



## THEO 454 – The Morality of War and Peace – Spring 2017

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Office hours\*:

3:30 - 4:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays

2:00 - 3:00 p.m., Wednesdays

Other times by appointment

*\* Appointments are not required but are welcome, even during normal office hours. This helps insure that I don't get called away to another meeting, and avoids scheduling conflicts with other students.*

### Course Description

Against the background of historical debates within the Christian tradition, this course examines circumstances in which military force may be justified and the moral constraints that apply to its conduct. Major attention to concrete case studies will familiarize students with standard just war criteria and develop their capacity to apply them in difficult situations. Students explore emerging debates over questions such as: Who decides whether a war is just? What place does war have in the evolving international system? What prospects has Gandhian nonviolence opened up for transarmament? Is there an obligation for humanitarian intervention even in the absence of national self-interest? Prerequisites: Theology 101 and one 200- or 300-level Theology course.

### Objectives

1. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view *through...*
  - *close reading of texts – both historical texts that continue to influence Christian moral reflection on war, and contemporary positions grappling with new challenges.*
  - *respectful engagement and debate between diverse voices in the Christian tradition, public square, and our own classroom.*

2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories, *specifically ...*
  - *the standard just war criteria for determining when it may be moral to go to war, how war might be waged morally, and what moral commitments follow a war.*
  - *major varieties of active nonviolence and Christian pacifism.*
  - *ongoing challenges for both just-war and pacifist approaches.*
3. Learning to apply course material to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions by...
  - *working through real-world case studies in the classroom.*
  - *working in a team to present a group report*
4. Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values *through...*
  - *regular self-reflective writing*
  - *honest, conscientious, and respectful participation in all of the above!*

### Writing across the Curriculum

Designation: Writing to Learn (WTL). Students complete a series of informal, low-stakes writing assignments that promote critical thinking and facilitate learning course content.

### Course Readings & Resources

- Stassen, Glen, ed. *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2008.
- Winright, Tobias, and Laurie Johnston, eds. *Can War Be Just in the 21st Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.
- Online reading “packet” (Blackboard)

**Also:** All students are required to use a loose-leaf binder with 8.5 x 11-inch paper (no spiral notebooks!) as a learning journal for note-taking, interaction with readings, and in-class writing exercises.

Assignments & Evaluation	Assignment	Due	Value
	Participation	consistently	10%
	Quizzes	regularly but unpredictably	10%
	Learning journals	spot-checked occasionally, and handed in on 3/15 & 5/10	20%
	Unit syntheses and reflections	one week after close of each unit	20%
	Group reports	4/19, 4/26, or 5/3, based on sign up	20%
	Final exam	5/17 @ 6 p.m.	20%

## Truth in advertising

Central to my commitment as a professor to you my students is that I show respect for diverse viewpoints in the classroom and even-handedness as I present the arguments that have shaped ethical discernment in the Christian tradition. I believe I can follow through on that commitment best by being transparent about my own positions when appropriate, rather than pretending an unrealistic neutrality concerning some of the toughest issues that human beings face. While respectfully teaching arguments for the just-war tradition and training you to use its criteria conscientiously, therefore, I will not attempt to hide my own roots in the tradition of Christian pacifism and my continuing advocacy of nonviolent alternatives to war. Here are my reasons for this transparency:

- As an active scholar and “public intellectual”, many of my own positions are only a Google search away in any case!
- The teaching of the Catholic Church and many other churches today is that the just-war itself is grounded in a certain kind of bias known as the “presumption against the use of force,” which it shares with the tradition of Christian pacifism. According to the just-war tradition itself, therefore, war is only justifiable as last resort; that in turn is only meaningful if people are well-prepared to resort first to the practices of active nonviolence.
- The default position in American culture tends to be an unexamined trust in military solutions to international conflicts. Thus, a stronger-than-usual presentation of arguments favoring nonviolence over militarism is often necessary to actually achieve an even-handed balance in the classroom.
- ROTC students, future policymakers, and ordinary citizens committed to using just-war criteria conscientiously may be all-the-more prepared to exercise responsible citizenship if they have learned this tradition from a respectful skeptic probing it carefully.
- Within a liberal-arts curriculum, discomfort is never a reason to avoid studying a challenging subject, and the subject of war should never be a comfort zone. A great source of injustice toward soldiers and veterans is the expectation of civilians that those in uniform will shoulder all the risk and suffering so that the rest of us can live in comfortable bubbles. The least that students far removed from war zones can do is to accept uncomfortable challenges to their worldviews.
- Taking this pedagogical stance offers me the opportunity – indeed, it requires me – to model what I will be expecting of you: respectful engagement with the views of others and self-reflective testing of your own assumptions.

