



**UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHWESTERN**  
— ST. PAUL —

OFFICE OF ADULT  
& GRADUATE STUDIES

# **ETH4023**

## **Worldview and Ethics**

**SUMMER 2022**

**SYLLABUS**

Version: OL v15.2:02/22

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# ETH4023 Worldview and Ethics

University of Northwestern – St. Paul

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students continue to develop their value systems with greater emphasis on the philosophical and theological foundations for ethics. Attention is given to the application of ethical principles to economic and political ideologies.

**Credits: 2**

**Prerequisites:** None

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Please see “Contacting the Instructor” on the course site.

## COURSE OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, a successful student will be able to

- CO-1. Deconstruct the grounds of biblical worldview perspectives on ethics
- CO-2. Compare alternatives in ethical systems and philosophies
- CO-3. Implement a framework for critically considering ethical issues about which biblical direction is limited
- CO-4. Defend critically reasoned stances on controversial modern ethical issues

## MATERIALS

### Required Textbooks and Materials

McQuilkin, J.R. & Copan, P. *An Introduction to Biblical Ethics: Walking in the Way of Wisdom*. 3rd Edition. Publisher: Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. Year: 2014.

The textbook is available as an eBook at no cost through the UNW Library via the link on the course site by the syllabus. See the bottom of the ATLAS/Technology page for tips on annotating and interacting with digital texts: <http://atlas.unwsp.edu/technology/>

### Required Tools

For this course, students will need access to Microsoft Office (available at no cost to students through the University of Northwestern-St. Paul), a PDF reader, and a standard internet browser. Please refer to the Tech Requirements found in the Technology Help section at the top of the course site for the full requirements.

## GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Course Grade Explanation

#### Assignments

Concepts Quizzes

#### Grade Weight

10

Short Essay Worksheet	10
Reflective Journal Posts (4 x 2%)	8
Major Philosophical Systems Chart	10
Weekly Discussion Forums (4 x 7%)	28
Opinion Forums (2 x 7%)	14
Dialogue Simulation	10
Evaluating Church and Society Engagement Models	<u>10</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100</b>

## Grading Scale Percentages

A	≥ 93	B	≥ 83	C	≥ 73	D	≥ 63
A-	≥ 90	B-	≥ 80	C-	≥ 70	D-	≥ 60
B+	≥ 87	C+	≥ 77	D+	≥ 67	F	< 60

## Late Work

All assignments are due as described in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for meeting assignment deadlines. Late assignments will be deducted one full letter grade (e.g., A to B) per day; late assignments will not be accepted for a grade beyond 3 calendar days past the original deadline. Forum discussion activities must be completed on time; late forum posts will not receive any credit. Students should contact the instructor via e-mail if an extenuating circumstance exists.

## Feedback Expectations

Students should expect feedback for their submitted assignments within 5 days of the assignment due date or the time of their submission, whichever is later.

## INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND SERVICES

### Guidelines and Information

Students are responsible for policies and procedures found in the Office of Adult & Graduate Studies Catalog located on theROCK. These policies include the following:

- Deadlines for dropping or withdrawing
- Attendance
- Class cancellations
- Plagiarism and cheating
- Grading System
- Complaints, exceptions, and appeals

Instructors may have course-related expectations that further detail the policies and procedures outlined in the catalog. Any such expectations must be provided to students in writing (e.g., handout, course site posting) prior to or at the beginning of the class.

Traditional undergraduate students enrolled in A&GS courses are subject to the traditional undergraduate student handbook for all non-course-specific policies and procedures.

## **Academic Integrity**

Members of the Northwestern community mutually commit to personal integrity and honesty. Students submitting work are expected to convey their own thoughts unless the source is cited appropriately. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty violate ethical and intellectual principles.

In every course, students are required to view the Understanding Plagiarism video and complete the Understanding Plagiarism Quiz prior to completing any of the course content. These items are part of the course orientation.

## **Academic Achievement**

UNW students requesting academic accommodations in association with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are directed to notify [Disability Services](#) to begin the application process. Academic Achievement also provides the following: [Writing Tutoring](#), [Subject Tutoring](#), advocating, transitional skill building, [Academic Coaching](#) (organization, time management, test taking, etc.).

