



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Understanding ethics from a Christian Perspective

Foundation Studies



Mr. John Vianney Ahumuza

jahumuza@ucu.ac.ug

0779364080

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Course Description

- *The course introduces you to the basic concepts of ethics with particular emphasis on the Christian perspective.*
- *It gives you opportunity to apply ethical principles to various challenges today*

Cont'n...

- ***It introduces some ethical systems (types of thinking that underlie the values and morals in our society)***

Course outline

- ***CHAPTER ONE: Introducing Ethics***
- ***PART I: ETHICAL SYSTEMS***
- ***Traditional African Perspectives on Ethics***
 - ***Ubuntu Ethics***
 - ***Old and New Testament Foundations***
 - ***Classical Western Ethics***
 - ***Modern and Postmodern Ethics***

PART II: APPLIED ETHICS

- *Church and Society*
- *Professional Ethics*
- *Making Ethical Progress*
- *Sexuality and Marriage*
- *War and Capital Punishment*
- *Wealth and Poverty*

Description...

- ***Teaching Methodology***
 - **Lectures**
 - **Tutorials**
- ***Evaluation***
 - **10% attendance & participation**
 - **20 % weekly assignments**
 - **10% Ethical Analysis Papers**
 - **10% test**
 - **End of semester exam– 50%**

Objectives

- *Gain understanding of Christian ethics*
- *Apply the knowledge to personal life and current moral problems*



Cont'n...

- ***Give opportunity to give particular focus on African perspectives and ethical problems***

Cont'n...

- ***Develop ability to articulate the place of God in ethics and the usefulness of ethics in contemporary world***

Why should we waste our time?

- **To appreciate the concept of thinking & practicing a good way of living**
- **Know the difference between JOB-SKILLS and LIFE-SKILLS.**

Continuation

Ethical awareness is a fundamental part of the professional practice of professional workers. Their ability and commitment to act ethically is an essential aspect of the quality of the service offered to those who use seek professional services.

What is involved in ethics

- ***Good conduct***
- ***Right vs wrong***
- ***Good Vs bad***
- ***Customs,values,customery codes***
- ***Integrity & respect***
- ***What ought to be done vs what should'nt be done***

Continued

***Ethics observes human conduct
& establishes that there are
some actions that are:***

- Good praised
- Bad
- Ought to be done or not to be done

Origin of morality

Primitive societies thought about 'good way of living' and that 'there existed a bad way of living':

If people lived a good way of living there would be:

- ***Good relationships***
- ***Tranquility***
- ***Peace.***

Continued

- *Customery morality*
- *Customery codes/rules*

All this was accompanied by punishment if one violated these rules

Meaning of ethics

- **From Greek word – ethos = character or custom of a given people or place.**
- **Study of morality in all its forms(process of inquiry & reflection).**

Cont'n...

- ***Customs refer to standards of right and wrong that people have and cherish.***
- ***The object of ethics is human conduct(Behavior)***
- ***There is a close relationship between ethics and morality***

Morality defined

- **Morality refers to any set of norms or standards-traditional or otherwise-that define , guide and regulate good(acceptable) behavior among human beings living together in society.**

- Note:

Gerald .A. Bannaars(1993), Ethics and development, East African publishers p,13

Sources of morality

- I. Religion- divine revelation & supernatural source of standards(laws of God as revealed in holy writings.**
- 2. Society- Social institutions e.g family, clan, elders, schools etc.**
- 3. Human person-human reason & conscience**

Cont'n...

- ***The study of ethics examines the morality of a person(s) and these are the norms of behavior that exist to establish whether they are viable (acceptable) or not.***

Ethics vs Morals

- ***Ethics and morals both relate to “right” and “wrong” conduct.***
- ***However, ethics refer to the series of rules provided to an individual by an external source. e.g. their profession.***
- ***On the other hand, morals refer to an individual’s own principles regarding right and wrong***

Ethics & morals compared

- ***Ethics defines how things are according to the rules***
- ***Morals defines how things should work according to an individuals' ideals and principles.***

Comparison

- ***Source of ethics; Social system/External***
- ***Source of morals; Individual/ Internal***

Continued

- We *practice ethics because society says it is the right thing to do.*
- We *practice morals because we believe in something being right or wrong.*

Continued

- ***Failure to practice ethics leads to peer/societal disapproval, or even be fired from our job.***
- ***Failure to practice morals leads to different effects on different people e.g they may feel uncomfortable, remorse, depressed etc.***

Famous quotation

- ***In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.***
(Emmanuel Kant)

Cont'n...

- ***In this course we examine
using Christian principles***



Ethical challenges faced by professionals in Uganda today

- ***Corruption***
- ***Conflict between organization goals and individual beliefs***
- ***Lack of exposure***
- ***Balancing between family demands and work demands***
- ***Sexual harassments.***
- ***etc***

Comments on state of our society

- ***In Uganda there more incidence of HIV/AIDS in married than in unmarried.***
- ***White crime has gone up in almost all countries – criminals are cleverer.***

Cont'n...

- ***The prisons are overflowing or expanding in each country on earth.***
- ***Crimes that cannot be legislated are far worse e.g. hatred, malice, phobia, lust, etc***

Main Texts

- *The Holy Bible*
- *Understanding Ethics from Christian Perspective – Course work book*

Cont'n...

- ***Atkinson David (1995) New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology***
- ***Clark David, et al 1996 Readings in Christian Ethics: Issues and Application, Vol. 2***

Concluding Remarks

- *It is not a waste of time to think about a good way of living.*
- *There is a lot of benefits associated with being good.*
- *Success in life is associated with good morals.*