



CH 540 Religious and Cultural Contemporary Ethics for Spiritual Caregivers

Spring 2026

**Synchronous Online Mode
Tuesdays, 5:00–6:50 pm (Eastern)**



SYLLABUS

Instructor:

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Office Hours:

Professor Mosher teaches from her office in Penney Farms, Florida. She may be "visited" by making an appointment via email for a Zoom or phone call. Recurring opportunities for office visits will be established and posted in late January 2026.

Course Format:

This course has been designed to fulfill requirements of the "synchronous online" instructional mode, thus requires three hours of online activity per week. The class meets via Zoom for two hours weekly. A third hour each week is spent watching video lectures individually, participating in online discussion forums, and occasionally, collaborating with a classmate. The Canvas website will provide the most accurate and up-to-date instructions for all aspects of the course.

Course Description:

As a core requirement of the MAC curriculum, this course is an exploration from multiple religious perspectives of theological and philosophical foundations for professional ethics; ethical theories appropriate to professional contexts, spiritual and emotional dimensions of human development, organizational behavior, group dynamics, and various political and social drivers (such as race, ethnicity, or gender)—with special attention to the Association of Professional Chaplains Code of Ethics and to the BCCI Common Qualifications and Competencies for Professional Chaplains.* By making extensive use of case-studies and current journal articles, it addresses challenges that particular contexts may bring to religious leaders as it simultaneously improves multireligious literacy. The major deliverable will be a paper laying out a faith-rooted approach to spiritual care integrated with a theory of ethical practice that

* This course gives particular emphasis to the following Common Qualifications and Competencies for Professional Chaplains promulgated addresses by the Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc.: ITP1, ITP2, ITP3, ITP4, ITP5, PIC6, PIC7, PIC8, PIC9, PPS2, PPS3, PPS7, OL1, OL2, OL3, OL4, OL5.

takes seriously the value of self-awareness, thus the need for harmony between belief, word, and action. This assignment will be archived as evidence of achievement of course and program outcomes.

Course Goals:

Completion of this course will enable the student to:

- Give an account of several ethical theories appropriate to contexts in which chaplains serve.
- Draw upon appropriate ethics theories and resources in explaining how a spiritual caregiver can respond to pressing individual, organizational, political, or social issues.
- Articulate a faith-rooted approach to spiritual care integrated with a theory of ethical practice.
- Demonstrate improved multireligious literacy.

Required Textbooks: Each of the five books listed here has a specific role to play. Students are expected to have access to a copy of each throughout this course.

Cadge, Wendy and Shelley Rambo. *Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in the Twenty-First Century: An Introduction* (UNC Press, 2022). ISBN 978-1469667607

Galanti, Geri-Ann. *Caring for Patients from Different Cultures*, fifth edition (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). ISBN 978-0812223118

Lartey, Emmanuel Y. *Postcolonial Images of Spiritual Care: Challenges of Care in a Neoliberal Age* (Pickwick, 2020). ISBN 978-1532685552

Mosher, Lucinda, et al. *With the Best of Intentions: Interreligious Missteps and Mistakes* (Orbis, 2023). ISBN 978-1626985452

Shafer-Landau, Russ. *A Concise Introduction to Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN 978-0190058173

Other Resources

Ali, Muhammad A., et al. *Mantle of Mercy: Islamic Chaplaincy in North America* (Templeton Press, 2022).

Chander, Vineet and Lucinda Mosher, eds. *Hindu Approaches to Spiritual Care: Chaplaincy in Theory and Practice* (Jessica Kingsley, 2020).

Corey, Gerald, et al. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*, 10th edition (Cengage, 2019).

Crawford, S. Cromwell. *Dilemmas of Life and Death: Hindu Ethics in North American Context* (Sri Satguru Publishers, 2016).

