

**School for New Learning
DePaul University
Course Syllabus: AI 244 Catholic Social Ethics
Summer 2009**

1. General Information

Faculty: Kevin Buckley, M.A.
SNL, 25 E. Jackson Blvd., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312-362-8544
Email: kbuckle1@depaul.edu

Location: Loop Campus

Dates/Time: Tuesdays, June 16, 23, 30, July 7, and July 14, 2009
6:00 - 9:00 PM

I will be available at the Loop Campus for individual meetings after 3:30 PM on Tuesdays. I am also in the office on most Mondays and Fridays between 10 AM and 5 PM. If you wish to meet with me, please email me to so that we can agree on a time and place for the meeting.

Credit Hours: 2

2. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

Students in this course will learn about ethics by examining the shifts in Catholic social teaching during the twentieth century and by comparing Catholic social thought with non-religious assumptions about social ethics. We will begin by reading selected New Testament texts that reflect the social dimension of moral decision-making. We will then read several church documents that identify the dignity of the human person as a basis for our collective moral responsibility in regard to such issues as just wages, safe working conditions, religious freedom, and war and peace. We will also examine some grassroots expressions of Catholic social teaching. Finally, we will compare the distinctive assumptions of Roman Catholic social ethics with the perspectives of secular humanism.

After working in both for-profit and non-profit settings for more than twenty years, Kevin Buckley earned an M.A. in Liberal Studies from DePaul University where his research addressed the role of institutions in mediating between the individual and society. He has been an academic advisor at the Loop campus since September 2000. He has taught the following SNL courses "Making Difficult Decisions - Moral Life in Modern Culture," "Advanced Elective Seminar: Spirituality, Culture, and Technology," "Work and the Modern Self," "Spiritualities of Work" (FDIS) and "College Writing." He has also conducted adult continuing education programs about spirituality at the Newberry Library and Loyola University's Institute of Pastoral Studies.

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3. Competencies

A-3-C. Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective.

- Identifies and describes a social issue or situation.
- Identifies an ethical perspective relevant to the issue or situation.
- Uses that perspective to raise or explore questions about this issue or situation.

You will analyze a social issue from the perspective of selected New Testament texts, the recent social teaching of popes and bishops, and the experience your own experience.

A-3-F. Can compare two or more philosophical perspectives on the relationship of the individual to the community.

- Selects two or more philosophical or theological perspectives on the relationship of the individual and community.
- Select and explain criteria for comparison of the two perspectives.
- Compares the perspectives
- Discusses the individual and social dimensions of being human.

You will use several assumptions about meaning, value, and purpose of human life to consider the relationship of the individual to the community. You will relate these assumptions to selected New Testament texts and to Roman Catholic social teaching since 1965. You will also consider the relationship of the individual to the community as the issue is addressed in “A Secular Humanist Declaration.” You will describe how your personal and family experience has affected your thinking about the relationship of the individual to the community.

A-4. Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems

- Identifies and describes an ethical issue or problem
- Describes the distinctive assumptions of two different ethical systems
- Analyzes the problem by comparing and contrasting how these two different systems would apply to that particular ethical issue or problem.

You will analyze a social issue from the perspective of Catholic Social Ethics, as described in selected New Testament texts and the social teaching of popes and bishops since 1965. You will also consider this issue from the perspective of “A Secular Humanist Declaration.”

H-2-X Can describe the role of institutions in mediating between individuals and the community.

- Relates the functions of institutions to certain basic human needs
- Applies a definition of institutions to the major dimensions of culture
- Describes a specific institutionalized setting where individuals encounter the values associated with family and community, organized belief systems, and economic and political structures

You will first consider how early Christian communities both challenged and adapted to values in the broader culture. You will then identify how a Catholic Social Teaching understands the dignity of the individual person as well as a person's experience of the family, the economy, and political institutions. Finally, you will describe your understanding of the role of institutions in mediating between you and American culture.

4. Learning Experience

Classroom learning strategies include brief presentations on key concepts, viewing of videotaped material, in-class writing exercises, structured class discussions of the assigned reading, and small-group discussions of mini-cases that illustrate course concepts. The second, third, fourth, and fifth sessions will include a brief reflection exercise and an activity in which members of the class will relate the reading to their personal experience and belief systems. Written assignments are designed to help students to master each of the characteristics of the competence for which they have registered.

