



## **CHTH131**

### **God and Ethics in the Modern World**

### **Short Course Description**

**Lecturer: Professor Murray Rae**

### **Brief Introduction to the Paper**

This paper offers an introductory study of the foundations and character of Christian ethics within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Our ethical judgements are shaped by a range of factors, predominantly the culture in which we have been nurtured, so it is important to understand something about how our cultures have been formed and to recognise some of their leading assumptions about the nature and purpose of human life. In Aotearoa New Zealand a range of cultural strands shape our life together, Māori, Pacific, Western, among others. While the Western cultural story has been shaped to a significant extent by the biblical story, in the Modern era Western culture has developed in ways that are often at odds with the biblical understanding of the nature and purpose of human life. The biblical story has also been woven into the cultural genealogies of Māori and Pacific peoples. We will try to understand how these strands of cultural influence shape our thinking about ethical issues before then considering the Christian story and the way it challenges us to think about all things in the light of God's purposes for the world as they are revealed in Jesus.

### **Assessment**

This paper is assessed by means of online discussion (10%), an 1800 word essay (40%), and a two hour examination (50%).

### **Teaching Schedule**

The **campus class** will be taught through 2 x 1hr lectures per week.

The **distance class** will be taught through 7 x 1 hr and 20min videoconferences plus optional online 'drop-in sessions'.

Timetable details are available at <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/> (See the hyperlinks under "Timetables", on the right hand side)

## **Learning Outcomes**

Students who complete this paper will:

- Develop an understanding of the 'big ideas' that have shaped contemporary New Zealand society
- Learn to critically engage with the prevailing assumptions of contemporary culture
- Become acquainted with some common approaches to ethics.
- Learn to consider the contrast between Western and other cultural perspectives
- Develop an understanding of the foundations and character of Christian ethics
- Critically analyse ministry practices of actual congregations and ministry organisations working in multicultural settings both overseas and in Aotearoa
- Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the relevance for New Zealand of multicultural ministry models from Australia, North America and Europe, where most books and articles on the topic originate

## **For more information**

Please direct any administrative enquiries to the Theology Administrator:

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