

# Foundations of Work and Vocation

NON 310  
Elijah Project

Dr. Greg Carmer, Ph.D.  
Spring 2014

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## **Description:**

This four credit, integrative seminar explores issues of work and vocation, drawing upon Biblical, theological, historic and philosophical sources. Attention will be given to situating questions of calling and life work within biblical teaching and theological reflection on work, ethical frameworks of responsible behavior and cognitive theory as a basis for forming moral judgments. The following questions will drive the course readings and discussions: What does Scripture say about the role of work in human life? How does Christian theology help us understand the significance of work? How are our choices concerning work informed by broader ethical frameworks? How are such decisions connected to the responsibility of being human?

## **Objectives:**

- 1) To explore foundational thought on the role of work in human life and theological perspectives on vocation.
  - 2) To become familiar with attitudes towards and perspectives on work held at different times by different thinkers and critique those perspectives on the basis of their implication for human life and Christian anthropology.
  - 3) To consider basic frameworks of ethical behavior as a means of evaluating meaningful human action, in particular, teleological, deontological and ecological models.
  - 4) To provide students with theoretical concepts and reflective practice in connecting knowing and doing by situating moral behavior within a broader framework of ethical theory.
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## **Course Requirements:**

A) Class attendance: The method of instruction will be a combination of lecture, class discussion, writing, reflection and self directed discovery. As an upper level seminar course, students will be expected to come to class prepared to engage the material; staying abreast of the scheduled reading will be essential for realizing the full value of the course. Because of the extensive use of class conversation and small group discussion, every member's experience is wed to that of the others.

B) Service-Learning: Each student is required to complete at least twelve (12) hours of involvement with an outside organization or individual over the course of the semester. Service opportunities, parameters, and expectations will be provided in the first week of class.

C) Readings:

**Required texts:**

- Creation Regained*, A. Walters. Eerdmans, 1982  
*The Fabric of Faithfulness, Second Edition* Steve Garber. IVP, 2007  
*The Fabric of this World*, Lee Hardy. Eerdmans, 1990  
*Heaven is Not My Home*, P. Marshall. Thomas Nelson, 1999  
*The Responsible Self*, H. Richard Niebuhr. HarperCollins, 1963  
*Leading Lives That Matter: What We Should do and Who We Should Be*, Mark Schwehn & D. Bass. Eerdmans, 2006 (selections)  
Course Reading Packet – (Supplied by instructor)

**Summer reading:**

- The Call*, Os Guinness. Word, 1998  
*Common Fire*, Daloz, Keen & Parks. Beacon Press, 1996

D) Reading Reports: five (5) reading reports that summarize in one or two pages the major ideas of the texts we read. Check reading schedule for due dates.

E) Reflective Essays: three (3) reflective essays of 750 - 1000 words each, responding to the reading and reflecting on community service experience will be required. Additional instructions will be provided for each assignment. Check reading schedule for due dates.

F) Summer internship: Each participant will complete a six-week internship in her or his area of interest. The Director and Assistant Director will assist in locating internships which will provide an opportunity to explore an area of work in which the student is interested. Small stipends are available to offset the loss of income for non-paying or low-paying positions.

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**Grading:**

The final grade will be based upon five elements: 1) evidence of comprehension of material and ability to connect it with self-insight and other educational experiences displayed in class discussions; 2) completion of Reading Reports; 3) Reflective Essays; 4) completion of Service-learning Component; 5) Internship Proposal.

Class Participation	200 pts	20%
Reading Reports	4@ 50 pts	20%
Reflection Essays	3@133 pts	40%
Service learning	100 pts	10%
<u>Internship Proposal</u>	<u>100 pts</u>	<u>10%</u>
	1000 pts	100%

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## Students with Disabilities

Gordon College is committed to assisting students with documented disabilities (see Academic Catalog Appendix C, for documentation guidelines). A student with a disability who may need academic accommodations should follow this procedure:

1. Meet with a staff person from the Academic Support Center (Jenks 412 X4746) to:
  - a. make sure documentation of your disability is on file in the ASC,
  - b. discuss the accommodations for which you are eligible,
  - c. discuss the procedures for obtaining the accommodations, and
  - d. obtain a **Faculty Notification Form**.
2. Deliver a Faculty Notification Form to each course professor *within the first full week of the semester*; at that time make an appointment to discuss your needs with each professor.

Failure to register in time with your professor and the ASC may compromise our ability to provide the accommodations. Questions or disputes about accommodations should be immediately referred to the Academic Support Center. See Grievance Procedures available from the ASC.

