

Fourth Year Summer 2026

PERKINS COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL

424 - Ethics (PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ETHICS 414)

Synchronous (Live Zoom) Sessions: Monday, August 3 – Friday, August 7, each day from 7:45 - 9:40 a.m. Central Time (Dallas).

Online Asynchronous: August 10 -14 & August 17 -21

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Course Description:

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:

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

1. Articulate a biblical and theological basis for ethical thinking and moral behavior, and distinguish major approaches to ethical reasoning.
2. Articulate and comprehend the relationship between their personal stories, pastoral vocation, local contexts, and responsibility as moral leaders.
3. 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. Demonstrate familiarity with and make use of the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church as a resource for ethical reflection and action.

Required Textbooks:

1. Patricia Jung and Darryl W. Stephens *Professional Sexual Ethics* Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.

BV 4011.5 .P76 2013 ISBN-10: 0800699432

2. Adeney, Bernard T. *Strange Virtues: Ethics in a Multicultural World*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1995.

BR 115 .C8 A33 1995 ISBN-10: 0830818553

3. Lovin, Robin *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2011.

BJ 1251 .L695 2011 ISBN-10: 0687467365

4. Wogaman, Philip J. *Christian Ethics: A Historical Introduction*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

BJ 1201 .W64 1993 ISBN-10: 0664251633

5. Holy Bible

Class Assignment A (due on July 20, 2026, must be uploaded to Canvas no later than 11:59 pm):

Read in their entirety Lovin's and Wogaman's

texts, both of which are named *Christian Ethics*, and use your knowledge of these texts to answer

the assignments below (the answer to each numbered assignment should not exceed five double-spaced

pages – about 1300 words, for a total of 10 pages).

1. In the first chapter of the Wogaman text, the author outlines six “points of conflict” regarding biblical interpretation within Christian ethics. Explain two of these tensions and then discuss how you think three of the following Christian thinkers might deal with or resolve the tensions:

Augustine of Hippo

Thomas Aquinas

Martin Luther

John Calvin

John Wesley

Sojourner Truth

Walter Rauschenbusch

Karl Barth

Reinhold Niebuhr

Gustavo Gutiérrez

2. Identify the historical context, meaning, and if possible, the authors' evaluation of the following persons and items.

Aristotle

Christian Realism

Deontology

Ecumenical Social Ethics

Just War

Liberation Theology

Virtue

Rerum novarum

Social Gospel

Ernst Troeltsch

Late submissions:

The completed pre-class assignment for this course must be uploaded to Canvas.

- Students should submit their pre-class assignments electronically in Microsoft Word (.doc) format via [Canvas](#).
- Students should keep printed and electronic copies of each assignment.
- Students should expect to continue with significant reading and writing while attending courses.
- Students are expected to cite their work appropriately with footnotes and a bibliography. View the [Scholarly Citation Examples using Chicago Humanities/Turabian](#) format guidelines.
- Late pre-class work will have grading penalties assessed as follows: (grades are expressed alphabetically from A to F, with F being the lowest grade)

Submissions dated July 21 – 26 will receive a one-letter grade reduction.

Submissions dated July 27-August 2 will receive a two-letter grade reduction.

Submissions dated August 3 or later, the student will be dropped from that course registration with no refund.

Class Assignment B (due on **Friday, August 14, 2026**--first week of the online portion of the class):

Read Adeney's text and present a three to five-page reflection on the book. Include in your reflection the narrative's implications for Christian ministry in a Multicultural setting and/or with marginal persons.

Class Assignment C (due on **Friday, Aug. 21, 2026**--second week of the online portion of the class):

Each student will prepare a five- to seven-page research paper on an issue/topic and/or moral dilemma highlighted addressed in the Social Principles of The United Methodist

Church. Students will make use of the materials studied in the pre-class assignments and in the

class, along with additional reading and research related to issue/topic. Each student will also

present the results of his/her research to the class and engage classmates in a discussion of the

issue.

Class Expectations and Assignments

Regular attendance at all synchronous class sessions is expected. A syllabus will be available and distributed on Canvas. Quizzes may be given on pre-class and class readings at the instructor's discretion. Each student is expected to have read all assignments prior to the respective class session.

Late Assignments:

Assignments submitted after their due date/time delivered late will have a late penalty assessed. The expectation is that each assignment must be submitted by the date/time indicated, if any work is submitted late, depending on the reason for which it was delivered late, there may be a reduction of up to 3 points for each day after the due date. In addition, assignments submitted late will not receive feedback from the instructor, only the score.

EVALUATION:

- 1) Assignment A 30%
- 2) Assignment B 20%
- 3) Assignment C 20%
- 4) Assignment Online interaction 30%

TOTAL 100%

Grade Range: Work for this class will be evaluated according to the following scale:

A = 95-100 Unusually high quality, exceptional work D+ = 67-69 Minimal work

A- = 90-94 Far above average, fine work D = 63-66 Barely acceptable

B+= 87-89 Above average for graduate work D- = 60-62 Acceptable

B = 83-86 Very good, average for graduate work F = 59 or below: Failure.

B- = 80-82 Slightly below average for graduate work

C+ = 77-79 Meets requirements, but noticeable inadequacies for graduate work

C = 73-76 Meets requirements, but with significant gaps for graduate work

C- = 70-72 Meets requirements, but serious gaps

Class Schedule:

Week 1 July 15-19: Live Zoom Synchronous Portion of the Class

Session 1 Student Introductions. Sociocultural Context and Initial Concepts

Readings:

Lovin, pages 3 – 68

Wogaman, pages 1 – 22

Session 2 Making Moral Decisions: Scripture

Readings:

Loving, pages 69 - 116

Jung/Stephens, pages 59-100

Session 3 Christ and Culture: The Historic Tradition

Readings:

Lovin, pages 117-184

Wogaman, pages 23 – 190

Session 4 Christ and Culture: Justice, Pluralism, and Public Engagement

Readings:

Lovin, 184 – 236

Wogaman, 191 - 284

Session 5 Distinctive of a Wesleyan Moral Vision

Readings:

On the Internet:

Wesley, Sermon CXX: Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity

Sermon XCII: The Danger of Riches

Thoughts Upon Slavery

Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions

<http://gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/>

http://wesley.nnu.edu/john_wesley/sermons/

Weeks 2-3: The Church as a Moral Community and the Pastor as the Moral Guide

Online Portion of the Class

The Church as a Moral Community: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity (Multicultural)

Readings:

Jung/Stephens, pages 101-182

Adeney, 13-124

The Church as a Moral Community: Friendship, Sexuality, and Homosexuality

Readings:

Jung/Stephens, pages 11-56

Adeney, 125-250

The Church as a Moral Community: Marriage, Family and Aging

Readings:

Jung/Stephens, pages 183-238