SPRING 2008 Syllabus
THEO 496-01 – Senior Seminar
Theology and Social Issues
Monday & Wednesday 2:45 -4:10- p.m. Duke 605
Azusa Pacific University

Asst. Professor: Jacquelyn E. Winston, Ph.D.; email: jwinston@apu.edu
Contact: Marilyn Moore, Undergraduate Theology Secretary, 815-5496, Duke 257

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:45-4 p.m. or by appointment, Duke 259, 815-6000, ext. 5631.

Class website: http://home.apu.edu/~jwinston/ OR: http://online.apu.edu/ (E-Companion class site). E-Companion student directions: http://groups.apu.edu/~dlce/Student/Student.HTM

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This senior seminar is designed for those who wish to further their understanding of an important issue facing Christians today. The course consists of a seminar format, including a major paper and oral presentation. Students combine Christian theology, biblical studies, and ethics to examine various ways in which the Christian faith can be lived out today. Meets the general studies senior seminar requirement. Prerequisites: three units of 300-level theology; CMIN 108, PHIL 210 or PHIL 220; UBBL 100; UBBL 230 (or equivalent); and upper-division writing intensive course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES (Student-based Competencies):

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to critically assess the impact of biblical, historical, religious, cultural, political, and sociological ideas upon the development of a Christian ethical response to a current or historical social issue.

2. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze Christian intellectual thought as it applies to specific social issues and to use these insights to contribute to an ongoing oral and literary dialogue regarding Christians’ ethical responsibility to society.

3. Through reading, research, and discussion, students will develop an understanding of the nature of the church (ecclesiology), the nature of humans in their social and moral settings (anthropology), and biblically based strategies for addressing moral dilemmas in contemporary society (ethical response).

4. Students will demonstrate oral and literary competencies as well as research skills through independent and corporate analysis of literary sources to formulate a holistic response to a specific social issue. This will include the ability to evaluate one’s own research as well as provide valuable and substantive peer-review of classmates’ work in a collegial environment.
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:


COURSES REQUIREMENTS:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Discussion Questions</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation (6-7 minutes)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class/Small Group Participation</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Peer Evaluations</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecclesiology Reading List Report</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
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<td>40%</td>
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TOTAL POINTS/PERCENTAGES: 1000 POINTS OR 100%

Reading Discussion Questions:

Reading is a major component of this course as a basis for class discussion and toward developing a coherent structure for your thesis paper. The student is expected to complete the reading assignments and reading discussion questions (in writing) BEFORE coming to class. The student should develop 4-5 discussion questions from the assigned reading in Sider or Verhey for each class session (Be sure to include page numbers with your questions). Your discussion questions from the textbooks should demonstrate critical thinking and incite indepth class discussion. The goal of your questions is to develop a broader understanding of the nature of the church’s ethical responsibility. Your questions should explore one of three broad areas:

1. **Ecclesiology** – what issues challenge the definition of the church or what insights (biblical, theological, historical, or social) reveal the nature of the church relative to the specific reading assignment? If you are speaking of issues which challenge the definition of the church, which specific characteristic of the church’s identity is being challenged by the issue and why? Or, if you are exploring insights on the character of the church, what aspect of the church’s character is being defined and how (such as the body of Christ, the kingdom of God, the people of God etc.)

2. **Anthropology** – what aspects of the human condition and human nature are being examined and what problems or issues impede moral excellence? How is a human
being defined and what ethical theories provide the basis for this perspective of humans (i.e. cultural relativism, Kantian ethics etc.)?

3. **Ethical response** – what ideas inform or shape human action and views of right and wrong? What theories direct a biblical response to moral dilemmas by providing the impetus for truly Christian action in the face of social problems?

During an eight week span when the class will focus on reading from the two major texts, students will turn in written discussion questions five (5) times. Three of the five times will be based on a signup schedule. Two additional times will occur without advance notice, so students should always come to class with their written questions in case they are randomly selected by the professor to turn in their questions.

**Research Paper Proposal:** On **Wednesday, 1/30/08**, the student will submit a typed, two to three page research paper proposal. This proposal should include the following information:

1. Student’s name, class title and number, date, tentative research paper title
2. Social issue which will be examined in the paper.
3. A preliminary thesis statement which introduces your anticipated approach to the paper by articulating an **ecclesiology**, **anthropology**, and biblical **ethical response** to the social issue. #1-3 of the proposal should be no more than one page and can be less than a page.
4. An annotated bibliography of 10-12 sources that you plan to use for your paper including complete bibliographic information (see a style manual if you are unclear) on a minimum of three sources for each section of the paper as noted in #3 above. The annotations for each source will succinctly explain specific relevant insights that the book will provide for your paper.

Research paper proposal is 5% or 50 points of the research paper final grade.