Fakhry, Majid. *Ethical Theories in Islam*, second expanded edition (Brill, 1994). {Out-of-Print; available through the course's Canvas site}

Giles, Cheryl A. and Willa B. Miller, editors. *The Arts of Contemplative Care: Pioneering Voices in Buddhist Chaplaincy and Pastoral Work* (Wisdom Publications, 2012).

Harris, Melanie. *Ecowomanism: African American Women and Earth-Honoring Faiths* (Orbis, 2017).

Heidt, Mari Rapela. *Moral Traditions: An Introduction to World Religious Ethics* (Anselm Academic, 2010).

Heim, Maria. *Buddhist Ethics* (Cambridge, 2020).

Keown, Damien, ed. *Contemporary Buddhist Ethics* (Routledge, 2000).

_____. *Buddhist Ethics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2020).

Kravitz, Leonard and Kerry M. Olitzky. *Pirke Avot: A Modern Commentary on Jewish Ethics* (Behrman House, 1993).

Lartey, Emmanuel Y. *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Jessica Kingsley, 2003).

Lovin, Robin D., *An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Goals, Duties, and Virtues* (Abingdon, 2011). ISBN 0687467365

Mabry, John R., ed. *Spiritual Guidance Across Religions: A Sourcebook for Spiritual Directors and Other Professionals Providing Counsel to People of Differing Faith Traditions* (Skylight Paths, 2014).

Newman, Louis E., *An Introduction to Jewish Ethics* (Routledge, 2003).

Oh, Irene, *What Is Religious Ethics? An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2023). ISBN 978-1-138-39359-2

Orr, Robert D. *Medical Ethics and the Faith Factor: A Handbook for Clergy and Health-Care Professionals* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009). [Kindle]

Patel, Eboo. *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016).

Peace, Jennifer Howe, Or N. Rose and Gregory Mobley, editors. *My Neighbor's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation* (Orbis Books, 2012).

Roberts, Stephen B. ed. *Professional Spiritual & Pastoral Care: A Practical Clergy and Chaplain's Handbook* (Skylight Paths, 2012).

Setia, Adi, translator. *Al-Ghazali: The Book of Prophetic Ethics and the Courtesies of Living* (Fons Vitae, 2019). ISBN 978-1941610428

Singer, Peter, ed. *A Companion to Ethics* (Blackwell, 1991). [The Great Ethical Traditions, pp. 43–118]

Singer, Peter and Shih Chao-Hwei. *The Buddhist and the Ethicist: Conversations on Effective Altruism, Engaged Buddhism, and How to Build a Better World* (Shambhala, 2023). ISBN 1645472175

Yetunde, Pamela Ayo. *Casting Indra's Net: Fostering Spiritual Kinship and Community: Wisdom from Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and more* (Shambala, 2023).

Course Structure:

The first Zoom session for this course (the aim of which is orientation to the study of ethics) will be held on January 20th. Thereafter, the course proceeds through twelve modules. Most topics and concepts are presented interreligiously and multiculturally. Review and connection-making is built in. Time is provided for preparation of a major essay delineating one's ethic of spiritual caregiving; review of ethical theories; Module 12 provides for completion of self-assessment matrices based on the APC Code of Ethics and the BCCI Common Qualifications and Competencies for Professional Chaplains.

Module	Theme	Interval	Zoom
Module 1:	Faith, Trust, and Morality	1/21–1/27	January 27
Module 2:	Cultural Fluency & Moral Reasoning	1/28–2/3	February 3
Module 3:	Ethics Theories; Professionalism	2/4–2/10	February 10
Module 4:	Teleology and Philosophical Ethics	2/11–2/17	February 17
Module 5:	Duty Ethics	2/18–2/24	February 24
Module 6:	Virtue Ethics	2/25–3/3	March 3
Module 7:	Aesthetics and Narrative Ethics	3/4–3/10	March 10
Module 8:	Socially Just Spiritual Care	3/11–3/24*	March 24
Module 9:	Multireligious/Multicultural Fluency	3/25–4/7	April 7
Module 10:	Organizational Management	4/8 – 4/14	April 14
Module 11:	Recapitulation	4/15–4/21	April 21
Module 12:	Summary & synthesis	4/22–4/27	April 28