## More on assignments

- **Quizzes**

While the emphasis in this class will be on engagement with ideas and arguments, processed dialogically through self-reflective WTL assignments, literacy concerning key terms and concepts is still required to follow Christian debates concerning warfare. In order to assess your mastery of these, there will be occasional pop quizzes based on readings and class work. Quizzes will be multiple choice, matching, or identification of terms.

- **Learning journal**

This ongoing assignment will provide the backbone for the course as you both “write to learn” and prepare the raw material for other assignments. Your journal should follow a double-column format:

- In the left-hand column on each 8½ x 11 in. page you should include notes on readings, class notes, personal journal entries, and so on.
  - However extensive your notes on readings, you should be sure that for every article or chapter, you record what you believe to be the author’s core argument or thesis, along with 2-5 major sub-points or pieces of evidence. Ask yourself what you would need in order to be prepared to summarize the reading in class, if called upon.
  - Class notes will include both your own regular note-taking and low-stakes, in-class WTL exercises. It would be wise to distinguish clearly between different kinds of entries.
  - Personal journal entries should not be so personal that you hesitate to share them with your professor or peers. Suggested topics: surprises, challenges, breakthroughs, connecting dots in fresh ways, etc.
- The right-hand column is for various kinds of dialogues with the material in the other:
  - Questioning, affirming, cross-referencing, or expanding on arguments in readings.
  - Comments from peers as they interact with your notes and journal entries in class.
  - Self-critical reflections as you look back on earlier notes and entries.
- Pre-class learning journal work can be either typed or (legibly!) handwritten. Typed material must be printed off, punched, and added to your binder, so that it is available for peer interaction or spot-checking by your professor. If you do not have ready access to a three-ring hole punch, one will be available in class.
- Spot-checking? Yes, while there are two due dates when you will hand in your learning journals for formal grading, you should expect occasional spot-checking in class in order to incentivize participation, assure accountability, and help you do your best.
- This is a low-stakes assignment in two senses:
  1. Although the journal as a whole is worth 20 percent of your final grade, any one entry in your learning journal will constitute only a fraction of that grade.
  2. While you obviously need to communicate well enough that your peers and professor can engage your thinking, direct work on writing proficiency is not one of the objectives, so you will not be graded on the mechanics of writing.

- **Unit syntheses and reflections**

At the close of every unit (if not earlier) I will hand out and/or post on Blackboard a reflection prompt or writing exercise that asks you to engage the material for that unit. It will be due at the beginning of the following class, in hard copy.

- Unless otherwise indicated, the expected length for each synthesis/reflection will be 800-1200 words (approximately 1½ - 2 pages, single-spaced).
- This is a medium-stakes assignment in two senses:
  1. Again, while you obviously need to communicate well enough that your peers and professor can engage your thinking, direct work on writing proficiency is not one of the objectives, so you will not be graded on the mechanics of writing.

2. Although no one synthesis/reflection constitutes a major “paper,” together they will add up to 20 percent of your final grade:  $20\% \div 6 = 3.33\%$  each.

- **Grading criteria**

So if assignments are “low-” or “medium-stakes” writing, how are they graded? The key criterion for grading is evidence of sustained self-reflection and critical thinking:

1. “Evidence” means that writing *does* have to communicate, even if we are not stressing over grammar, style, or other mechanics of writing. It should be on-point and focused even if exploratory, not going on tangents or wildly stream-of-conscious.
2. “Sustained” means not falling behind or missing assignments, doing them thoughtfully and not in haste or with a perfunctory minimalist response to prompts.
3. Above all, “self-reflection and critical thinking” means
  - respectful engagement with the views of others.
  - self-reflective testing of your own assumptions.

Unless otherwise tweaked for specific assignments, here is a rubric to explain expectations:

**Note:** Overall scores are adjusted for late or missing entries; the criteria below describe what contributes to an overall score in that range. Even if you have some fabulous entries (in the A range) but have missing or brief minimal entries, your score will drop into lower ranges.

**D range: Yikes.** The entries, overall, are done in obvious haste; they are too brief, off-topic, or difficult to interpret. The writing is poorly organized, illogical, or difficult to understand. There is little or no reflection, and little or no interaction with other voices in our readings or classroom.

**C range: Ho-hum.** The entries are a bit underwhelming. They respond to the task or offer reflection but minimally, without sustained insight or thoughtfulness. They are sometimes off topic or hard to understand. Or they are too chain-of-conscious, lacking a logical progression of ideas. They do not fully respond to the assigned task and/or are too brief for a reader to engage in much further conversation. They do not seem aware of relevant course material or don’t often refer to it. They respond only minimally to other voices in our readings or classroom.

