CE2003 Roman Catholic Sexual Ethics (3 Credits)

Fall 2021

Format: Hybrid
If you are unable to meet in person, you can meet via ZOOM. However, the details must be worked out with instructor and Dean.

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Office Hours: Thursdays 10-12 and by appointment

Course Description

This seminar course is designed to introduce students to Catholic thinking on sexuality as experienced in various cultural contexts and in dialogue with other faith traditions. This investigation includes an examination of the official Church teachings and studies by leading theologians that explore topics such as marriage, family life, single life, and celibacy. The goal is to present a wide range of positions within the Christian tradition so that students can discuss and debate the available alternatives and come to their own reasoned positions concerning premarital sex, domestic violence, gender injustice, sexual abuse, and pornography.

The content of the course and the plan for teaching and learning emerges from the Institutional and Program Goals of DSPT. These directives offer guidance not only for specific courses of the Dominican School but also represent the learning goals throughout the GTU. The goals and outcomes target ways that this study contributes to intellectual, moral and spiritual development of students.

Course Goals and Outcomes: These course goals and outcomes help students to meet their program goals for an MA in theology. (See Appendix A)
At the end of the course, students will:

1. **A1; ThG1,2, and 5; DivG1, 2** Have a comprehensive understanding of human sexuality as constitutive to human flourishing through:
   a. Learning how Christian texts, tradition, reason, and experience are used in developing sexual ethics.
   b. Evaluating how Catholic teachings on human sexuality contribute to the wellbeing of persons and the common good in a pluralistic society.
   c. Investigating varying perspectives regarding human sexuality as presented by Christian ethicists.

2. **A1,A2; ThG 1 and 5; DivG 2 and 3** Possess a foundational knowledge of the Catholic Church’s teaching on Marriage, Family, Single Life, and Celibate Life as experienced in various multi-cultural contexts and in dialog with other social groups and religious traditions through:
   a. Recognizing and appreciating diverse contextual approaches concerning human sexuality.
b. Addressing ways cultures receive and inform Catholic teachings

3. Engage in contemporary research and public debate concerning premarital sex, marital sex, domestic violence, gender, sexual abuse, pornography, AIDS, and homosexuality through:
   a. Critically reading and analyzing positions of theologians and religious leaders
   b. Integrating theology with other disciplines as they develop their ethical positions on topics presented.
   c. Presenting their own argumentation in speaking and writing

These Goals and Outcomes will be fulfilled through completing the Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation
THIS COURSE IS A SEMINAR thus in this format each student will be required to view the video lectures, complete readings and writing assignments so to be prepared for class discussion. This course will rely heavily on class discussion, participation, and presentations; consequently, it is vital that students be present and prepared to participate in each class session.

Completion of Assignments
Students must complete each of the assignments stated above to receive a final grade.

1. Class Discussions:
   a. Students will attend all class meetings and come prepared by completing assignments so that they can contribute fully to the class discussions. (30% of grade)
   b. Conversation Starters: Each week 2 students will address/respond to a question based on the material assigned for that class date. These responses will serve as an introduction to the class session.
   c. Summary: Each week 1 student will be selected to summarize the class discussion and pose a question(s) for further study/reflection. The response to this question is due each Wednesday at NOON. It will be posted on Moodle.

2. Research and Dissemination: (25% of grade)
   Mid-term [8-10] Exploring any of the themes from Section I or II of the Course. The paper focuses on the research and discussion of the material assigned to the subsection. It should be comprised of an analytical study of the documents/books/articles that focus on an aspect of human sexuality and the Church’s teaching. You then either support or challenge these ideas/proposals with your own arguments/ideas while also showing how this research contributes to a deeper understanding of human sexuality. (Due November 1)

   Project: Designing a workshop/webinar of human sexuality. This includes, profile of targeted community, proposal for the workshop (rationale, methodology, plan [with workshop resources and bibliography] and a sample lesson plan [in detail].

