

HT 267W Lutheran Ethics

Instructor: Craig Nesson

Fulfills WTS ethics requirement.

Open to all; priority to those fulfilling WTS ethics requirement.

3 credits; grade or credit/no credit

DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the field of Christian ethics, paying attention to distinctively Lutheran themes. Presentations, readings, and case studies examine how Lutheran theology shapes ethical reflection for the church in mission. How do the Word of God, law and gospel, sacraments, liturgy, reason, theology of the cross, Christian freedom, vocation, and two kingdoms teaching inform ethical deliberation? Analysis of ELCA social statements provides the basis for engaging an ethical method. We will consider how to give leadership so that congregations become communities of moral deliberation.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To explain core themes of a Lutheran perspective on Christian ethics (practice of biblical and theological wisdom).
2. To analyze case studies of embodied ethical responsibility (practice of engagement with cross-cultural and global dimensions).
3. To increase capacity to teach ELCA social statements focusing on use in congregations (practice of complex analysis; practice of ecclesial partnership).
4. To form leaders for congregations as communities of moral deliberation (practice of collegiality; practice of immersion in context).

PROCEDURE:

The course will consist of presentations, readings, analysis of ELCA social statements, and case studies.

EVALUATION:

1. Regular attendance.
2. Engagement with assigned readings in student contributions to the course.
3. Leadership in teaching project.
4. Two written assignments— 1) one social statement or message prepared and presented as part of a small group; and 2) summative project: six one-page papers explaining the ethical importance of Lutheran themes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Required Choose One **Required *Recommended**

***Walter Altmann. *Luther and Liberation: A Latin American Perspective*. Second Edition.

*Jennifer Baldwin. *Trauma-Sensitive Theology: Thinking Theologically in the Era of Trauma*.

Bruce C. Birch, Jacqueline E. Lapsley, Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, and Larry Rasmussen. *Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life: A New Conversation*. Third Edition.

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer. *The Bonhoeffer Reader*. Edited by Clifford J. Green and Michael P. DeJonge.

*Lisa Dahill and James Martin-Schramm, Eds. *Eco-Reformation: Grace and Hope for a Planet in Peril*.

*Kelly Brown Douglas. *Resurrection Hope: A Future Where Black Lives Matter*.

George W. Forell. *Faith Active in Love*.

*Philip Hallie. *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*.

Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, Eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*.

William Lazareth. *Christians in Society: Luther, the Bible, and Social Ethics*.

Timothy Lull et al., Eds. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, Third Edition.

Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda. *Building a Moral Economy: Pathways for People of Courage*.

***Craig L. Nesson. *Free in Deed: The Heart of Lutheran Ethics*.

Dorothee Soelle. *Essential Writings*. Edited by Dianne L. Oliver.

**Matthew D. Taylor. *The Violent Take It by Force*.

*Reggie Williams. *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance*.

**Renate Wind. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Spoke in the Wheel*.

**ELCA Social Statements <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements?_ga=2.157406010.1231828817.1680978111-844513521.1571947649>