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## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

### Reading Reports

This term we will be equipping ourselves with tools for understanding the world and our place in it. These tools will come by way of insights, ideas, concepts, vocabulary and ways of seeing. They will include some new terms and conceptual frameworks from the reading we do. The reading reports are to help you grasp and take hold of these tools. They should consist of a brief summary of the key ideas presented by the designated reading. You may include quotation of key passages. No need to interact with the material; you will do that in the Reflective Essays. A good Reading Report will serve as an aid to your understanding and as a quick summary for future reference. You may use an outline form, provided that you grasp the material, or use traditional prose.

### Reflective Essays

Reflective Essays provide an opportunity for you to respond to course material once you have understood it. A good essay will show evidence of clear comprehension of the material, thoughtful engagement with the material and an earnest attempt to apply the concepts. Approximately one third of the essay should explicate a major idea from the course reading, one third should engage the material through questions, comments, critique, criticism, elaboration, illustration or application, and one third should reflect on your service experience in light of the reading and course discussion. Particular directions will be given for each essay.

## Assignments:

### Reading Reports

Feb 11	RR 1	<i>Leading Lives That Matter</i>
Feb 18	RR 2	<i>Fabric of this World</i>
Feb 27	RR 3	<i>Creation Regained</i>
Apr 8	RR 4	Loneragan

### Reflective Essays

Mar 20	RE 1	Church and Work
Apr 22	RE 2	Development of One's Self and the World
May 1	RE 3	Responsible Action

## Grading Standards

**Essay Evaluation:** Above all, your essays should exhibit depth of thought and insight that results from wrestling with the issues raised by the texts we read and the ideas we discuss. Essays will be assessed according to the following criteria:

**“A” means superior college-level work. Your essay demonstrates the following:**

- A thorough, interesting and creative completion of all assignment elements
- Clear controlling idea sustained throughout the essay
- Convincing evidence and effective textual examples thoroughly explained
- Sophisticated understanding of the text under discussion
- Superior insight into oneself in light of, or response to the text
- Logical and fluid organization of ideas
- Fresh insight or particular thoughtfulness about a topic
- The ability to analyze and argue, to take apart an issue
- A point of view on the issue rather than a report or observation
- Complex ideas (depth and originality)
- Appropriate context (i.e. grounds ideas in the text/situates ideas in relation to others’).
- A strong sense of audience and respect for that audience and dissenting viewpoints
- Clear transitions moving from one idea to the next
- Engaging introduction
- Consistent voice and appropriate tone
- Crisp clarity on the sentence level—no wordiness, awkward phrasings, or vagueness
- No syntax errors
- No surface errors (punctuation, spelling)

**“B” means very good college work. Your essay demonstrates:**

- Clear grasp of the assignment and thorough completion of it
- Clear controlling idea
- Depth of thought about the issues and analysis of them
- Very good understanding of the text

Evidence of insight into yourself in light of, or response to the text  
Logical organization with clear links between ideas  
Strong use of evidence and examples from the text  
A clear sense of audience  
Fluid prose and varying sentence structure  
Recognition of dissenting viewpoints  
Attention to context  
Even tone  
Good transitions  
Few syntax problems  
Few surface errors

**“C” means all is “okay.” Your essays demonstrate:**

An attempt to address the topic of the assignment  
Topic/theme presented but focus wavers  
Organization is present but insufficient  
Simplistic ideas or insufficient evidence to support ideas  
Few references to the text or weak grasp of text  
Little effort to understand oneself in light of or in response to the text  
Lack of clarity about content or ideas presented, little analysis  
Difficulty acknowledging dissenting viewpoints or disregard for them  
Insufficient context for readers  
Inadequate transitions so ideas are disconnected  
Some syntax errors  
Some surface errors

**“D” means your essay is not college level work. Your essay demonstrates:**

No clear evidence of understanding the assignment  
A major theme or topic  
Numerous ideas, but often simplistic or undeveloped  
Lack of organization  
Insufficient textual evidence or a poor understanding of the text  
Unsubstantiated opinion (opinion not backed up with textual example)  
Lack of awareness of the context surrounding the topic  
Disregard for opposing viewpoints or insistence on a particular viewpoint  
No clear connections between ideas  
Many syntax or surface errors