**B range: Good.** The entries show thoughtfulness and attention to the specific task(s) at hand. They are self-reflective, though not as fully as they might in length and complexity. They are reasonably well written, with some decent observations, insights, and creativity. They may have a few minor lapses in content, structure, or readability, but this is not too distracting, or else they do not fully explore the ideas they raise. They bring in material from the course when relevant but could do so a bit more. There is some degree of interaction with other voices in our readings or classroom.

**A range: Really good.** This is reserved for the most thoughtful, insightful, and clearest entries, ones that demonstrate not only an understanding of relevant principle(s) or issue(s) but an innovative, intriguing, and engaging response to prompts, readings, or discussion. There is real substance—exploration at some length and with some depth. There is considerable dialogue with other voices in our readings or classroom.

- **Group reports**

During the last month of class, groups of 2-3 students will present 20-minute reports, each on one of the ten “normative practices” in the book *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*. The claim that just peacemaking theory presents is that

these practices offer realistic, historically documentable strategies for reducing warfare and building peace. Reports should therefore:

- Summarize what the practice is and how it works.
- Explain at least one of the historical case studies that the author(s) present(s) as evidence for the effectiveness of the practice, or research and present a newer one.
- Assess the claims the author(s) make(s) about how the practice offers a proven a realistic way to reduce warfare and build peace.
- Continue to evince critical thinking and self-reflection by making connections to other readings, issues, and discussions we have encountered in the class, while recognizing and responding to objections even when they challenge students' own assumptions.

Sign up will occur early in the second half of the semester.

- **Final exam**

By the time we get to the final exam you should have a good idea of what to expect:

- About one third of the test will be similar to quizzes, and will allow you to demonstrate familiarity with key terms and concepts in this field.
- About two thirds of the test will be similar to synthesis/reflection assignments, offering you a final opportunity to synthesize the course as a whole and reflect on how your thinking about issues of war and peacemaking in the Christian tradition have developed, evolved, or changed over the course of the semester. Prompts will be available in advance of the test, but you will write your responses in the allotted final exam time slot.

- **PS: Extra credit**

Attendance at some special campus lectures and other events may qualify for extra credit, as announced by the professor. A student may gain extra credit in one of two different ways. (1) Take notes at the event and hand them in to your professor in order to make up for an unexcused absence in your *participation grade*. (2) Or hand in your notes and also write a 250-word reflection on the event in order to make up for missed quizzes/

## **Other policies**

**About reading assignments:** One can no more study theology (or other fields in the humanities) without reading than one can study the sciences without doing laboratory experiments. That does not mean students need to obsess over every name or term or fact or date that appears in readings. Part of the art of reading is learning to separate key concepts and central arguments from the supportive evidence a writer provides along the way (cf. objective no. 1 on page 1 of this syllabus). As a WAC Writing-to-Learn class, only a small portion of your grade will directly require recognition or recall of terms, names, or facts. In other ways, however, your professor expects to see evidence that all students are engaged with assigned readings.

**About attendance:** Significant absences will affect your grade in various ways. Each student will be allowed two unexcused absences over the course of the semester, but after that each unexcused absence will reduce a student's participation grade by 5%. The direct hit on your

participation grade is only the beginning, however. It is rarely possible to fully “make up” for missed classes – especially evening classes meeting only once a week. If you must miss a class, you (not your professor) are responsible to compensate as best you can by borrowing notes or handouts from other students. (Absences will only be excused for medical and family emergencies, or for participation in UST-related events as explicitly requested by other UST faculty or staff.)

**About promptness:** I reserve the right to reduce the grade on any late assignment by up to half of a letter grade per day late, except in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

**About in-class use of electronics:** (1) Smart phones and other hand-held devices may not be used in class for any purpose other than to access readings. If you are anticipating a possible phone call or text because of an emergency, notify your professor ahead of time, and then step into the hallway to respond to the message. (2) Students who wish to use laptops or tablets in class to access readings must notify the professor by email or office appointment during the first week of class to explain their learning practices, how they will avoid distractions in class, and will demonstrate this. Finally, a general word to the wise: Professors can tell when you are trying to multi-task in the classroom. Even when your screen is not visible to a professor, your body language inevitably betrays the fact that your use of screen and keyboard are out of synch with classroom processes. Thus, attempts to multi-task will seriously affect your participation grade.

**About academic integrity:** The requirements of academic integrity preclude the unacknowledged use of other people’s words and ideas in one’s own writing. Such use is known as “plagiarism.” Information on [UST policies regarding academic integrity](#) is available in the [student policy book](#). It is your responsibility as a student to understand these policies, recognize plagiarism, and avoid it. As applied to this class, academic integrity does not preclude discussions on readings, brainstorming, or mutual assistance in formulating approaches to assignments. Collaboration must end, however, when each student begins writing. Your written work must be your own.

