Many persons immediately think of Christian ethics class as a place for heated discussions of controversial quandaries, those congregational hot topics of abortion or euthanasia, where everyone jumps into the fray with opinions flying. Although these controversial quandaries certainly are a part of what we think about in Christian ethics class, they are a small part. We need first to understand that Christian ethics concerns day to day living more powerfully than the mental exercises we might do with particular quandaries. All too often these “quandary exercises” involve situations we will almost never face ourselves. Exercises about other people’s decisions are helpful perhaps, but theoretical. It is much more clearly a matter for Christian ethics how we actually “are” in the world and the daily decisions we make, like what kind of car we drive, the respect we show our housemates, how we treat strangers, whether there is a flag in the sanctuary, and how much money we believe we are allowed to keep for ourselves.

In this class, we will investigate what it means to think ethically as a Christian and how one might do that. We will look at traditional theories of Christian ethics and also more recent theories. We will learn the importance of the community of moral discourse and different methods for making moral judgments. Our final class sessions will look at specific areas and issues for ethical thinking.

**Required texts:**
- *Feminist Theological Ethics*, ed. Lois Daly
- *The Stones that the Builders Rejected*, ed. Walter Fluker
- *Moral Fragments, Moral Community*, Larry Rasmussen
- *From Christ to the World*, ed. Boulton, Kennedy, and Verhey

If textbook costs are a difficulty for you, please see me.

Additional materials are on reserve in the library for your reading pleasure.

Weekly attendance is expected. If you must miss class, make sure you are in contact with the professor before class time. Seminary policy states students should not receive credit for a class they do not attend at least 75% of the time. Keep me informed.

As a courtesy to all class members, cell phones need to be turned off before class begins.

**A note about written assignments:** The library has style sheet information to assist your preparation of papers, so your footnotes, bibliography, and other material will meet seminary expectations. If you believe you may need writing assistance, please contact the Academic Dean.

Please make sure your CTS box number is on all written work.
Graded Assignments:
Quiz over use of the Bible in Christian ethics, February 5 10%
Student presentations in class, March 4 25%
4 page reflection on Rasmussen, April 15 15%
12 page paper on the Relationship of Christian Ethical Theory to the Life of Faith, due May 6 25%
(Note: papers may go over assigned page limit by not more than one full page.)
Class participation in book discussions 25%
(Note: comments made without reference to textual material will hurt your grade)

Class Schedule

January 22 Introduction, Thinking about Christian Ethics. What Are We Doing Here?
January 29 Definitions, Beginning Look at Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics.
For class, have read Daly, preface and chaps 1-4; Fluker, chaps 1-3;
and Boulton, preface and chap 1 (p 1-11).
February 5 Bible and Other Resources for Christian Ethics.
Be prepared for quiz over readings. Class discussion on ways to use the
Bible in Christian ethical thinking.
For class, have read Boulton, chaps 2-9; Fluker, chap 4; Daly, chap 9.
(note that Boulton has an introduction to each section, which you will
want to read before you read the chapters, and then again after you read
them, to make sure you understand why the selections were chosen.)
February 12 Traditional Ethical Theories: Descriptions, Strengths, and Weaknesses.
Deontological, Teleological, and Virtue Ethics.
Choose presentation topics.
For class, have read Boulton, chap 31-37
February 19 Continuing to Look at Traditional Theories and Modifications.
Agapé and Liberation Ethics. Recent Ethical Theories.
For class, have read Daly, chaps 6, 10, 11; Fluker, chaps 5, 6.
February 26 Features of Christian Ethics.
Class discussion of Norms.
For class, have read Boulton, chaps 39-48.
March 4 Contemporary Types of Christian Ethics.
Student Presentations.
For class, have outline or text of presentation to turn in for comments.
March 18 Contemporary Types of Christian Ethics, con’t.
Class discussion of Womanist, White Feminist, and African American
Liberation Ethics.
March 25  About Quandary Ethics; Uses and Misapplications of Quandary Ethics.
Quandaries are Never About One Issue. Why Even Bother?
For class, have read Boulton chaps 63-69; Daly, chaps 14-16.

April 1  Issues of Justice, especially regarding Race and Gender.
Class Discussion.
For class, have read Boulton, chaps 9, 58, 75, 84-86; Daly, chaps 5,18,19;
Fluker, chap 7.

April 15  Issues of Community and Economics.
Class Discussion.
For class, have read Rasmussen. Turn in 4 page reflection paper. You may also want to look at Boulton, chaps 78-82.

April 22  Issues of Human Sexuality.
Class Discussion.
For class, have read Daly, chaps 12, 17, 18; Boulton, chaps 56-62.

April 29  Ecological Issues
Class Discussion.
For class, have read Daly, chaps 19-21; Boulton, chaps 87-92.

In lieu of a final exam, a 12 page paper on The Relationship of Ethical Theory to the Life of Faith is due by 1:00, May 6, 2004.
Please drop it off at my office, room 233, or deliver it to Joyce Krauser, faculty secretary.