

# Introduction to Moral Theology

5132B / Religious Studies 2238G  
COURSE OUTLINE \* Winter 2015

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**Tuesdays – 9:30am – 12:30pm**

Room 108, St. Peter's Seminary

Professor: Andrew D.H. Stumpf

Office Hours by appointment: adhstump@uwaterloo.ca

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## A. Course Description

*From the Catalogue:* An exploration of the fundamental concepts of the Catholic moral tradition in light of the Second Vatican Council: scriptural foundations, conversion and discipleship, the role of the Magisterium, natural law and the law of Christ, conscience, the moral act, sin and virtue.

*See Class Schedule below for specific details concerning topics to be covered.*

## B. Goals

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes:

### Knowledge

1. To know and understand the basic terminology and concepts of the Catholic moral tradition.
2. To be able to trace the basic historical trajectory of the Catholic moral tradition from the time of the early church through the era of the manuals and concluding with the Vatican II years.
3. To understand the role of key figures in the development of the Catholic moral tradition.
4. To develop a basic understanding of how the Catholic moral tradition contributes to the public mission of the church, including ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue.

### Skills

1. To read critically the literature in the field with a view toward developing the abilities to follow arguments, teach, and intelligently discuss issues of morality.
2. To help the student reflect critically on the moral dimensions of human experience so that they will develop an intelligent and affective grasp of the moral issues and values that promote human dignity.

### Attitudes

1. To challenge the student to recognize that moral theology is not simply a system of ideas and doctrines but it must also be lived and applied in a personal, pastoral, and prudent way.

## C. Class Format

Each week will include a mix of lecture and discussion on the main points of the assigned readings. I will make effort to situate the readings in their broader historical and theological context, and will encourage discussion and debate on the issues. I encourage students to examine the ideas in the readings and lectures critically and to offer their own arguments in support or opposition.

## D. Required Text

Pinckaers, Servais, O.P. *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. Washington: CUA Press, 1995.  
Available in the UWO Bookstore.

## E. Course Requirements & Assessment

	Details	Due Date	Weighting
Participation	Attendance & discussion	n/a	10%
Essay Proposal / Bibliography	2 pages	Feb 10 <sup>th</sup>	15%
Presentation of Research	10 min. + 10 min. Q & A	Mar 3 <sup>rd</sup>	15%
Research Paper	8-10 pages (2000-2500 words)	Mar 24 <sup>th</sup>	30%
Final Exam (Take-Home)	Cumulative	Apr 10 <sup>th</sup>	30%

## F. Class Schedule (Tentative)

Week	Topic(s)	Readings*
(1) Jan 6	Course Overview / Introduction What is Christian Ethics / Moral Theology?	Ch 1 (pp. 1-13) + Forward & Intro
(2) Jan 13	Overview of Christian Ethics: Some Basic Questions	Ch 2 (pp. 14-44)
<b>PART I: ETHICS, HUMAN AND CHRISTIAN</b>		
(3) Jan 20	The Human Aspect of Christian Ethics	Ch 3 (pp. 47-94)
(4) Jan 27	Christian Ethics: Its Distinctive Character Christian Ethics according to St. Paul	Chs 4,5 (pp. 95-133)
(5) Feb 3	The Sermon on the Mount and Christian Ethics	Chs 6 (pp. 134-167)
(6) Feb 10	Is St. Thomas's Moral Teaching Christian? {ESSAY PROPOSALS DUE – IN CLASS}	Ch 7 (pp. 168-190)
Feb 16-20	*** Reading Week – No Lectures ***	None
<b>PART II: HISTORY OF MORAL THEOLOGY</b>		
(7) Feb 24	The Patristic Period & High Scholasticism	Chs 8,9 (pp. 191-239) + Intro to Part Two
(8) Mar 3	The Late Middle Ages and the Modern Era {RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS}	Chs 10,11 (pp. 240-279)
(9) Mar 10	Catholic Moral Theology and Protestant Ethics Moral Theology Today	Chs 12,13 (pp. 280-323)
<b>PART III: FREEDOM AND NATURAL LAW</b>		
(10) Mar 17	Freedom of Indifference: Origin of Obligational Moral Theory	Chs 14 (pp. 327-353)
(11) Mar 24	Freedom for Excellence; Human Freedom According to St. Thomas {RESEARCH PAPERS DUE – IN CLASS}	Chs 15,16 (pp. 354-399)
(12) Mar 31	Natural Inclinations at the Source of Freedom and Morality	Ch 17 (pp. 400-456)
(13) April 7	Course Wrap Up and Review	Conclusion (pp. 457-468)

\* Note that readings from the text may be supplemented with selections from other sources. In that case, the instructor will provide handouts or links to online source

## G. University Policies

Students are responsible for knowing the University's academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. These can be all found at the University's website: (<http://www.uso.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>).

#### **A. Submission of Assignments and Tests**

1. It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments can be completed on time.
2. Assignments are to be handed in at the class on the due date. Assignments may not be dropped off at King's or submitted electronically.
3. For a serious reason, a student may be granted an extension. On the form provided, the student is to write a brief explanation of the reason for the extension. This is to be signed by the teacher, with the extended date noted. A copy of the extension notice is given to the Dean.
4. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.
5. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.
6. No electronic devices will be allowed during tests or the examination, unless approved in advance by Student Services at the University or King's. (This refers to students with disabilities who have permission to use a word processor to write their exams/tests.)
7. Students who miss tests will negotiate a "make-up" date with the professor. Any medical reasons will be confirmed by proper documentation as approved by the Dean's Office.

#### **B. References**

1. The MLA Style (Modern Language Association) is to be used in writing your papers: in the Bibliography/Works Cited and in the quotations in the text.
2. If references are given from internet sites the exact designation of the site must be given **along with** a hard copy of the page from which the quote is taken or to which the reference is made.

#### **C. Academic Offenses**

1. Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.
2. "Scholastic offenses are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offense, at the following web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>."
3. "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."