Required readings:

- New Testament: Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 1-19; Matthew, Chapter 25, verses 31-46; Luke, Chapter 10, verses 25-37; Acts, Chapter Six, verses 1-6; Romans, Chapter 13, verses 1-10; James, Chapter 1, verses 22-26.
- Second Vatican Council: *Gaudium et spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World (1965), Paragraphs 1-3 and 11-22 (to the end of Part One, Chapter One).
- Pope Paul VI, *Populorum progressio*, "On the Development of Peoples" (1967), paragraphs 1-24.
- Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, "On Human Work" (1981), paragraphs 1-13, 19 and 23.
- "A Secular Humanist Declaration" (1980). This text provides a contrasting philosophical and ethical perspective (required for those registering for the A-4 and A-3-F competence options and recommended for others).
- Handout material distributed in class or available at the course Blackboard site.
<http://oll.depaul.edu/>

It will not be necessary for you to purchase any book for this course. All of these documents will be available on the Internet. Since you will not need to read the entire document, I suggest that you print out only the parts of the document that you will need to bring to class. Because class discussions depend extensively on the reading assignments for each session, it is essential that you bring a copy of the readings to class.

Attendance and participation:

- Classroom presentations, discussions, mini-case discussion and exercises provide information and opportunities for application of course content that are not provided in the reading assignments.
- Consistent attendance is expected. If you must miss class, please notify me before the session or within one day after the class. It is your responsibility to:
 - obtain notes from another class member for any class that you have missed
 - read the handouts and the assignment for any sessions or parts of sessions that you miss. This material will be available at the course Blackboard site.

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5. Outcomes

At the end of this five-session course, you should be able to:

- describe how different assumptions about the meaning, value, and purpose of human life can:
 - contribute to an individual's ethical decision-making
 - provide insights about the relationship of the individual to society
 - guide one's moral assessments of social institutions such as the family, the economy, political structures, and systems of meaning and values
- identify four perspectives regarding the relationship of the individual to the community
- describe the role of theology, philosophy, and social analysis in describing the good life or human flourishing.

If you have registered for the A-3-C competence, you will be able to:

- identify the questions that are typically addressed in systematic approaches to ethics
- analyze a social issue from the perspective of a specific ethical perspective.

If you have registered for the A-3-F competence, you will be able to:

- apply criteria for determining how a theological or philosophical system views the relationship between the individual and the community
- compare and contrast how a specific religious tradition and a secular humanist perspective address the relationship of the individual to the community
- relate these perspectives to your personal and family experience.

If you have registered for the A-4 competence, you will be able to:

- identify the questions that are typically addressed in systematic approaches to ethics
- analyze a social issue from the perspective of two ethical systems

If you have registered for the H-2-X competence, you will be able to:

- Describe how effective social institutions promote certain values and reduce uncertainty about life in community
- Identify a specific cultural tradition's values relating to the family, religious belief, and the economy and political institutions
- Describe the perspective of a major cultural tradition regarding the relation of the individual to society.

6. Evidence That You Will Submit

Beginning the second session, you will contribute to small-group discussions of the readings. Your contribution will relate to important course concepts and theories as well as to the competence for which you registered. You will also contribute to a discussion of the readings from the perspective of the experience and belief systems of members of the class. You will write short papers that will be due the second, third and fourth sessions and one week after the fifth session. Writing these papers will help you to apply course concepts and theories to specific course reading. The writing for each competence will

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add up to about nine pages of rather densely-written material. You will also submit a one-page reflection on your learning at the end of the course. You will receive information about the classroom discussions and written assignments during the first session.

7. Criteria for Assessment

About 40% of your grade will reflect the quality of your participation in class. The criteria for class participation and written exercises will include the extent to which you relate course readings and application exercises to course concepts and theories, to your life experience, or to your belief systems. You will not receive full credit for attendance if you do not have a copy of the course readings with you in class. Although there are some opportunities for partial make-up work, missing one or more classes or a pattern of tardiness may affect the final grade.

About 10% of your grade will be based on a one-page reflection on your learning that you will submit the end of the course and which will demonstrate your ability to synthesize important course concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms.

About one-half of your grade will be based on writing that addresses the competence for which you are registered in this course:

- Writing for the A-3-C competence will address how Catholic Social Ethics addresses several questions that are typically considered by any ethical system. The writing will also describe how Catholic Social Ethics has analyzed a specific issue related to human development, poverty, peace, or human rights. You will also analyze this issue from the perspective of your own experience.
- Writing for the A-3-F competence will consider how the meaning, value, and purpose of human life are addressed in Catholic Social Ethics and in “A Secular Humanist Declaration” (1980). Your papers will describe how both of these perspectives address the relationship of the individual to the community.
- Writing for the A-4 competence will consider how Catholic Social Ethics addresses several questions that are typically considered by any ethical system. The writing will analyze how Catholic Social Ethics and “A Secular Humanist Declaration” (1980) would address a specific issue related to human development, poverty, peace, or human rights.
- Writing for the H-2-X competence will address how a major belief system views the role of institutions in mediating between individuals and the major institutions of modern culture. You will also consider how institutions mediate between you and American culture in the 21st century.