Contact Academic Achievement for more information: [AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu](mailto:AcademicAchievement@unwsp.edu) | 651-628-3316 | N4012 (Revised 07/21).

## **Support Services**

Links to support services are available found in the Student Services section at the top of the course site.

## **COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **Email and Announcements**

Students are responsible to regularly check their Northwestern student email and the announcements in the course site in order to receive updates and information.

### **Attendance**

Due to the accelerated nature of the online curricula, students are expected to participate in all course activities. Students must contact the faculty member in advance or as soon as possible if unable to participate in all or part of the course activities for a given week because of a medical (which includes having to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19 exposure or confirmed illness), family, or work-related emergency. Students should refer to their course syllabus and/or faculty member for specific requirements. Students who do not participate in course activities and fail to withdraw from the course will receive a failing “F” grade.

### **Submission Standards**

All assignments, unless otherwise stated, must be submitted on the course site in Microsoft Word document format (.doc or .docx). For all assignments, use a standard readable font, double-spaced, etc.

### **Critical Response to Alternate Viewpoints**

When students are reading or viewing course materials, they may encounter viewpoints, words, or images that their instructors would not use or endorse. Students should know that materials are chosen for their value in learning to read, write, and view critically, not because the materials are necessarily Christian.

## Scholarly Research

Quality participation in this course requires contribution of scholarly research to class interactions. Students can engage in external research via the Berntsen Library website by performing a search of the 60+ databases available to students. Also available on the library site are multiple tutorials to educate learners in effective search techniques. Other credible journals/articles are options as well.

## ASSIGNMENTS

See the course site for complete details on the assignments.

### Concepts Quizzes (Unit Level Objective/ULO 2.1)

The purpose of these weekly quizzes is to measure and support your increasing proficiency in meaningfully using concepts from the field in all other assignments and life beyond this course. Carefully read the assigned materials to prepare for each week's quiz.

Each quiz is open book and open notes, but has a **time limit of 20 minutes per attempt**. Each attempt presents 20 questions randomly chosen from a larger pool of questions, largely True/False. All but the first quiz include 5 review questions at the end from previous weeks' assigned materials.

You may take the quiz up to **3 times**, with your final grade for the quiz calculating the **average of all attempts**. Since the score is an average of attempts, you are encouraged to be prepared before the first attempt.

### Short Essay Worksheet (ULOs 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)

Download the Short Essay Worksheet Template from the course site. Complete the document with at least 100 words in thoughtful response to each question. Submit your completed version of the worksheet on the course site. The questions are as follows:

1. How would you summarize the relationship between humans and both law and love?
2. How would you define the two terms love and sin, both culturally and biblically?
3. How ought a Christian balance the conflicting demands and priorities implied in the notion of Christian love?
4. Describe an ethical stance you hold that is not explicitly addressed in scripture? How much certainty can you have that your position is correct? How does your awareness of the limits of certainty in this area influence how you would engage with another thoughtful Christian who holds an opposing stance on the topic?

### Reflective Journal Posts (ULO 3.3)

The purpose of these assignments is to invite you to analyze assumptions, limitations, and biases in our thinking that can often go unnoticed, yet powerfully impacts our perspectives and ethical decision-making.

By the end of each week in this course, reflect on the following questions in a brief reflective post of about 100 words in the week's Reflective Journal Forum. Aside from your one post each week, responses to peers' posts are encouraged but not required.

For each entry, answer the following:

1. What assumptions, limitations, and biases do you hold that you have become more aware of while considering the course concepts this week?
2. In what ways have your previously-held positions, perspectives, or appreciation changed, been challenged, or expanded as a result of wrestling with course concepts this week?

These posts are graded based on completion to an acceptable degree of critical thinking and reflection (either 1 or 0). Contact your instructor about re-trying any posts that do not meet the threshold.

## Major Philosophical Systems Chart (ULO 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

The purpose of this assignment is to help you organize the similarities and differences between key aspects of the major philosophical ethical systems addressed in this course.