On **Wednesday, 2/20/08**, each student who received 40 or less on their original research proposal may re-submit an improved version of their research proposal (along with the graded original proposal) incorporating the professor's suggested changes to receive an improved grade on the original proposal.
Ecclesiology Reading List Report:

On 2/25/08, the student will turn in a typed reading report detailing the essential elements from reading on the handout “Theoretical Resources for Ecclesiology Reading List.” This reading assignment involves reading and taking notes from 125 pages of the student’s choice from this reading list (including the asterisked required reading pages). Note taking should include page numbers and bibliographic sources. Notes may be done in an outline or bulleted format rather than complete sentences and should highlight only key points that provide insights regarding theoretical elements related to the church’s nature and function. Choose reading from this list (including the required pages) to serve as a basis for Section 1 of your research paper. (Advice: Read 25 pp. per week from the beginning of class, rather than waiting to the last minute to read all 125 pages by the due date). (3% of the grade or 30 points)

Class/Group Participation:

Since consistent attendance is an essential element for comprehending course materials, students should sign the roster at the beginning of each class session. Additionally, the nature of the course assumes active participation in class discussions. Therefore, each student will be graded for participation on the basis of active involvement in class discussions as well as consistent attendance using a scale of 12% (120 points).

Peer-Review/Evaluation:

From 3/24 to 4/9, the class will meet in topical small groups to discuss specific aspects of the individual papers and research process. In these groups, each person will present their work in progress. To assist in the development of the paper as well as improve assessment skills, each student will submit a completed peer review for the students in their group at the end of each class session (6 classes). These reviews provide substantive suggestions for improvement, such as areas where clearer definitions, further explanations, or editing is needed in the work presented. It also may contain suggestions for further exploration, related questions for consideration, and bibliographic resources of which you are aware that may assist your classmate. It should also contain a brief discussion of the strengths of the section presented. Peer reviews for each class session will be graded on a scale of 25 points for a total of 150 points (15%) of the grade.
Professor Consultation:

From 3/24 to 4/14/08, simultaneous with the small group consultations during the class period, the professor will meet with one student from each group during the class time by prior arrangement. These private 15 minute conferences will allow the student and professor to discuss specific aspects of the research paper and provide direction and other resources.

Research Paper:

Each student will submit a typed, double-spaced research paper (20 pages plus cover page and bibliography) prepared according to style manual guidelines which examines a social issue from a Christian theological perspective. The paper will be constructed as follows:

1. Introduction (one page): Introduce a social issue in its contemporary context along with your thesis statement which articulates a relevant definition of the church (ecclesiology), how the specific target humans are to be understood in the context of the social issue (anthropology), and the appropriate Christian ethical response to the social issue (ethic). This is a brief abstract of the entire paper. It can be introduced by the use of a pointed story or some other literary device which helps the reader to visualize your issue.

2. Ecclesiology (six pages): Define the nature of the church using a couple of biblical models, relevant scriptures, and historical, biblical, and secondary source material from ethical theorists. Your ecclesiology provides a perspective to justify the ethical approach that you will formulate to address this social issue. Therefore, your ecclesiology should be specific and relevant to your social issue.

   The ecclesiology section is a theoretical discussion of the nature of the church. This lays down the ideal characteristics of the church from a biblical perspective. This is not an indepth discussion of the church's actions related to your specific issue, nor is it the place to discuss the problem indepth. Instead, in this section, you should examine those biblical/theological qualities which embody the ideal biblical response to your ethical issue. Choose 2-3 specific biblical, theological, and/or ethical models which relate to the church's nature with regard to your issue, analyze them fully using respected literary sources, and demonstrate how these models serve as analogies of the church's function which will create an atmosphere conducive to positively addressing your social issue.

3. Anthropology (six pages): Define human nature as it applies to your particular social issue. This will include a theological discussion of human nature, an examination of the influences of culture, religion, and other environmental factors which have affected human responses to the issue, and a discussion of a biblically based view of humans relevant to your specific issue including examination of relevant scriptures.
The anthropology section is a discussion of the problems and needs of your target (don't use the word “target” in your paper). This section examines the physical, spiritual, psychological, social, historical, personal, environment, age-related, and any other problems which your target faces. Problems and needs are both positive and negative. In other words, your target may have specific problems such as low self-esteem or an addiction. They may also have “positive” needs such as the need for love or acceptance. This section may use social science resources such as Santrock's review of developmental theorists, or governmental or organizational reports specific to your topic; however, remember statistics should only be used for specific purposes and you should explain their significance in the context of your discussion. This section also discusses negative or inadequate attitudes and responses that the church has typically demonstrated on this social issue.