**For students with disabilities:** Academic accommodations will be provided for qualified students with documented disabilities including but not limited to mental health diagnoses, learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, chronic medical conditions, visual, mobility, and hearing disabilities. Students are invited to contact the Disability Resources office about accommodations early in the semester. Appointments can be made by calling 651-962-6315 or in person in Murray Herrick, room 110. For further information, you can locate the Disability Resources office on the web at <http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>.

<b>Grading scale</b>	97-100	A+	80-83	B-	64-66	D
	94-96	A	77-79	C+	60-63	D-
	90-93	A-	74-76	C	< 60	F
	87-89	B+	70-73	C-		
	84-86	B	67-69	D+		

## Class schedule

Your professor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule of topics, readings, and tasks. Any changes will be minor and announced in advance.

Date	Units	Topics	Readings & other assignments
2/1	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we think about war? How would Jesus think about war?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This syllabus!</li> <li>Matthew 5:1-16,21-26,38-48 (handout)</li> <li>Sample of classical interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount (handout)</li> </ul>
2/8	I. What do we do with Jesus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classic interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount</li> <li>Overview: Christian pacifism, just war theory and variations</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Baseline synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cahill, "Just War and the Gospel," ch. 1 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>USCCB, <i>The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace</i> (read intro through the end of section B on the "Two Traditions: Nonviolence and Just War")</li> <li>Niebuhr, "Why the Christian Church is not Pacifist"</li> </ul>
2/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both/ands</li> <li>None-of-the-aboves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yoder, "Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism"</li> <li>Lopez, "The Ethical Legacy of Dirty Harry"</li> </ul>
2/22	II. Who is the "we" here?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What kind of people must we be?</li> <li>What kind of citizenship do we practice?</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unit I synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stiltner, "A Taste of Armageddon," ch. 2 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>Powers, "Self-Determination and the Ethics of Force," ch. 5 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> </ul>
3/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What kind of church must we be?</li> <li>I pledge allegiance to...?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winright, "Introduction" to <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>Bell, "Can a War Against Terror Be Just?"</li> <li>Schlabach, "Signs of that Peace"</li> </ul>
3/8	III. Just war theory as "traditional righteousness"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just war criteria in detail</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unit II synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allman, "Postwar Justice"</li> <li>Winright, "The (Im)Morality of Cluster Munitions, ch. 3 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>Scheid, "Torture, Terror, and Just War," ch. 6 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> </ul>
3/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DOD Law of War</li> <li>Does the just-war theory have "teeth?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opongo, "Just War and Its Implications for African Conflicts" ch. 10 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>Yoder, "Just War Tradition: Is It Credible?"</li> <li>Reid, "The Forgotten Case of Louis Negre"</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hand in notebook</b>

Date	Units	Topics	Readings & other assignments
3/29	Interlude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The possibility of thinking like Jesus about war, after all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stassen, <i>Just Peacemaking</i> introductory chapter</li> <li>Schlabach, "'Confessional Nonviolence' and the Unity of the Church" (skim 125-29, read 130-36, skim 137-40)</li> </ul>
4/5	IV. War in the modern world as a "vicious cycle"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just-war thinkers think twice</li> <li>Diagnosing vicious cycles</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unit III synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnston, "Just War Theory and Environmental Destruction," ch. 7 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>John Kiess, "Civilian Vulnerability in Contemporary War," ch 11 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> </ul>
4/12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other collateral damage</li> <li>Learning from wounded warriors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winright &amp; Jeschke, "Combat and Confession," ch. 12 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> <li>Second Vatican Council, <i>Gaudium et spes</i>, sections 79-82, "Avoidance of War"</li> <li>Pope Francis, World Day of Peace Message 2017</li> </ul>
4/19	V. Active nonviolence & other "transforming initiatives"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The power of active nonviolence</li> <li>Just Peacemaking practices I</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unit IV synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cartwright &amp; Thistlethwaite, "Support Nonviolent Direct Action," ch 1. in <i>Just Peacemaking</i></li> <li>Skim chs. 2-4 of <i>Just Peacemaking</i></li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Student presentations</b>
4/26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The possibility of scaling up</li> <li>Just Peacemaking practices II</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharp, "Civilian-based defense as a peace strategy"</li> <li>Skim chs. 5, 7 &amp; 9 of <i>Just Peacemaking</i></li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Student presentations</b>
5/3	VI. From just war to just peace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Just Peacemaking practices III</li> <li><i>Just</i> just policing?</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unit V synthesis/reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skim chs. 6, 8 &amp; 10 of <i>Just Peacemaking</i></li> <li>Schlabach, "Just Policing, Not War"</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Student presentations</b>
5/10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching for a new consensus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Himes, "Humanitarian Intervention and the Just War Tradition," ch. 4 in <i>Can War Be Just?</i></li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hand in notebook</b>
5/17			<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Final Exam, 6:00-8:00 p.m.</b>