appears to be turning in careless work, or work that does not appear to represent the amount of time spent that is reported, the instructor may explore with that student alternative methods of grading for her or him.

Help Outside of Class; An Invitation from the Instructor

Please feel free to drop by my office during office hours. You don’t need an appointment, but you are free to make one if you want to guarantee I won’t be with another student when you come by.

I’m happy to explain or clarify or give further help. I also enjoy continuing and deepening discussions begun in class. More important, if you have questions about your personal relationship with God, want to understand how to accept Jesus as your Savior, or discuss some other matter- please come by. My highest goal for this class cannot be reached without each student coming face-to-face with Jesus Christ and enjoying His work in their life. If a visit can help you personally with the work of Jesus in your life-- please come by, e-mail, or call!

Weekly Topics and Assignments

The chart below is a tentative suggestion of the direction of the class. Every effort will be made to tailor the class to the needs, interests, and questions of the class members. Therefore, topics and assignments will be flexible and adapted as the class progresses. What will remain constant is that each assignment will be 4 - 5 hours of reading, writing, and reflection. Grades will not be based on correct answers on quizzes or tests but on honest time spent in thoughtful inquiry and reflection.

1. Reading from *Moral Choices* by Rae

- Read & mark the assigned chapter for the week.
- Write answers to the review questions at the end of each chapter (a minimum of 3 questions needs to be answered for each chapter)
- Include your signed “honesty statement” at the end of your paper
- Spend a little less than 50% of your time (2-4 hours) on Rae

2. Lecture Review

- Students are required to view the weekly uploaded fifteen-minute class lectures.
- After completing their weekly class viewing of the lecture, students are required to submit a onepage paragraph on e-class.

3. Weekly Discussion Post

- Students will be required as an assignment to post a response to the discussion on e-class.
- These responses must be at least three to five sentences in length but can exceed more than five sentences.
- You are required to respond to at least eight posts. Each post is worth eight points, totaling 80 pts.

4. Research paper: Each student will select current ethical topic based on their area of interest. Students must submit a topic proposal to the instructor for approval. The research paper must

follow APA guidelines and be between 8-10 written pages. The paper must have a minimum of 6 references, 3 of which must be peer reviewed journals. Websites must be pre-approved by the instructor for use as references. All sections will be submitted electronically via E-class as well as in a hard copy brought to class for peer review. You must give proper credit when citing the work of others. See section on Academic Honesty within this syllabus.

5. **Presentations:** Once you have finished your research you will post your research content on eclass in a PowerPoint format. This is an online class therefore you will need to video yourself as if you are presenting before your classmates. For further information concerning your presentations please see the section below titled Class Presentations.

Part 1 Title page and Introduction (1-2 pages)

1. Description of your topic
 - a. Why this is an important topic to consider? (Short paragraphs)
 - b. How common is this topic? (Short paragraphs)
 - c. What's the effect this ethical issue has on the quality of life? (Short paragraphs)
2. What are some of the challenges this ethical topic poses:
 - a. Ex. This therapy/theory possesses many challenges

Part 2 Literature Review (2-3 pages)

1. What are the different aspects of this topic?
2. For each key topic, what are the main findings?
3. Identified gaps and weaknesses in literature
4. Correct APA, in-text citations (6 required)

Part 3 Discussion/Summary (2-3 pages)

1. Restated what literature has found
2. Application to practice/recommendations
3. Personal reaction
4. Conclusion

Final Draft

1. Integrate all sections of the paper, make all suggested corrections, and submit the complete paper with the bibliography.

Due Dates for All Assignments: Christian Ethics

All research paper assignments must be brought into class in a hard copy for peer review as well as being submitted to e-class to get the full 20 points. You must participate in both peer review opportunities to get the points. No partial credit is available.

June 9th Research Topic & Proposal Due

June 16th Research Paper Part 1 Due

Peer Review

10pts

June 23th

Research Paper Part 2 Due Literature Review
Bring to class for second Peer Review

30pts

June 30th

Final Research Paper Draft Due
Wednesday submission by noon

30pts

July 7rd

Make final edits to paper

30pts

July 30th

Research Paper Due

30pts

TOTAL POINTS: 130 pts

Class Presentations Grading

Content: What we mean by content is how well informed you are about the topic you selected. You should know the basics concerning your topic.

Pts 10

Length of Presentation: Each student is required to us at least 15 minutes of class time during their presentations. If you go below the 15 minutes time requirement, points will be deducted. I you go beyond the 15 minutes, you will be given a 5-minute grace period. Once you go beyond the grace period points will be deducted.

Pts 10

Creativity: Thinks outside the box. Try to do something unique that is not commonly done during a presentation. A common presentation is when you only do a PowerPoint. Examples, in class interview, skits, videos and class activities.

Pts 20

Delivery: Delivery is based on overall presence, your attire, your tone (if you are flat or excited), etc. It also means your ability to articulate to your class member your content well. **Pts 10**

Total Points 60

Tentative Class Schedule and Due Dates

Due Dates	Weekly Readings	Rae Assigned Reading (due in e-class by 4 p.m. on due date)
June 2 nd	Introduction to Christian Ethics	
June 9 nd	Why Study Ethics Christian Ethics & World Views	Rae, Chap. 1 Rae, Chap. 2
June 16 th	Ethical Systems & Ways of Moral Reasoning Making Ethical Decisions	Rae, Chap. 3 Rae, Chap. 4
June 23 st	Abortion & Embryonic Stem Cell Research Reproductive Technologies	Rae, Chap. 5 Rae, Chap. 6
June 30 th	Biotechnology, Genetics, & Human Cloning Physician-Assisted Suicide & Euthanasia	Rae, Chap. 7 Rae, Chap. 8
July 7 th	Capital Punishment The Morality of War	Rae, Chap. 9 Rae, Chap. 10
July 14 th	Sexual Ethics Ethics and Economics, Nursing Ethics & Life	Rae, Chap. 11 Rae, Chap. 12
July 21	Presentations	