## **Participation Evaluation**

**“A”** Reads the material well, thinks about it carefully, and comes prepared to discuss it  
Contributes consistently nearly every class and leads discussion  
Understands the texts studied and responds with insight  
Thinks “outside the box,” demonstrates intellectual risk-taking  
Interprets with depth, perception, and complexity, not merely frequency  
Respects the ideas of others, listens well, argues with grace and patience  
Synthesizes divergent viewpoints from the group or text  
Recognizes individual differences and sensitivities

- Actively identifies group goals and works hard to meet them  
Always attends class
- “B”** Reads the material well and comes prepared to discuss it  
Contributes consistently (most classes) and engages in the discussion  
Understands the texts studied  
Interprets the material thoughtfully  
Respects the ideas of others, listens well, contributes responsively  
Consistently supports the group discussion, encouraging others, staying on track  
Participates actively in assigned roles (e.g., small group leader)  
Consistently attends class
- “C”** Reads the material but can only offer surface discussion  
Offers basic understanding of texts but not in depth  
Contributes to the discussion occasionally  
Offers observations or interpretations occasionally  
Joins group discussion some times and not others  
Shows the ability to communicate with others  
Respects others but may inadequately grasp their perspectives  
Misses class occasionally
- “D”** Reads material some of the time  
Comes inadequately prepared or has spent insufficient time understanding the text  
Contributes rarely  
Demonstrates impatience with others or disrespect for their perspectives  
Rarely joins group discussion  
Three unexcused absences

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Work & Vocation  
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**Reading  
Schedule**

**ELIJAH PROJECT**

**ND 310**

**Fabric  
of Faithfulness**

<b>Competing Valuations of Work:</b>	TR Jan. 16	INTRODUCTION		1, 2	
	Literary Voices	TU Jan. 21	LEADING LIVES THAT MATTER (LLTM)	Intro & Prologue (1-36)	3, 4
		TR Jan. 23	LLTM	Vocabularies (39-46, 49-62, 65-86, 107-113)	
		TU Jan. 28	LLTM	Part II, §2: Sayers, Piercy, Heschel, Meilaender	
	Historic Views	TR Jan. 30	LLTM	Part II, §3: Wuthnow, Longfellow, Yates	
		TU Feb. 4	LLTM	Part II, §1: Three Sketches Part II, §7: Frost, Bateson	
		TR Feb. 6	HARDY, FABRIC OF THIS WORLD	1	
TU Feb. 11 <b>RR 1</b>		HARDY, FABRIC OF THIS WORLD	2		
<b>Towards a Christian View of Work:</b>	TR Feb. 13	WOLTERS, CREATION REGAINED	1,2,3		
	A Biblical Vision	TU Feb. 18 <b>RR 2</b>	WOLTERS, CREATION REGAINED	4,5	5
		TR Feb. 20	WOLTERS, CREATION REGAINED	Conclusion, Postscript	
	Expanding The View	TU Feb. 25	MARSHALL, HEAVEN IS NOT MY HOME	Parts I, II, III	
		TR Feb. 27 <b>RR 3</b>	MARSHALL, HEAVEN IS NOT MY HOME	Part IV	
		TU Mar. 4	MARSHALL, HEAVEN IS NOT MY HOME	Part V	Proximate Justice
	<b>Responsible Human Action:</b>	TU Mar. 18	LONERGAN; HUMAN GOOD AS OBJECT ITS INVARIANT STRUCTURE	Reading Pack	
Reading the World: Human Good and Development		TR Mar. 20 <b>RE 1</b>	"	Reading Pack	
		TU Mar. 25	"	Reading Pack	
		TR Mar. 27	LONERGAN; METHOD: INVARIANT STRUCTURE OF KNOWING	Reading Pack	
The Structure of Responsibility		TU Apr. 1	"	Reading Pack	
		TR Apr. 3	"	Reading Pack	
		TU Apr. 8 <b>RR 4</b>	H. R. NIEBUHR THE RESPONSIBLE SELF	1, 2	
		TR Apr. 15	"	3, 4	
		TU Apr. 17	"	5, Appendix	
TU Apr. 22 <b>RE 2</b>		REVIEW			
<b>Community as Context</b>		TR Apr. 24	DEVELOPING CIVIC JUDGEMENT	Reading Pack	6
		TU Apr. 29	SOUL OF A CITIZEN	Reading Pack	7
		TR May 1 <b>RE 3</b>	COMMUNITY, CONFLICT & WAYS OF KNOWING	Reading Pack	8
	TU May 6	REVIEW			
<b>FINAL EXAM</b>					
<b>Mon. May 12, 12:00 - 2:00 pm</b>					