

CONTEMPORARY MORAL & SOCIAL ISSUES

Mrs. Carolyn James

Scope and Sequence

In this course, students address personal and social issues that relate to the development of a mature conscience, rooted in Christian principles. We will explore the concerns of personal choice, responsibility, the fundamental dignity of the human person, freedom, law, authority, and the gospel of peace and justice as they relate to the individual's moral choices and spiritual growth. As additional sources for topics of discussion, we will use articles, videos, and documentaries about current personal, local and global issues facing our society.

Students completing the 11th grade Contemporary Moral and Social Issues course will:

- Recognize the importance of personal responsibility in making well thought out decisions, and realize how the consequences of those decisions affect others and the world around them.
- Demonstrate familiarity with and the ability to apply the steps for decision-making based upon Christian principles, human dignity, and compassion for others.
- Identify the effects of sin on society and the individual, and realize that forgiveness is essential to gaining personal freedom.
- Realize the importance of developing a well-formed conscience, and recognize its right relationship to authority.

TEXTS: ***GROWING IN CHRISTIAN MORALITY*** by Ahlers, Allaire and Koch
 CMI Folder of printed materials

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Morality: Choosing the Person You Become

- definitions of morality*
- society's values*
- what's good?*
- moral maturity*
- importance of self-esteem*

Chapter 1 Test

II. Christian Vision of Morality

- Jesus, model of full humanness*
- who we are / where we're going*
- importance of love*
- how we are called to respond: virtues*

Chapter 2 Test

III. Helps Along the Way

- the gift of relatedness*
- tuning in to God / the gift of grace*
- our community of relationships*
- help from society*
- teachings from Scriptures / Church*
- Sin / God's mercy / reconciliation*

Chapter 3 Test

IV. Moral Decision Making

- the LISTEN process*
- understanding conscience*

Chapter 4 Test

V. Wise Judgment: Good Conscience in Action

- a. *virtues and character*
- b. *environmental ethics*
- c. *sticky situations / rationalization*

Chapter 5 Test

VI. Justice: Love's Minimum

- a. *love and justice*
- b. *essential human rights*
- c. *dimensions of justice*
- d. *service and the common good*

Chapter 6 Test

VII. Courage: Facing Fear for the Sake of the Good

- a. *what is a hero?*
- b. *overcoming our fears*
- c. *the way of Jesus*

Chapter 7 Test

VIII. The Journey to Wholeness

- a. *wholeness, not perfection*
- b. *the true meaning of freedom*
- c. *self love vs. selfishness*
- d. *mature relationships*

Chapter 8 Test

IX. Honesty: Creating Trust

- a. *the meaning of integrity*
- b. *honesty vs. lying*

X. Respect for Persons

- a. *the Golden Rule*
- b. *to be valued vs. to be used*
- c. *sex and violence*
- d. *prejudice and stereotyping*

XI. Compassion: Solidarity with Those Who Suffer

- a. *the homeless and marginalized*
- b. *Jesus, the model*

XII. Respect for Creation

- a. *environmental ethics*
- b. *global problems and solutions*
- c. *renewing the earth*

XIII. Reverence for Human Life

- a. *a consistent life ethic*
- b. *technology and morality*
- c. *euthanasia*
- d. *death penalty*
- e. *war*

XIV. Peacemaking: Handling Conflict with Creativity

- a. *creative strategies*
- b. *loving one's enemies*
- c. *meaning of forgiveness*
- d. *working toward justice and peace*

FINAL EXAM

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Plagiarism - Academic integrity is expected and the policy outlined in the *Student/Parent Handbook* will be strictly followed.

Study materials – Students will not be allowed to go to their lockers during class. After one warning, a student will lose five points each time she forgets to bring what she needs. You are expected to bring all essential books and materials to class every day.

Late Assignments – Late homework assignments will NOT be accepted. Parents will be notified if there is a pattern of missing assignments. A valid request for an extension on any assignment or project will be considered *in advance* or in the case of a family or personal emergency. Please see me, as this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When using a computer for your assignments, SAVE OFTEN and PRINT EARLY! Malfunctioning computers, disks or printers are not acceptable excuses for late work unless accompanied by a note of verification from a parent.

Attendance – If you are absent, it is *your* responsibility to find out about any assignments missed and to catch up on class notes. Please check the class website for assignments. If you miss a quiz or a test due to an excused absence, you must meet with me to schedule an alternate testing period. Excessive absences may result in a student's final grade being lowered by 10%. Ordinarily, if a student accumulates ten or more absences during the semester, she will not receive academic credit.

Tardiness and Personal Needs – You are expected to be on time for class with all essential books and materials, and having taken care of all your personal needs such as snacks, beverages and bathroom visits.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Four reflection papers and/or class presentations are required in which students are expected to integrate material read and discussed in class with their own insights and opinions. Papers are to be typed, double-spaced, in a simple font, no less than 12 point.

Chapter tests, reading quizzes, writing/oral presentation projects, oral participation and a comprehensive will be given. **(80 % of final grade).**

The final exam is worth 20% of your final class grade.

Oral participation in class is **essential** and will be reflected on your **final grade**. Students are expected to participate actively and respectfully in class with thoughtful questions, reflections, or other input.

Ms. James' office hours are by appointment, Tues.-Thurs. after school.