You might organize your discussion of this needs/problems section with a first paragraph that connects the previous theoretical section (ecclesiology) with the current anthropology section by reiterating the positive characteristics of the models followed by a section/thesis approach which provides a 3-4 point direction for the anthropology section. This 3-4 point approach gives a structure to the section and lets your reader know the direction you plan to take in your discussion of the target’s needs.

For example, if you used community of the king, family of God, and children of God in section I, you might say something like: “Since the community of the king is a welcoming family where those who are broken are received in love, the church which functions in this way will be an inviting place for foster children who have been cast out from a loving environment. Foster children will also be nurtured to wholeness by the family of God, and where fear and the uncertainty of their circumstances has made them feel alone and rejected, the church which recognizes that it has been adopted by the heavenly Father will embrace them as God’s children as well. To explore the ways that the church can welcome broken children and fulfill Christ’s mandate to love one another, this section will discuss the many challenges which foster children face that threaten their spiritual and emotional development. These challenges can be categorized in three ways: hindrances to the emotional and spiritual development of the foster child due to an abusive birth family environment; negative attitudes in the church based on an ignorance of God’s commands or insensitivity to the needs of neglected children; and, the damaging effects of bureaucratic and inadequate social systems that prioritize rules over the needs of the foster child.”
4. Ethical response (six pages): Based on your understanding of the nature of the church and the biblically based needs of humans in the context of your social issue, develop an appropriate ethical response to the issue. This answers the question – “What should the church do?” Based on an informed understanding of scripture, the nature of the church, and the needs of humans, how should we respond as a community of believers in Christ? This should include a discussion of concrete programs or activities which have (or could) be done to address the issue as well as an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the program’s approach.

In section 3, Ethical response – you are providing a program or practical response to meet the needs/problems that you identified in section 2 and that corresponds with the characteristics of the church that you identified in section 1. You can either create a program based on elements from an existing program or you can choose individual elements from 2-3 existing programs. If you choose elements from existing programs, you do not have to completely describe the existing program. Instead, only describe the single element from that program that you are choosing as a desired ethical response. Your ethical response program should probably have around 3, no more than 4 practical elements (since you need to analyze them in depth to show they meet your own criteria). Fully explain and analyze each element by showing its strengths and weaknesses and address relevant questions related to your specific issue which might be seen as obstacles. Show the benefits of your program from two sides – How does it meet the needs of your target (be specific)? How does it coincide with the proper functioning of the church based on the models that you identified in section 1? For example, if you said the church is a Servant and servanthood demonstrated compassion, humility, and nurturing, then one of the elements of analysis in section 3 would be to show how a specific process in your program demonstrated compassion to your target (e.g. reading stories and bringing food to sick AIDS patients). You also want to demonstrate that your program benefits the church by imitating Christ and instilling spiritual characteristics such as humility etc. (e.g. show that serving AIDS patients follows Christ’s mandate to set at liberty those who are bruised - Luke 4).

5. Conclusion (one page): Provide a summary of the paper, articulating the salient aspects of the three sections (ecclesiology, anthropology, and ethical response), including briefly raising additional questions which warrant further exploration relevant to your social issue.
The grading for your research paper will span the course of the semester and occurs as follows:

1/30/08: Research proposal 5% (50 points)
2/20/08: Optional Revised proposal to raise original proposal grade
3/12/08: Section I (Introduction & Ecclesiology) 5% (50 points)
3/26/08: Section II (Anthropology) due 5% (50 points)
4/7/08: Section III (Ethical Response) due 5% (50 points)
4/16/08: Final 20-22 page research paper 20% (200 points)

Avoid websites, popular magazines, and review articles, unless approved by the professor. Very limited use of a website and respected newspapers will be permitted for sections II or III, but no more than one of each may be used for the entire paper, with professor approval. This paper will be due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, 4/16/08.

Each section paper turned in on the due dates above should have a cover page as well as a complete bibliography. It is acceptable to use the entire paper's bibliography for each section, rather than breaking down your sources by section. In the final paper, section headings should still be used, but do not start a new section on a separate page unless it falls that way naturally.

Research paper checklist: 1" margins, cover page (not counted or numbered), 20 page double spaced body of paper using 12 pitch font, notes (parenthetical, footnotes, or endnotes acceptable) with a numbered bibliography page.

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT:

The mission of Azusa Pacific University includes cultivating in each student not only the academic skills that are required for a university degree, but also the characteristics of academic integrity that are integral to a sound Christian education. It is therefore part of the mission of the university to nurture in each student a sense of moral responsibility consistent with the biblical teachings of honesty and accountability. Furthermore, a breach of academic integrity is viewed not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor but rather as an act which is fundamentally inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the entire university. A complete copy of the Academic Integrity Policy is available in the Office of Student Life, the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, and online.

