Texts: 


Westminster Standards (*Confession of Faith, Larger & Shorter Catechisms*) [available on line at http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html]

Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism [available on line at http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html]


Exams: Final Exam in class on the afternoon of Saturday, April 17. Open Bibles, texts, and notes.

Papers: Book Review: A 3000 word summary and analysis (Biblical and pastoral) of book published after 1998 (or pre-approved by the professor) that deals with an ethical matter that the author is likely to confront. This requirement has three parts:

Proposal: A two-paragraph description and rationale for reviewing a book appropriate for this assignment. For the book, the student will provide (a) a brief explanation of the ethical issue(s) treated by the book, and (b) a brief justification that the issue will be of relevance to the student’s likely future role in the church. This should include a reason to believe that the book is biblically sound enough for consideration. Feb. 20.

Rough Draft: A 2400 word (target) draft of the text (not just an outline) of the review. Optional Due Date: March 20. Drafts received by this date are guaranteed a detailed response with sufficient time to make revisions. Drafts received after this date will be considered as time permits.
Final Draft: Completed review. DUE ten days after receiving the professor’s comments on the rough draft (if submitted prior to March 20), or May 1, whichever is later.

Pre-approved ideas (but still just illustrative):

- Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror* (for those likely to serve military families or politicians)
- Marsh, *God’s Long Summer* (for those likely to serve is racially charged situations)
- Adams, *Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage* (for those likely to counsel couples)
- Murray, *Principles of Conduct* (1957) (a standard among older ministers)
- Speigel, James, *How to Be Good in a World Gone Bad* (for business and family ethics)
- Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace* (for those likely to assist with reconciliation efforts)

Case Study Scenario: Each student will prepare a short (1 page maximum) description of a realistic situation in which biblical ethical guidance is required for an assigned kind of situation. Another student will write a response to the scenario as part of their Resource Guide. Scenarios will be evaluated for (a) realism, (b) adequacy of the details provided, (c) difficulty, (d) clarity, and (e) mechanical proficiency. DUE in class on Friday, March 12.

Note: the kinds of ethical challenges will be determined the class on the first day. Possibilities include the following (as illustrations):

- Materialism (as a form of idolatry)
- Depictions of Christ (in art, film, flannelgraphs)
- Oath-taking
- Sabbath-keeping
- Civil disobedience
- End-of-life decision-making
- Divorce & Remarriage
- Intellectual Property
- Lying
- Jealousy
Resource Guide (Group Project): Students will be placed in groups of three or four. During the week of class, time will be set aside for laying the groundwork for a jointly produced guide for biblically handling a kind of ethical challenge. Each student will write a (1000 word) response to a Case Study Scenario. Together, the group will also prepare each of the following (each targeted at 1000 words).

(a) a summary of the most important considerations to bear in mind, both biblical and practical (this element is required),
(b) a guide to using the internet to seek help,
(c) a guide to print materials available in a local Christian bookstore, and
(d) a summary of an interview with a local pastor about the challenge.

(So each member will write one of these elements and a Case Study response.) A PLAN for the Resource Guide (who is doing what) is due on April 3. The completed Resource Guide is DUE April 24.

Quizzes: No quizzes for this course.

Attendance: Attendance is expected. Students who miss a significant portion of class meeting time will have their grade adversely affected.

Grading: Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review Prospectus</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Guide (group)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Schedule of Topics & Summary of Due Dates:

Feb. 5-6 God’s Character and Will:
- The foundation of all ethical considerations
- The necessity of this transcendent foundation

An Overview of Systems of Ethical Deliberation
- Everything you need to know about Kant’s Deontology, Mill’s Utilitarianism, Aristotle’s Virtue Ethics, recent reworkings of those systems and a bestiary of Relativisms
- Identifying the most pressing pastoral challenges in our future
- A messy game involving a cream pie

Reading Assignment (if possible): Douma, “The Prologue”
Feb. 19-20  Social Ethics and the Current Landscape in Ethics
• Rawls & Reflective Equilibrium
• Singer’s Anti-speciesist Utilitarianism
• Feminist Ethics of “Care”
• Another game that will test your fairness
The Decalogue: Prologue
The First Commandment

Writing Assignments: Prospectus for the Book Review
Reading Assignment: Plantinga, all
Douma, “The First Commandment” & “Appendix: The Use of Scripture”
Jones, Chapters 2-5

Mar. 12-13  The Second Commandment
The Third Commandment
The Fourth Commandment
• Sabbath-keeping as a delight
• The abiding ordinances
The Fifth Commandment
The Sixth Commandment
• Just War Theory
• End-of-Life Decision-making

Writing Assignment: Case Study Scenario (DUE Friday evening)
Reading Assignments: Douma, “The Second Commandment” through “The Sixth Commandment”
Jones, Chapters 1, 6, 7

(March 20 Optional Due Date for Rough Draft of Book Review)

Mar. 26-27  The Seventh Commandment
The Eighth Commandment

Writing Assignment: Plan for the Resource Guide
Reading Assignment: Douma, “The Seventh Commandment” & “The Eighth Commandment”
Jones, Chapters 8 & 9

Apr. 16-17  The Ninth Commandment
The Tenth Commandment
FINAL EXAM (after lunch)

Reading Assignment: Douma, “The Ninth Commandment” and “The Tenth Commandment”

Apr. 24 (Sat)  DUE: Resource Guide (Case Study Responses + Group Elements)

May 1 (Sat)  DUE: Final Draft of Book Review