

TR 572 Good Work

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities
Winter 2010, M-F 8:45 am - noon

Professor: Sharon Tan
Office: 231 MacMillan Center
Phone: (651) 255-6129
Email: stan@unitedseminary.edu
Office Hours: You are welcome to stop by my office whenever the door is open, or email to set up an appointment.

Course Description

Work is one of the primary ways we as individuals find and give meaning to our lives. It is also a societal and moral expectation of us. In addition to their economic functions, our workplaces are also social and moral communities. This course explores the ethical and moral issues involved in what, where, how, and with whom we work: specifically, issues of meaning, integrity, ambition, moral autonomy and responsibility, and vocation.

Course objectives:

1. To explore the moral and ethical issues involved for a person in work.
2. To explore the virtues and vocation involved for a person in work.

Course texts

1. Holy Bible.
2. David Jensen, *Responsive Labor: A theology of work* (Westminster John Knox, 2006).
3. Dorothee Solle, *Creative Disobedience* (Pilgrim 1995).
4. Brian Mahan, *Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose* (Jossey Bass, 2002)
5. Stephen Carter, *Integrity* (Harper Perennial 1996).

Supplementary Reading (on reserve):

6. Max Weber, "Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism," Ch. 5 in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Routledge, 1992).
7. Hauerwas and Pinches, "Is Obedience a Virtue?" Ch. 8 of *Christians Among the Virtues* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1997)
8. John Bradshaw, *Reclaiming Virtue* (Bantam Books, 2009).

Course Requirements

1. Regular and punctual attendance in class, timely reading, and thoughtful participation in class discussions. More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade (one grade level per absence). 22% of grade.
2. 6 sets of questions to spark discussion, related to the reading(s) for the day, and bringing up moral and ethical issues. This is for the days you are not presenting a paper. ½ page and 3% of grade each, for 18% of total grade.

3. 2 papers that summarize a portion of the reading for the day (to be assigned in class), interact with it, and provide questions for discussion. 3-5 pages and 15% of grade each, for 30% of total grade
4. A final paper in which you explore in-depth an issue related to the course. 10-15 pages, 30% of grade.

General Class Structure

The class will be seminar style with an emphasis on discussion.

Course Policies

1. Please treat this course, your instructor, and your fellow students with respect by attending class and participating thoughtfully in the discussions. In fact, attendance and participation in class are required to pass this course. More than two unexcused absences will result in a penalty of one grade level per absence. Coming to class late or leaving early may count as an absence.
2. All papers, except the discussion questions, are to be double-spaced and typewritten, with appropriate citation format. A sample format is provided in Appendix I. I will not accept emailed papers, but you may fax papers to me at 651-633-4315. Papers are due at the beginning of the class for which they are assigned.
3. All work submitted must be your own, and done specifically for this course.
4. Please see the seminary-wide policies on academic integrity, inclusive language, and sexual harassment, articulated in the student handbook.
5. The current UTS policy on extensions is as follows:
The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case an extension must be agreed to by the instructor by the end of the final class session and the student must complete a formal petition to be submitted in lieu of a grade. If the student is unable to negotiate the extension by the end of the final class session due to critical health issues, the student is responsible for seeing that the professor is notified as soon as possible, and then negotiating the extension promptly.

Course Schedule:

Date	Subject	Reading
Week 1	Theological issues	
1.4.10	Introduction	
1.5.10	Theology of work	Jensen, Preface, chs. 1-3
1.7.10	Theology of work	Jensen, chs. 4-end

1.8.10	No class	Weber
Week 2	Ethical issues	
1.11.10	Vocation and ambition	Mahan, Foreword, Preface, chs. 1-3
1.12.10	Vocation and ambition	Mahan, chs. 4-end
1.14.10	Integrity	Carter, chs. 1-6
1.15.10	Integrity	Carter, chs. 7, 11-14
Week 3	Developing spirituality and virtue	
1.19.10	Autonomy and obedience	Soelle; Hauerwas and Pinches
1.20.10	Virtue	Bradshaw, Part 1: Introduction, chs. 1, 3, 6
1.21.10	Virtue	Bradshaw, Part 2: chs. 7, 10
1.22.10	Wrap up	