1. Students are expected to write all of their own work. You are welcome to study with your fellow students, but you must write your own assignments. Any assignments written in conjunction with another student will be considered plagiarism and will receive an “F” (0 points) for that assignment.
2. If you borrow more than more than 3 or 4 words in a row from another source, it should be properly referenced using quotation marks and full bibliographic information, including page number. When you borrow ideas but not actual words, you may cite the source at your discretion to help your reader follow-up on your discussion. Failure to provide full bibliographic citation for quotations is considered plagiarism and will result in an “F” (0 points) for that assignment.

2. Style manuals: All style manuals are acceptable including Chicago Manual of Style, Turabian, Campbell, APA (with modifications, such as page numbers for all citations). You may choose to use footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical references, but please be consistent throughout the paper. Your final paper should include a title page as well as a thorough bibliography. Also, be sure that you proof your paper for spelling and grammar as well as content.

Class Presentation:

On 4/16 or 4/21/08, each student will present a 6-7 minute synopsis of their final research paper. The presentation will articulate the paper's final thesis question and a brief synopsis of the three sections (ecclesiology, anthropology, and ethical response) including salient insights from crucial theorists. A one page (maximum) outline or other visual aid should be emailed to the professor NO LATER than 24 hours before the class presentation – 2:30 p.m. on 4/15 or 4/20/08. The single page should have your name and class title as header information and should be in Microsoft Word, html, jpg, or pdf format. Each student will be graded on a 150 point scale (15% of the course).

Resources:

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CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

Items to bring to each class: Sider & Verhey textbooks, and your completed current Reading Discussion Questions, as well as a Bible.

Syllabus Review & Course Requirements – Wednesday 1/9/08

Introduction to Christian Ethics – Monday 1/14/08

Reading assignment: Verhey 3-48
Scriptural Basis of a Christian Ethic; Christian Medical Ethics – Wednesday 1/16/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 49-91

NO CLASS – Monday 1/21/08 – Martin Luther King Holiday

Christian Medical Ethics, pt. 2 – Wednesday 1/23/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 92-154

A Christian View of Gender – Monday 1/28/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 157-211

A Christian View of Sexuality – Wednesday 1/30/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 212-240
Research Paper Proposal due at beginning of class

A Christian View of Money, pt. 1 – Monday 2/4/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 243-287t

A Christian View of Money, pt. 2 – Wednesday 2/6/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 287t-329

Christians and Political Power, pt. 1 – Monday 2/11/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 333-387

Christians and Political Power, pt. 2 – Wednesday 2/13/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 388-430b

Christians and Political Power, pt. 3 – Monday 2/18/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 430b-477m

Choosing between Evangelism & Social Justice – Wednesday 2/20/08
Reading assignment: Verhey 477m-507; Sider 9-10, 15-25
Optional re-submission of improved research paper proposal

The Message of the Kingdom of God – Monday 2/25/08
Reading assignment: Sider 26-79.
Ecclesiology Reading List Report due
The Cost of Conversion – Wednesday 2/27/08
Reading assignment: Sider 83-118, 121-135

The Christian Responsibility to Act – Monday 3/3/08
Reading assignment: Sider 136-183

COMMON DAY OF LEARNING – NO CLASS – Wednesday 3/5/08

Incarnational Christianity – Monday 3/10/08
Reading assignment: Sider 184-209

Section I – Ecclesiology due at beginning of class – Wednesday 3/12/08
Explanation of the peer group process & group introductions

EASTER VACATION – 3/17 & 3/19/08

Peer Evaluation of Papers – Monday 3/24/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Section II – Anthropology due at beginning of class – Wednesday 3/26/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Peer Evaluation of Papers – Monday 3/31/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Peer Evaluation of Papers – Wednesday 4/2/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Section III – Ethical Response due at beginning of class – Monday 4/7/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Peer Evaluation of Papers – Wednesday 4/9/08
Turn in Peer Evaluation Reviews for your group by end of class

Work on Papers – No class/Optional Professor Conference by appointment – Monday 4/14/08
FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS – Wednesday 4/16/08

Class Presentations – Monday 4/21/08

All students must attend class on 4/16 & 4/21/08 – each student will be advised of their date and order of class presentation on 4/8/08 through the E-Companion website.
STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET (please PRINT clearly)

NAME ________________________________________________________

CAMPUS/COMMUTER ADDRESS & BOX #: _______________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

PHONE #: ________________    Email: __________________________ (include area code)

YEAR IN PROGRAM: ________________    SENIOR GRADUATING THIS SEMESTER _____________

MAJOR: _________________________    PREVIOUS BIBLE/RELIGION COURSES: _______________________________
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WHAT SOCIAL ISSUES DO YOU BELIEVE THE CHURCH NEEDS TO ADDRESS IN A MORE CHRIST-LIKE MANNER?
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YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE:
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