Download the Major Philosophical Systems Chart Template from the course site. Fill in all the boxes of this template with the requested information for each of the major philosophical systems of ethics. Submit the completed version of your chart on the course site and use the chart for reference during future assignments.

This assignment will be graded based on the following criteria:

1. **Accuracy—40%:** The information reflects the systems correctly.
2. **Completeness—30%:** All boxes are completed as instructed.
3. **Detail—30%:** Each description successfully distinguishes each system from others.

## Weekly Discussion Forums (ULOs 1.1, 2.4, 3.2, 4.3)

Online discussions represent tremendous learning opportunities because classmates can share viewpoints and other ways of expressing complicated concepts that enable others with diverse learning and cognitive styles to better grasp and master ideas. Approach discussions as learning opportunities where you learn from others and they learn from you. You are not just writing for the instructor to read and grade; you are also writing to converse and help others and yourself better learn and understand at a deeper level.

Each substantive post can only earn a maximum of 4 points and accumulates across the week toward a maximum of 10 points by the end of each week. Note that it is not possible to achieve all 10 points with less than three posts. Posts earn rating points for the presence of the following:

- 1 point for **Evidence of Study**—Proficient reference of course learning resources and concepts
- 1 point for **Contribution**—Leads conversation by contributing relevant value beyond existing course resources such as new examples, illustrations, critical thinking questions, cited references, links, or related current events
- 1 point for **Professional Style**—Correct grammar, clarity, organization, respectfulness, openness to healthy debate
- 1 point for **Early Participation**—Post is created prior to 11:59 p.m. on Day 5 and earns at least 1 point for either Evidence of Study or Contribution

A reply that includes only statements of "I agree", "I liked what you said about...", and/or "I appreciated..." will not be graded. A good reply requires critical thinking skills, affirmations, challenges, open-ended questions, scriptural support, creative application, examples or counterexamples, relevant stories, and other evidence that you understand the initial post and that the post inspired you to think further about the topic.

Total points earned in a week equate to letter grades as follows:

- 10 or more total points = A (100%)
- 9 points = A- (90%)
- 8 points = B- (80%)
- 7 point = C- (70%)
- 6 points = D- (60%)
- 0–5 points = F (0–50%)

## Opinion Forums (ULOs 3.2, 3.4, 4.1)

During both Week 3 and Week 4, you are asked to synthesize all that you are learning to demonstrate your ability to defend a clear, thoughtful, and biblically grounded stance on various applied ethical issues (Week 3) and various economic, civic, and political issues (Week 4).

For each forum, choose two of the available issues and defend a thoughtful position on the topic, including rationale and connections to course concepts. Then, after reading some of your peers' positions, raise meaningful, thoughtful, and biblically grounded responses, questions, or challenges to other students' positions, being respectful and charitable in pursuit of intelligent discussion and mutual understanding.

Opinion Forums are graded just like Weekly Discussion Forums with a maximum of 4 point possible per post, adding toward a cumulative target of 10 (or more) points total by the end of the week.

## Dialogue Simulation (ULOs 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.3)

The best way to test if you truly understand another worldview is to craft a valid and coherent defense of ethical conclusions based on the grounds that serve as the foundation for that worldview.

Write a 4- to 6-page paper that represents a dialogue between two fictional people about a modern ethical issue. Carefully craft the words and voice of each speaker to fairly and consistently represent a specific example of how grounds justify ethical conclusions. The idea will be to make their ideas seem as plausible as possible, and to connect them to deeper underlying ethical convictions, e.g. about justice or fairness. The purpose is not to show a clear winner, but to show how two reasonable, well-meaning people with very different perspectives might have an intelligent conversation about a controversial topic. The dialogue should make it clear how each person derives their conclusion from their underlying worldview, and should be charitable in showing the limits we have in ethical knowledge and the possibility of reasonable disagreement on ethical matters.