   The workshop/webinar can explore any of the following: Sex and Virtue, Marriage and Family, or various pastoral concerns and social justice issues in fostering healthy relationships in family, church, and society. (Due December 22)
There will be adjustments for students taking the course for an advance level. The students will write a final research paper of 20 – 25 pages instead of the original final paper of 2,500 words. They will be expected to participate in the discussion at a higher level not only leading the class discussion but also present a particular sexual ethics issue in the class for 45 minutes bringing in special readings and materials assigned by the professor in addition to the introductory readings. They will be able to do critical thinking on the pastoral care on marriage and the family and on issues like divorce; homosexuals; persons living with HIV-AIDS and victims of sexual abuse.

**Grading**

Grading criteria of the above four items: To what extent does the student demonstrate that s/he (1) comprehends the main points of the readings by making connections between themes and ideas of the readings and the topic of the assignments; (2) presents understanding and comments in a clear and timely fashion both orally and in writing; (3) shows creativity or originality in presenting and applying the materials by linking the readings with life experience and social realities.

All assignments and participation receive a point/percentage grade, which will be averaged together and submitted as a letter grade at the end of the class. The following are grade / percentage equivalencies: A: 100-93; A-: 92-90   B+: 89-87; B: 86-83; B-: 82-80   C+: 79-77; C: 76-73; C-: 72-70   F: 69-0

**Technology Requirements**

All students should have access to technology sufficient to complete the course successfully. This includes a computer, laptop, or tablet, with webcam & microphone, with an updated operating system (Windows, Mac, Linux) and an updated internet browser (Chrome, Firefox); high speed internet bandwidth (preferably 10 mbps or greater but at least 3 mbps); Zoom and Moodle software, and the ability to use them. If students experience any difficulties with Moodle, Zoom, or other technology, they can contact Moodle support at moodle@gtu.edu. Students will receive a response within 24 hours

**Course Materials**

The course readings will help us meet the goals articulated in the course description. These documents, books, articles, case studies and media presentations offer insights that will help us deepen our understanding of human sexuality.


Church Documents and other materials will be made available through use of the library reserve or blackboard systems or these websites: Vatican www.vatican.va US Bishops www.usccb.org

Additional Readings on Moodle. The materials will be reproduced and electronically distributed pursuant to the “Fair Use” (sec 107) and the Technology, Education, and Copyright Law (U.S. Code, title 17) Articles and Chapters listed is for one time use only in this course.

Video and Internet Resources: These materials are listed below according to themes and topics. All of these materials are in the public domain.

Other Resources:


Topics and Weekly Assignments

I. Catholic Morality and Human Sexuality: General Introduction
September 13, 20, 27 and October 4
What is sexuality? What are the foundations for Catholic sexual ethics? What is the relationship between care of the body, human sexuality, and our call to Christian discipleship? Can we make a case for sexual virtue?

September 13: The Meaning of Human Sexuality
Introduction:
What is Hook-Up Culture? [22 minute podcast] https://www.scu.edu/the-big-q/hook-up-culture/
September 20: The Mission: Call to Holiness, Call to Justice
Introduction:
Simon, “Six Sexual Lenses” Chapter 1 in Bringing Sex into Focus

September 27: The Case for Sexual Virtue
How might virtue theory deepen our understanding of human sexuality? How is our growth in sexual maturity rooted in a freedom for excellence? What is the relationship between virtue, human sexuality, and care of the body?

October 4: The Case for Sexual Virtue (Continued)
Introduction:
Ted Talk: Maria Ahlin: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBTb71UzPmY
“Why I stopped watching porn” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRJ_QfP2mhU

Texts:
Childerston and Wade, “Pornography, Prostitution, and Polyamory” (On Moodle)
Jay, “Sexual Integrity and the Challenge of Addiction” Chapter 3 in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Morrow, “Pornography and Penance” Chapter 3 in Leaving and Coming Home...
Simon, “Flirtation and Seduction, Casual Sex, Sex as a Commodity Chapters 4, 6, 7 in Bringing Sex into Focus

II: Human Sexuality and Character: Marriage, Family and Vowed Life
October 11, 18 and November 1, 8
Matrimony: What is marital sexuality according to the Catholic Church’s teaching? How do you understand matrimony as a sacrament? How are married persons called to virtue? How are they ministers for the Church and society?