* Includes time out for Reading Week and observance of Eid-al-Fitr

Assessment:

Asynchronous lecture-watching: Pre-recorded lectures to be watched independently are provided via VoiceThread—a tool that invites commenting and question-raising. *20% of final grade*

Discussion forum: Participation in an online discussion forum by posting brief, written responses to a module's materials, then commenting on classmates' posts. *20% of final grade*

Attendance and oral responses: participation in the course's Zoom sessions; possibly, "oral quizzes" on key vocabulary and concepts. *20% of final grade*

Short essays: 500-word compositions synthesizing concepts drawn from two or more course modules. *20% of final grade*

Culminating Essay: A formal statement of one's ethic of spiritual caregiving, as may be expected when applying for board certification as a chaplain. This assignment is archived for future assessment of learning by HIU students. *20% of final grade*

Hartford International University Grading Scale

A (95-100)	Demonstrates excellent mastery of subject matter and superior ability to articulate this; provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations.
A- (90-94)	Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
B+ (87-89)	Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets course expectations.
B (83-86)	Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.
B- (80-82)	Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.
C+ (77-79)	Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.
C (70-76)	Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.
F (below 70)	Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Plagiarism exists when:

- a. the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work,
- b. parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement,
- c. the whole work is copied from another source [web-based or print],
- d. the work submitted contains significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course.

Use of Artificial Intelligence, while not plagiarism exactly, can be a form of academic dishonesty. If you use Grammarly, a translation program, or any other form of AI, you must note that in work you submit. Please be aware that, in footnotes and endnotes, AI has an egregious tendency to invent or embellish titles of books or articles; more often, it fabricates

co-authors or co-editors for scholarly works (which is a serious affront to the legitimate author or editor of that opus). Take particular care to verify that the publication citation information you convey in footnotes or endnotes is accurate. To do otherwise is tantamount to collaboration in deceit or fraud and can call your entire essay into question.

Inclusive Language

Hartford International University for Religion and Peace is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God.

Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures equal access to qualified individuals with disabilities, and prevents discrimination on the basis of a disability. It is the policy of Hartford International University for Religion and Peace to provide reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis, which may mean working with outside social and governmental agencies to provide the necessary range of services for student success. Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations must contact the Student Services Coordinator. Students with disabilities are eligible for disability support services when they are enrolled in courses and they have disclosed their disability and requested related accommodations during enrollment and/or before the start of each semester. All students seeking accommodation must fill out HIU's *Request for Disability Accommodations* form.

Policies and Procedures

For all other questions you might have regarding policies or procedures, please check the HIU website for the student handbook and various official statements.

About Canvas

This course's Canvas website is your primary roadmap for this course. Be sure to explore the site thoroughly before you begin. If you have difficulty navigating or operating any aspect of the site, do take advantage of the "Help" button (indicated by a question-mark). The "live chat" feature works very well; you can expect prompt and clear responses to your questions. You may also phone the Canvas Support Hotline: (877) 249-4494.

If you have questions about course content (or you have tried Canvas Help but are still mystified), please do email or text your professor right away.

Attendance

Active attendance in Zoom sessions is required. If you will be unable to attend a Zoom session please inform the professor in advance. The professor may request evidence of preparation for a session. Active use of the Canvas site is also required. Failure to log on for seven consecutive days is tantamount to absence from class and may incur a penalty.

Communication and Technology

Students will be expected to use their Hartford International email for communication regarding the course. Students must also create a free account with VoiceThread and have access via the VoiceThread app, in Canvas, or in a separate browser window. Within Canvas, the *Announcements* feature will be used to convey information "for the good of the order" and are automatically emailed to all enrollees.