Azusa Pacific University  
C.P. Haggard Graduate School of Theology  
Course Instruction Plan  

GTHE 505: Christian Ethics  
M.Div. Program  
Prof.  Marsha Fowler, M.Div., Ph.D.  
Fall 2002  
4 units  
Office: WC 341; office hours by appointment  
Tel: 626-815-5391  

I. Course Description  

This course is a study of the Biblical and theological foundations of Christian ethics and an analysis of the nature of Christian responsibility in major areas of social concern. Classical and contemporary theories will be examined for their distinctive contributions to ethics. Each theory will be examined with respect to its source, form, context, strengths and weaknesses, and usefulness for contemporary ethical understanding.  

II. Instructional Objectives:  

III. Required Textbooks  

• The Holy Bible (New Revised Standard Version)  
• MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.  

IV. Recommended Texts  


V. Course Requirements  

1. Class attendance  
2. Completion of all required readings or assignments prior to each class; “WASC guideline for assignments is a two-hour minimum outside of class for every hour in class,” that is, 8 hours outside for a 4u class.  
3. Prepared, informed participation in seminar  
4. Field experience related to term paper topic and reflection paper  
5. Term paper
VI. Grading

- Term paper 90%
- field trip and reflection paper 10%
- poor attendance/unprepared participation/nonparticipation supervaluation 10%

VIIa: Term paper

The student will prepare a 22 page (corpus) term paper on any of the topics listed below. The paper will be typed (12 point font, double spaced, paginated, ragged-right margin) and must conform to standard, graduate level expectations for written assignments. The student must use inclusive (nonsexist) language for humanity.

The term paper will consist of an ethical analysis of a pressing, live moral issue to which Christian ministers will be expected to respond whether socially or in counseling members of the congregation. Where appropriate, the issue will be addressed as a local, regional or state issue (e.g., homelessness and my congregation; the power crisis in California; bilingual public education in California; illegal immigration in California and access the health care/education; gambling in Azusa).

The components of the ethical analysis that are required include Biblical precepts, constructive theology, current context of the problem, and denominational perspectives (where appropriate/available). The student will analyze the issue, take a normative position and defend it.

The term paper is due at the beginning of the last lecture period, that is, at PM on . Attendance at the last seminar is required. A late penalty begins to accrue at the start of the last class session and accrues at the rate of 1/3 grade per day. There is no final exam and class will not be held during finals week.

The style manual for the course is MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Students who require assistance with the rudiments of composition, punctuation, grammar and the like should seek assistance from the learning resource center. The Harbrace Grammar and Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary are very highly recommended.

VIIb. Topics for Term Paper

Homelessness in southern California; assisted suicide and euthanasia; withholding or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment; the power shortage in California; domestic violence (spousal, child abuse, or elder abuse); bilingual education in California; treatment of companion animals; pornography, the internet/TV and children; gambling in southern California; capital punishment; undocumented persons and access to education/health care.

VIII. Field Experience and Reflection Paper

Each student will choose and pursue a field experience related to her or his term paper topic. For instance, if the topic is “domestic violence,” the student might visit a shelter for battered women, or an elder abuse clinic. Students are expected to spend 6 hours on site, gaining “experience” in the topic and relating to those whom the issue affects. Subsequent to the experience, the student will prepare a 5 page
Biblical/theological reflection paper on the field experience. All the usual and customary expectations for written work apply to the reflection paper. The field experience should be completed on or before the 10th lecture period. The reflection paper is due at or before the beginning of the 11th lecture period.

Grading:
The following summarizes the basic attributes of each grade level:

**A:** demonstrates excellence in scholarship, imagination and creativity; shows rigor; is sound and free of logical error; thorough with depth; exceeds basic expectations; consistent with graduate level standards of composition

**B:** demonstrates above average insight and comprehension of the subject matter; sound and free of logical error; thorough with depth; rigorous; consistent with graduate level standards of composition; more than one absence from class or tardiness may reduce grade

**C:** demonstrates the characteristics of “B” though with less depth or thoroughness or rigor; or has a significant though not “fatal” defect in logic or argument; falls at the lower edge of the standard for graduate level work; excessive absences from class or tardiness will reduce grade

**D:** inadequate in quality and or quantity; fails to reflect comprehension of the course materials; fails to reflect completion of the course assignments/work; fails to reflect graduate level work

**F:** work is unacceptable in quality or grossly inadequate in quantity; not consistent with graduate level performance.

**Incomplete:** Please review your University handbook. An incomplete can only be assigned for a dire or emergent situation. An incomplete cannot be granted simply to extend the deadline for the summative assignment, or to allow students to revise their final work.

**Caveat on academic dishonesty:** It is not nice to cheat in an ethics course; a policy of strict intolerance will be observed. Academic dishonesty (not limited to plagiarism) is considered to be utterly inimical to the essence of the course. Any form whatsoever of academic dishonesty will result in immediate failure of and dismissal from the course, and a letter in the student’s permanent file. Please see your Graduate Student Handbook both for the Graduate School of Theology and for the University.

**Learning Disabilities:** Students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center (LEC) as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

A “learning disability” presumes a neurological dysfunction that may exist with other disabling conditions. It does not include (a) mental retardation, (b) psychological or emotional disturbance, or (c) economic, cultural, or language disadvantage. The LEC does not provide assessment services for suspected learning disability; this must be obtained from a qualified outside professional.

The student must not delay in initiating disability verification at the outset of entry into the program if not prior to entry.