October 11: Marriage and Family Life: Part 1 “Problematic History?”
Introduction: Lisa Cahill Lecture: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMYhNgT9kqM

Texts:
Cahill, Sex, Gender and Christian Ethics Chapters 5-6
Chisholm, “Male and Female in Genesis Accounts” (On Moodle)
McCarthy, “Cohabitation and Marriage Chapter 6 in Leaving and Coming Home

Church Documents
Familiaris Consortio (22 November 1982) Apostolic Exhortation Pope John Paul II (Sections)

October 18: Marriage and Family Life: Part 2
Introduction:
Video: The Joy of Love Fr. Dan Horan OFM Part 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyzIewE6m8A
Part 2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4pJkcCcfls

Texts:
Cloutier and Mattison “Bodies Poured Out in Christ: Marriage Beyond Theology of the Body, “Chapter 9 in Leaving and Coming Home
Hogan and Hogan, “The Joyful Dance of Sexual Connection,” Chapter 4 in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Rubio, The Practice of Sex in Christian Marriage, Chapter 10 in Leaving and Coming Home
Simon, “Marital Sexuality” Chapter 2 in Bringing Sex into Focus

Church Documents Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia 1-5, 9
November 1: Marriage and Family Life: Part 3

Narratives/Case Studies
20 Most Common Problems Faced by Married Couples

Texts:
Ashley, Deblois, O’Rourke and Dubois, “Sexuality and Reproduction Chapter 3 in Health Care Ethics (on Moodle)
Bourg, “Multi-Dimensional Marriage Vocations and Responsible Parenthood,” Chapter 9, in Leaving and Coming Home
O’Malley, “Educating for Sexual Integrity within the Family” Chapter 2 in in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Therrien, “The Practice of Responsible Parenthood, NFP, and the Covenantal Unity of Spouses, chapter 10 in Leaving and Coming Home

Birth Regulation:
IVF and the Catholic Couple: https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7985

Church Documents

November 8: Marriage and Family: Interreligious and Intercultural Dimensions
Texts (TBA)
Speakers on Marriage and Family

November 15: Virginity and Chastity
Introduction:
Simon, “Virginity and Chastity” Chapter 3 in Bringing Sex into Focus
Constitutions of our Congregations

Texts
Fairbanks O.P., Sara, “Love and Intimacy as a Religious Sister,” Chapter 8, in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Keating. Daniel, Growing in “Sexual Integrity as a Consecrated Man,” Chapter 7, in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Quinn, Bishop John M., “Sexual Integrity and the Diocesan Priesthood,” Chapter 9, in Sex and the Spiritual Life
III: Human Sexuality: Same-Sex Attraction, Bisexuality, and Transgender Persons

November 22

What is same-sex attraction, transgender identity, and bisexuality? What are the Church teachings and what should be the Church’s pastoral outreach?

Introduction:
Martin, James, Building a Bridge: The Catholic Church and the LGBT Community
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlnKTpDknZQ

Texts
Austriaco, “Understanding Sexual Orientation as Habitus.” Chapter 5 in Leaving and Coming Home.
Coleman, Gerald, Chapters 1 and 8: “What Does It Mean to Be Homosexual?” and “Homosexuality: Pastoral, Personal and Professional Reflections” Homosexuality: Catholic Teaching and Pastoral Practice. (On Moodle)
Farley, Margaret, “An Ethic for Same-Sex Relations,” in Dialogue About Catholic Social Teaching (on Moodle)
Simon, “Homosexuality” Chapter 5 in Bringing Sex into Focus
Tushnet, “Hidden Treasures for Gay Catholics,” Chapter 6 in Sex and the Spiritual Life

Documents:


b. Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers (10 September 1997) Statement of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on Marriage and Family

c. Ministry to Persons with Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care

November 29: Transgender Identity

Introduction:
Video: Growing Up Trans
https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/growing-up-trans/

Whitehead, James, and Evelyn, “Transgender Lives: From Bewilderment to God’s Extravagance.”
Yarhouse and Sadusky, “Gender Dysphoria” (On Moodle)
IV. Church as Educator and Advocate
December 6 and 13

Current Concerns: Sexual Abuse, Domestic Abuse, Divorce, and Abortion and Politics

How does the Church promote a holistic understanding of sexuality and human development? How do we witness to this holistic approach?

