

**Course of Study Extension School  
Indiana Conference, United Methodist Church  
University of Indianapolis  
Summer 2019  
Class Meeting Dates: May 18<sup>th</sup> & June 29<sup>th</sup>**

**COS 424: Ethics**

This course introduces the biblical and theological bases for Christian behavior, emphasizing the pastoral skills needed for moral leadership in the congregation and community.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to articulate a biblical and theological basis for ethical thinking and moral behavior and distinguish major approaches to ethical reasoning.
2. Students will be able to comprehend the relationship between their personal stories, pastoral vocation, local contexts, and responsibility as moral leaders.
3. Students will be able to develop a Christian framework for moral reason and action and apply it to the use of power and the setting of boundaries in ministry.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with and make use of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church as a resource for ethical reflection and action.

These course objectives have been developed and approved by the Council of Course of study Directors.

**Instructor Information**

Dr. Randy Gibson  
910 Highland Avenue  
Lafayette, IN 47905  
(765) 295-8895 (Home)  
(574) 524-5047 (Cell)  
[rwgib@alumni.duke.edu](mailto:rwgib@alumni.duke.edu)

The best way to contact me is by email. I check it daily. If you want or need to speak in person, we can set up a time to converse by phone.

**Course Format**

This is a hybrid course. This means that part of the class is done online, and part of the class takes place in the classroom. Our classroom time will be in the form of a seminar rather than a lecture format.

## Books

Required:

1. *The Bible*
2. Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011) ISBN-13: 978-0-687-46736-5
3. Patricia Beattie Jung & Darryl W. Stephens, *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013) ISBN 978-0-8006-9943-7
4. Rebekah L. Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Augsburg Fortress Press, 1999) ISBN 0800 631 366

Required Reference Book:

1. *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2012* (United Methodist Publishing House, 2012) [http://issuu.com/abingdonpress/docs/9781426757877\\_online\\_part1](http://issuu.com/abingdonpress/docs/9781426757877_online_part1)  
The 2016 version, if available

Recommended (Optional: You do not have to purchase these books, but they are recommended as you build your library):

1. Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: Harper One, 1996) ISBN 978-0-06-063796-5
2. Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) ISBN 978-0199739371

Recommended (Free Online):

1. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm>
2. Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/k/kant/immanuel/k16prm/>
3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, [http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/WeirdWildWeb/courses/wphil/readings/wphil\\_rdg09\\_nic\\_homacheanethics\\_entire.htm](http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/WeirdWildWeb/courses/wphil/readings/wphil_rdg09_nic_homacheanethics_entire.htm)

I will post the links to the recommended reading.

## Requirements for the Course

1. Attend class. We are only meeting twice. You will also have to be diligent and disciplined to do the preparatory work before we meet as well as completing the online only components.
2. Read, watch, and study the assigned material prior to our class meetings. I will proceed with the assumption that you have done so. Remember, the class time will be seminary style, so be ready to participate.

3. There will be three papers and one presentation. The papers will be four to six pages.
4. We will also have forums. Answer the question posed with an original post. Respond to at least two other people's posts. Hopefully, the forums can turn into a discussion, similar to one we would have in class. Depending on the discussion, we may start another forum(s) on a question or issue raised. We may also want to carry the discussion over into our class meeting.

### **Instructions for the Written Assignments**

1. The first and last paper will be due the day we meet in class. The second paper will be due on the assigned date. I believe that you will be able to upload your papers in Moodle. If not, then you can email them to me in Word or PDF format. You may also bring the first and third paper to class. You may turn the assignments in early.
2. Follow the lengths stated for each writing assignment. Use complete and grammatically correct sentences. Double space using a Times New Roman with a 12 font and one inch margins.
3. Use your own words. Do not quote extensively from other authors. If you do quote, paraphrase, or use another author's ideas, then be sure to credit the author(s). Be sure to use quotation marks for quotes. To credit, that is, cite a source do so like this for a book (Lovin, p. 32), like this for *The Book of Resolutions* (BR, p. 114), and like this for the Bible (Gen 12:18). If you use a work that is not one of our texts, then you will have to provide full bibliographic information.
4. Use a cover page, including the course number, name of the course, your name, and the date the paper is due. The cover page does not count as a page. In other words, a cover page and three pages of text do not add up to a four page paper—it is a three page paper. The same is true of an end note page and a bibliography page. Staple the pages together if you bring them to class.
5. Here is a great source for all things having to do with writing, Purdue Owl:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

### **Grading**

Grading is the traditional letter grades, A, A-, B+, B, B-... F. The papers will be equally weighted.

### **Plagiarism**

Using other people's language or intellectual property without acknowledgement or documentation, whether from a book, journal, teacher, sermon service, another student or lectionary aid is stealing. Otherwise known as plagiarism, this is obviously unacceptable behavior and will usually result in failure of the course with notification sent to the Conference Course of Study Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. Again, I refer you to Purdue Owl.

## Assignments

### Module One

Have the following done by the first class meeting (18May2019):

1. There will be several YouTube videos for you to watch.
2. Read Robin W. Lovin, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues*
3. Write a four to six page paper: In Chapter Three (pp. 45-66) Lovin introduces four Christian stances, synergy, integrity, realism, and liberation. Compare and contrast these stances. With which stance do you identify and why?
4. Optional Reading:

The following are not required. They are optional. If you do decide to read one or more of them, do not spend a lot of time on them.

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Chapter 1

Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, First Section

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books I & II

In class:

1. We will discuss Lovin's book.
2. We will discuss some of the major ethical theories.

### Module 2

This portion of the class will have to do with the aftermath of the special session of the General Conference. We will have to wait a bit to fill in the details.

Please note that Annual Conference is June 13-15, 2019.

### Module 3

Have the following done by the last class meeting (29Jun2019):

1. Read Patricia Beattie Jung & Darryl W. Stephens, *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*, and Rebekah L. Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide* (Augsburg Fortress Press, 1999).

2. Choose and sign up for a chapter of *Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach*. Write a paper that does the following: address what the author is saying and what the author uses to support his/her idea(s), then take a critical look at what the author has written, e.g., where is the author right or wrong and why, what is the logical consequence of what the author has written, what part of the essay is weak and why, what part of the essay is strong and why, etc.

3. You will be leading the discussion of the chapter you choose.

4. Participate in the forum(s).

In Class:

1. We will take some time for Module 2.
2. We will have the presentations from Jung and Stephens in class.
3. We will discuss Miles.

### **Disclaimer**

The instructor reserves the right to alter the type and sequence of activities scheduled for this course.