Course Unit Outline
Unit Code
E7200
Unit Name
Methods in Christian Ethics
Unit Weighting
9
Type of Unit
Intermediate
Prerequisites
E7100 Sources and Principles of Christian Ethics or W7201 Moral Philosophy or 72 cps in the BTh
Academic Staff
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Curriculum Objectives
This unit introduces students to the methods and principles of Christian ethical reflection and moral theology. It provides a methodological basis for specialised studies in Christian ethics.
Learning Outcomes
At the end of this unit students will be able to:

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1. Discuss the nature of Christian ethics and its biblical foundations
2. Identify and clarify the anthropological bases of the Christian moral life
3. Explain how to evaluate moral action in accordance with Christian faith and reason
4. Utilise skills in Christian moral reasoning, in the light of Scripture and tradition
5. Explore a contemporary moral issue from a Christian moral perspective

Threshold concept to be acquired in this unit
The distinction between philosophical and theological ethics.
Content

1. The distinctiveness of Christian ethics
2. Commandment and beatitude
3. Approaches to moral normativity
4. Natural law theories and the question of nature and grace
5. Principles of moral reasoning and discernment
6. The moral evaluation of human action (goodness/rightness; ends/means; intention/object)
7. Freedom, responsibility, conscience, passions and virtues.
8. Authority, tradition and moral absolutes
9. Human life and the dignity of the person.

Learning Activities

Lectures, seminars, student presentations.

Required Specialist Facilities or Equipment

n/a

Assessment Profile

Assessments tasks are designed both to help students attain the unit outcomes and to enable teachers to assess student attainment.   In this unit, the required assessment tasks <u>will enable students to demonstrate how successfully they can</u>:

1. Outline the debates over the distinctiveness of Christian ethics and its biblical foundations (e.g. in a short essay). [Early diagnostic task] Outcome (1)
2. Explain the role of nature and 'natural law' in the development and systematisation of Christian ethics. Outcomes (2) and (3)
3. Engage in a systematic and integrated reflection on a contemporary ethical using the methods of Christian ethics (e.g. in a major essay). Outcomes (3), (4), (5).

Representative References

Black, Rufus, *Christian Moral Realism: Natural Law, Narrative, Virtue and the Gospel*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Grisez, Germain. *The Way of the Lord Jesus. 1: Christian Moral Principles.* Quincy, Ill: Franciscan Press, 1993.

Hay, Richard B. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996).

Jensen, Steven J. *Good & Evil Actions.* Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2010.

Kaczor, Christopher. *Proportionalism and the Natural Law Tradition.* Washington, DC. CUA Press, 2002.

Keating, James. (Ed.) *Moral Theology.* New York: Paulist, 2004.

Levering, Matthew. *Biblical Natural Law.* New York: OUP, 2008.

Mattison, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008).

O'Donovan, Oliver, *Resurrection and Moral Order: an outline for evangelical ethics*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1994.

Pinckaers, Servais, *The Pinckaers Reader: Renewing Thomistic Moral Theology* (Washington: Catholic University of America Pres, 2005).

Porter, Jean. *Nature as Reason: A Thomistic Theory of the Natural Law* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

Rhonheimer, Martin. *The Perspective of the Acting Person.* Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2008.