

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BTHM/PTHM 640¹ – Specialized Studies: Theology of Work
(Business as Stewardship and Mission)

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Spring, 2009
Study Week Module
February 23-27, 8 AM – 5 PM
Room 228

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION³

Starting with the definition of work as “purposeful activity, whether manual or mental or both, whether remunerated or not” we will explore both the biblical basis of a theology of work and then wrestle with the contextual implications. Theology is an ellipse with one focus on the timeless Word of God and the other in the contemporary situation. The course will involve learning as a community and putting into practice the theology of work on has gained.

OBJECTIVES

Upon successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- 1) Articulate the principles taught in this Theology of Work course to other leaders in their respective denominations or ministries.
- 2) Have a clear understanding of how they are presently practicing the principles learned in this course into their own ministry.
- 3) Be able to confirm the ministry calling of those in the marketplace and business and provide needed instruction to bring them to a full understanding of their role in the Kingdom work here and now on earth.

METHODOLOGY

Assigned reading, book reviews, media presentations, group discussion, interactive teaching and “seat time” with the professor, immersions in business, and writing a final project paper.

¹ This course may be taken as a BTH or PTH elective or as a substitute for PTH 650 Building a Disciple-Making Ministry.

² See the Student Portal for a fuller introduction to Dr. Dewey, her photo, credentials, and contact information.

³ See the Student Portal for an Expanded Description of this course.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Bakke, Dennis. *Joy at Work*; and *Joy at Work – Executive Summary*, PVG 2005. ISBN: 0976268604 [314/12 pages, PDF file]

Bakke, Ray, W. Hendricks, and Brad Smith. *Joy at Work Bible Study Companion*, PVG 2005. ISBN: 0976268639 [216 pages, PDF file]

Stevens, Paul R. *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Workplace*, Eerdmans (2006). ISBN: 0802833985 [251 pages]

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

Higginson, Richard. *Questions of Business Life: Exploring Workplace Issues From a Christian Perspective*. Spring Harvest (2002). ISBN: 1-85078-477-9 [338 pages]

- Out of print; read if you can find it.

Stevens, R. Paul. *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective*. Eerdmans (1999). ISBN: 978080284800 [278 pages]

Novak, Michael. *Business as Calling*. Free Press (1996). ISBN: 0684827484 [246 pages]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Session Assignment

- Read a total of 1,000 pages from the required and recommended reading list. (Reviews of these books are due as a Chapter 1 of the Final Project, the Post-Session Assignment.)

During Class Session

- Participate fully in all class sessions.
- As per AGTS' attendance policy, missing 20% of class sessions or more results in a course failure. In this class, which meets 40-hours, 8 hours of absence or more constitutes course failure.
- In addition, you are to submit to Dr. Dewey each morning a one-page summary of your learning and reflections on the previous day's class, including comments from both formal in-class or other ad hoc sessions throughout the week. (These summaries will help in the preparation of Chapter 2 of the Final Project, the Post-Session Assignment.)

Post-Class Session Assignment

- The following components are chapters of the 35 to 40-page Final Project paper due approximately 60 days after class (*on the last class day of Spring semester*), i.e., Friday, April 17.
- As are all AGTS written assignments, this paper is graded on form (Turabian) and writing (English spelling and grammar) as well as its content.
- Thus the project must include all of these elements: 1) title page; 2) table of contents; 3) book reviews; 4) journal; 5) seminar development; 6) immersion in business; 6) self-evaluation; and 7) bibliography. All of these elements are provided in a Final Project Paper Template, which may be downloaded from the Student Portal.

1. **Book Reports** (Chapter 1)⁴

Submit a two-page (double-spaced) review including the three parts described below on each book read from the required and recommended reading lists for the 1,000-page Pre-Session Reading Assignment.

- First, in one-half page, describe the book's thesis and development.
 - (a) Simply, in one or two sentences, share the book's thesis, the main point or main concept of the book that the author is trying to communicate. This is often found in the preface or first chapter.
 - b) In one paragraph, summarize its content in terms of major themes, concepts, and ideas. Present the argument of the author, not the chapter outlines. Thus part one answers two questions, in about one-half page: why did the author write this book, and what is its main point?
- Second, in one-full page, analyze how the chapters present the author's argument. Delineate the strengths and limitations of the book: its thesis and argument.
- Third, in the remaining space (of the two-page book report) apply what you have read. What did this book mean to you? How can you apply it to your situation? What questions, issues, or disagreements did it raise for you? What are some principles transferable to your context?

2. **Journal** (Chapter 2)⁴

Chapter 2 should be approximately 5 pages or 1200 words, and requires the same three levels of work as Chapter 1: description, analysis and application (integration). (Within your daily journal, document each session by including comments from both formal in-class or other ad hoc sessions throughout the week.)

- First (part one) describe, narrate, and summarize (for your ministry group in your home church) the essence of what you heard and saw.
- Second (part two) analyze what was said or not said, i.e., the theological assumptions of the presentations, the social location of the presentation, etc.
- Finally (part three), extrapolate the transferable principles for your context and ministry. (These are principles you can share with your colleagues anytime.)

Your journal will be evaluated on completeness, creativity, insightful analysis, contextual application.

⁴ **Note:** Write the first three chapters to share with their ministry leadership team as well as the professor of record. This will shape the genre and vocabulary of your work. It also means you can get very creative and practical and be accountable for all aspects of your work in this leadership program.

3. Seminar Development (Chapter 3)⁴

Based on the readings, contextualization studies, and instructional materials used for this course, develop a Theology of Work seminar or course, which you could teach in your church or to a group of pastors.

Chapter 3 is that seminar or course outline in approximately 10-15 pages or 2000 words.

4. Immersion in Business (Chapter 4)

In several 3-4 hour sessions, spend 6-8 hours “shadowing” men or women in the workplace. During interaction over coffee breaks or lunches, identify the questions, issues, stressors and causes of celebration of the businessperson being “shadowed.”

- Then write a report as Chapter 4 in 5 pages (about 1200 words) summarizing your immersion in business experience. Without identifying persons by name or their businesses but the general industry, indicate what you have learned about the integration of faith and work, and how the church could help these persons view their work as ministry.

5. Evaluation (Chapter 5)

As your final chapter, in 3 pages, write an evaluation that reflects what you have learned, and whether the experience met your anticipated learning outcomes (goals or objectives) as well as personal goals for the course. Assign yourself a grade.

GRADING PROCEDURE

1. Due Dates

- No late assignments are accepted, nor are grades of “Incomplete” given.
- In the case of a *serious emergency*, contact the professor before the due date. An exception may be permitted to grant an extension at a one-letter penalty or more.

2. Writing

- As are all AGTS written assignments, the Final Project paper is graded on form (Turabian) and writing (English spelling and grammar), as well as its content.

3. Relative Weight of Assignments

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|-----------------------------|-----|
| a. Reading and Book Reviews | 20% |
| b. Course Journal | 20% |
| c. Seminar Development | 20% |
| d. Immersion in Business | 20% |
| e. Class Participation | 20% |

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by G. Dewey 11.14.08, edited and reformatted by D. Gill 01.13.09.