All papers should be typewritten or computer-generated, double-spaced, with margins of one or one and one-half inches and 12-point typeface. Attachments to email messages should be saved to Word.

My assessment of all written work will consider whether you have:

- submitted the paper by the due date or, in the case of a notified absence, within twenty-four hours of the class that was missed
- included an appropriate introduction describing the scope and purpose of your paper,

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- demonstrated a college-level mastery of Standard English word usage and grammatical conventions, including appropriate sentence structure, punctuation, and subject-pronoun and subject-verb agreement
- included multiple parenthetical references to the course readings
- cited the reading appropriately at the end of each paper using MLA or APA format.

I will abide by the University's guidelines on academic integrity (see policy in the Addenda below). Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course.

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: "Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement." Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!

Selection of grading on a pass-fail basis must be received by the deadline listed in the DePaul University Academic Calendar. Students who commit to taking the course Pass/Fail cannot switch back to a letter grade.

See the Addenda, below, for the policy guiding requests for a grade of "incomplete" for the quarter. In order to qualify for the IN grade, a student must have regularly attended class and must have completed at least the first three written assignments.

Please review the university deadlines for withdrawal without tuition refund and the implications of withdrawal for financial aid and grades.

7. Tentative Class Schedule

#1) June 16, 2009

- Course overview and expectations
- Decision-making: ethics and morality; taste or preference
- Social institutions as embodiments of moral values
- The individual and the community as sources of the good life
- Questions typically addressed by ethical systems
- Rule-based ethical decision-making
- The New Testament as a source of Christian social teaching.
- Reading for Session Two: Please read and be prepared to discuss the following texts from the New Testament: Matthew 5:1-19 and 25:31-46; Acts 6, 1-6; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 13:1-10; and James 1:22-26
- Writing: Two-page competence-specific paper; details to be provided.

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#2) June 23, 2009

- Brief reflection exercise: the individual and the community
- Relating the reading to personal experience and belief systems
- Virtue-based ethics
- The social ethics and authority structures of early Christian communities
- Application exercise: income distribution
- Ethics and the development of modern social, political, and economic institutions
- Overview of the Second Vatican Council (1962-5).
- Reading for Session Three: Second Vatican Council: "Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World," Paragraphs 1-3 and 11-22 (to the end of Part One, Chapter One).
- Writing: Two-page competence specific paper; details to be provided.

#3) June 30, 2009

- Brief reflection exercise: respect for the "other"
- Relating the reading to personal experience and belief systems
- The dignity of the human person in Catholic Social Teaching
- The social nature of the human person as a basis for understandings of the common good
- The role of general principles in morality and ethics
- Application exercise: applying the "golden rule" to the workplace
- Natural law as a basis for social ethics
- Reading for Session Four: Pope Paul VI, "On the Development of Peoples," paragraphs 1-24.
- Writing: Two-page competence specific paper; details to be provided.

#4) July 7, 2009

- Brief reflection exercise: private property and the common good
- Relating the reading to personal experience and belief systems
- The dignity of the human person as a basis of human rights
- Understandings of the common good
- Application exercise: impact of globalization on local communities.
- Reading for Session Five:
 - Pope John Paul II, "On Human Work," paragraphs 1-13, 19 and 23.
 - "A Secular Humanist Declaration."

#5) July 14, 2009

- Brief reflection exercise: marriage and health insurance
- Relating the reading to personal experience and belief systems
- Secular humanism as a philosophical or ethical perspective
- Determining the morality of social and economic institutions
- Application exercise using two ethical perspectives

Writing to be emailed to me by July 21: a three-page competence-specific analysis.

Writing to be emailed to me by July 25: a one-page reflection on your learning

Details for both submissions will be provided.

The grade for the course will be posted at the end of the Summer Quarter. The maximum points for any papers or make-up writing submitted after July 25 will be the equivalent for a C- for the assignment or the session for which make-up work is submitted.

Addenda

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLuS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.

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Chronic Illness Initiative

The Chronic Illness Initiative (CII) provides access to higher education for students disabled by chronic illnesses that unpredictably increase and decrease in severity such as chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or illnesses requiring frequent hospitalizations. At SNL, staff and faculty are compassionate and committed to helping CII students achieve their educational goals. Contact CII at CII@depaul.edu.

Writing Help

For help with organizing your ideas, grammar, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, sample SNL assignments and much more, see the [Writing Guide for SNL Students](http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html) at <http://snl.depaul.edu/writing/index.html>. For on-campus and online tutoring, see the [DePaul University Writing Centers](http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/) at <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/>.

[In addition, consider adding the Writing Centers' syllabus supplement available here <http://condor.depaul.edu/~writing/html/fac/supplements.html>.