Introduction
Bishop Robert Barron: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6b1q7I2O_c

Texts
Grabowski, Sex and Virtue, Chapter 7: “Teaching Sex: Education, Sexuality, and Character” (On Moodle)
Hathaway, “Conclusion” in Sex and The Spiritual Life.
Keating, James. “Sexual Integrity in Formation of Seminarians” Chapter 10 in Sex and the Spiritual Life
Simon, “Toward Sexual Integrity” Conclusion in Bringing Sex into Focus

Church Documents
Amoris Laetitia, Chapters 6-8
APPENDIX A

DSPT Institutional Goals and Course Goals
https://www.dspt.edu/mission-and-goals

Institutional Goals:

A1 Integrative Thinking: the ability to recognize, understand, retain, integrate, and apply the fundamental principles operative in a field of inquiry, and use them to make synthetic judgments.

A2 Intellectual Humility: an orientation of mind and heart that fosters intellectual collaboration, precludes both rigidity and passivity of mind, and recognizes that contrary opinions are not a threat, but provide the opportunity to test and deepen one's own grasp of the truth.

A3 Self-Direction: the disposition to take primary responsibility for one's own education, manifested in a keen intellectual interest in the topic of studies, and the ability to teach oneself through a habit of skilled and responsible research and resilient exploration.

B1 Ability to Collaborate: expressed in good listening and communication skills which foster decisions stemming from and leading to an open, transparent, and mutually enriching dialog with others in order that the gifts of all can be appropriately acknowledged and utilized.

As a philosophical and theological school we believe that at the end of this course students will have applied integrative thinking, cultivated intellectual humility, and maintained good self direction during the course of study. They will also acquire a solid foundation of the topics explored by this specific course and discover ways for the application of this knowledge through further research, teaching or pastoral care.

MA Theology Program Goals

ThG 1 Foundational knowledge of the fundamental areas of theological inquiry in the Roman Catholic tradition (Biblical Studies, historical theology, dogmatic theology, and moral theology);

ThG 2 Specialized knowledge of one area of theological inquiry (area of concentration) chosen by the student;

ThG 3 Ability to communicate this knowledge effectively through scholarly writing;

ThG 4 Ability to communicate this knowledge effectively through oral presentations and discussions;

ThG 5 Ability to integrate contemporary theological issues with the tradition of the Catholic Church, and where possible with the theological tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas.
Masters of Divinity Program Goals

**DivG 1** [communication] to communicate simply, accurately, and effectively the theological tradition of the Roman Catholic Church through preaching, teaching, and writing;

**DivG 2** [evaluation] to analyze, assess, and critique theological perspectives and situations through scriptural, historical, systematic, and pastoral theological methods, and to assist others in doing the same;

**DivG 3** [application] to apply Catholic teaching and theology, especially as exemplified by St. Thomas Aquinas, to pastoral situations, recognizing both the difficulties and the opportunities they present;

**DivG 4** [collaboration] to lead and to work collaboratively with others in a just, charitable, and generous manner, respecting the relevant cultural, social, and ecclesial circumstances, all the while maintaining professional, ethical boundaries;

**DivG 5** [Church-uniting] to foster Church communion, demonstrated through consistent dedication to community life, participation in prayer, and leading others in worship and theological reflection

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**GOALS of MA Program**

**GTU MA 1** Obtain a basic understanding of theological or religious studies as preparation for doctoral work or as an academic foundation or secondary school teaching, educational or social justice ministries, or religious leadership in non-profit sector

**GTU MA 2** Engage in ecumenical and interreligious learning opportunities through respectful dialogue

**GTU MA 3** Demonstrate their focused learning of a particular theological or religious concentration by producing a research project of high academic standards