- **Evidence of Study—40%:** Shows evidence of sophisticated integration of course concepts
- **Fair Representation—30%:** Fairly represents the best arguments of each position (avoids caricature)
- **Grounds & Conclusions—30%:** Conveys clear connections between grounds and conclusions of both positions

## Evaluating Church and Society Engagement Models (ULO 4.2)

Not everybody agrees what role the church should play in engaging the broader, non-churched society on issues of ethics and morality. Compose a 3- to 4-page essay evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of at least two different models of engagement between the Church and society on moral issues. In this context, "models of engagement" refers to alternative approaches to the church-state relationship. The models are 1) state controls church, 2) church dominates state, 3) church and state assigned mutually exclusive roles, and 4) church and state distinct but mutually influential. These are explained in chapter 32.

Include answers to the following questions in your evaluation:

- What strengths and weaknesses are evident in each model? Provide at least one specific example or illustration of each model's strength and weakness
- Which model do you advocate using in your church and personal life?

See the Evaluating Church and Society Engagement Models Grading Criteria on the course site for grading details.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Format**

This course is delivered in an online format that provides all learning activities online. The day the course starts is considered Day 1 of Week 1 for the course. For example, if a course begins on a Monday, then Day 1 is Monday, Day 4 is Thursday, and Day 7 is the following Sunday.

This course is an accelerated course. As a rule of thumb, students should expect to spend on average 17.5 hours on course work each week.

### **Due Dates**

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be submitted on the course site by 11:59 p.m. CT on Day 7 of each week. Please see the following schedule for details on when an assignment is due.

For any questions regarding these assignments, contact the instructor.

### **Orientation**

- Read the Getting Started Page
- Participate in the Introductions Forum
- View and Complete Understanding Plagiarism Presentation and Quiz
- Complete Student Responsibilities Exercise

## **Week 1: God and Ethics: Love, Law, and Sin**

### **Assignments**

- Familiarize yourself with the syllabus and course site
- Post in the Class Introductions Forum and make connection replies to a few others
- Read McQuilkin & Copan
  - Introduction
  - Part I
  - Part II
  - Part III
- View Wk1 Videos
  - The Euthyphro Dilemma (17:11)
  - Animated Explanation of the Law—The Bible Project (5:59)

### **Due Day 5**

- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk1 Discussion Forum

### **Due Day 7**

- Complete participation in Wk1 Discussion Forum
- Submit Short Essay Worksheet (download Short Essay Worksheet Template)
- Complete Concepts Quiz
- Post Wk1 Reflective Journal

## **Week 2: Virtues, Vices, and Theories of Ethics**

### **Assignments**

- Read McQuilkin & Copan
  - a. Part IV



- b. Part V
- View Wk2 Videos
  - a. Moral Relativism (9:22)
  - b. Utilitarianism (10:24)

#### **Due Day 5**

- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk2 Discussion Forum

#### **Due Day 7**

- Complete participation in Wk2 Discussion Forum
- Submit Major Philosophical Systems Chart
- Complete Concepts Quiz
- Post Wk2 Reflective Journal

### **Week 3: Family and Human Life**

#### **Assignments**

- Read McQuilkin & Copan
  - a. Part VI
  - b. Part VII
  - c. Part VIII
- View Wk3 Videos
  - a. Abortion (18:36)
  - b. Homosexuality and Harm (10:09)

#### **Due Day 5**

- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk3 Discussion Forum
- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk3 Opinion Forum

#### **Due Day 7**

- Complete participation in Wk3 Discussion Forum
- Complete participation in Wk3 Opinion Forum
- Begin working on the following projects
  - a. Dialogue Simulation
  - b. Evaluating Church and Society Engagement Models
- Complete Concepts Quiz
- Post Wk3 Reflective Journal

### **Week 4: Property, Society, and our Fallibility**

#### **Assignments**

- Read McQuilkin & Copan
  - a. Part IX
  - b. Part X
  - c. Part XI
- View Wk4 Video
  - a. John Haldane: Reasonable Disagreement, Humility and Civic Friendship (6:23)

#### **Due Day 5**

- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk4 Discussion Forum

- Last chance to earn bonus points for early posting in Wk4 Opinion Forum

**Due Day 7**

- Complete participation in Wk4 Discussion Forum
- Complete participation in Wk4 Opinion Forum
- Complete Concepts Quiz
- Post Wk4 Reflective Journal
- Submit Dialogue Simulation
- Submit Evaluating Church and Society Engagement Models