



Reuben Welch School of Theology & Christian Ministry

PHL2011-5

3 Units

Spring 2026

Meeting days/times: MW 8:15am – 9:30am

Meeting location: Taylor Hall 105

Final Exam: Wednesday May 8, 7:30am – 10:00am

Instructor title and name:	Dr. John McAteer
Phone:	619-510-1864 (cell, text okay)
Email:	jmcateer@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	<i>By appointment</i>

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

The study of right and wrong in principle, character, and conduct; practical moral issues analyzed from the basis of sound moral theory; characteristics of an adequate, consistent code of ethics.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. describe and explain, in outline, the history of ethics and, in detail, ethics and the ethical theories of several of its pivotal figures;
2. analyze and criticize ethical situations, questions, reasoning, and diverse perspectives and positions;
3. discern the ethical dimension of everyday life, and its invitations to ethical inquiry;
4. apply your ethical inquiry and study of the history of ethics to historical and current events and your experiences and living within and beyond the academy work;
5. express yourself orally and in writing more clearly, meaningfully, truthfully, and philosophically

Foundational Explorations Learning Outcomes

Context #1: Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ

FELO #1d. Critical Thinking: Students will be able to examine, critique, and synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions

Outcome Measure: Students will write an essay responding to the prompt: Please clearly state St. Anselm’s argument for the existence of God from chapter two of *Proslogion*. **This will be assessed as part of the Midterm Exam.**

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

1. Boyd, Craig A. and Don Thorsen. *Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy: An Introduction to Issues and Approaches* (Baker Academic, 2018) – ISBN: 978-0801048234
2. McCracken, Vic. *Christian Faith and Social Justice: Five Views* (Bloomsbury, 2014) – ISBN: 978-1623568184

Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

Assignment Category	Description	Percentage of final grade
Class Participation	Students are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in class activities and discussions. Students are granted TWO unexcused absences. All further absences will result in 20 points off the	10%

	participation grade. Coming to class unprepared to participate in class activities will also result in 20 points off.	
Application Papers	Students will write a series of one-page papers explaining an ethical issue and defending their personal position on that issue. Due dates will be assigned in class.	40%
Midterm Exam	The Midterm will be an essay exam on the first half of course content to be completed in class, including the Signature Assignment essay question.	25%
Final Exam	The Final exam will be a cumulative essay exam on the appointed day.	25%

Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate. PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20

percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade. █

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you’re in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
PART 1: Christian Ethics (Scripture, Tradition, and Experience)		
Mon 1/12	Intro to Course	
Wed 1/14	Varieties of Ethics and Moral Thought	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 1
Mon 1/19	Martin Luther King Day (No class)	Last Day to Add/Drop is Friday
Wed 1/21	Case Study: Violence against women and children (Relativism)	
Mon 1/26	Ethics in the Hebrew Scriptures	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 2
Wed 1/28	Case Study: Care for the Environment	
Mon 2/2	Ethics in the Christian Scriptures	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 3
Wed 2/4	Case Study: The Nearest and the Neediest	
Mon 2/9	Divine Command Theory	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 4
Wed 2/11	Case Study: Interventions, Exemptions, and Conscience	
Mon 2/16	God as the Ground of Goodness (The Ontological Argument)	Anselm's <i>Proslogion</i> (handout), a requirement for the gen ed Signature Assignment to be assessed during the Midterm Exam.
Wed 2/18	Catholic Social Thought	
Mon 2/23	Natural Law Ethics	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 5 (30)

Wed 2/25	Case Study: Human Sexuality	
Mon 3/2	Midterm review	<i>Last day to turn in application papers for first half of course (Relativism, Environmentalism, Neighbors, Conscience, Sexuality)</i>
Wed 3/4	MIDTERM EXAM	Including the Signature Assignment essay question on Ansem's Poroslogion.
Mon 3/9 Wed 3/11	Spring Break (NO CLASS)	
PART 2: Secular Ethics (Reason)		
Mon 3/16	Kantian Ethics	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 7
Wed 3/18	Case Study: Capital Punishment	
Mon 3/23	Utilitarianism	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 8 First day of the The 2025-2026 H. Orton Wiley Lectures in Theology with Guest Lecturer Dr. Catherine Keller in Crill Performance Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mon 11am and 1:30pm • Tues 9:30am • Wed 8:30am
Wed 3/25	Case Study: War	
Mon 3/30	Virtue Ethics	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 10
Wed 4/1	Case Study: Lying	
Mon 4/6	Easter Monday (NO CLASS)	
Wed 4/8	Individualistic Ethics	Boyd & Thorsen Ch 6
Mon 4/13	Case Study: Abortion	
Wed 4/15	Libertarianism	McCracken Ch 1
Mon 4/20	Political Liberalism	McCracken Ch 2
Wed 4/22	Liberation Theology	McCracken Ch 3
Mon 4/27	Virtue Ethics	McCracken Ch 5
Wed 4/29	Christian Faith and Social Justice Debate	<i>Last day to turn in application papers for first half of course (Abortion, Capital Punishment, War, Euthanasia, Lying)</i>
Fri 5/8	FINAL EXAM	