

# Semlink+

GORDON  CONWELL

## MC/TH 525: Faith, Work, and Economics

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Course Instructors</i>         | 2 |
| <i>Technical Support</i>          | 2 |
| <i>Office Hours</i>               | 2 |
| <i>Course Description</i>         | 2 |
| <i>Course Learning Objectives</i> | 3 |
| <i>Lesson Topics</i>              | 4 |
| <i>Required Materials</i>         | 5 |
| <i>Course Requirements</i>        | 5 |
| <i>Grading Policy</i>             | 8 |
| <i>Course Policies</i>            | 8 |

### **Course Instructors**

Dr. Richard Lints

[rlints@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:rlints@gordonconwell.edu)

Vice President for Academic Affairs,

Dean of the Hamilton Campus

Andrew Mutch Distinguished Professor of Theology

978.646.4122

John Truschel

[jtruschel@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:jtruschel@gordonconwell.edu)

Adjunct Faculty, Semlink+

### **Technical Support**

Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue, please email [helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu). All requests related to the course should be sent to the professors, and/or the Semlink program staff.

### **Office Hours**

The Instructors will be available for regular office hours, as indicated in the Sign-up tool in Sakai. You can contact them using Skype; their Skype usernames are listed above under "Course Instructors." Skype is a free program and may be downloaded by clicking on the "Download Skype" button in the Sakai toolbar.

### **Course Description**

An introductory survey of scriptural, historical, and theological understandings of Stewardship and Economics. Special emphasis will be given to the church's role in enabling systems of human flourishing, and the Christian Minister's responsibility for stewardship in personal and ministry life.

### **Gordon-Conwell Mission**

This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives:

Article 1: To encourage students to become knowledgeable of God's inerrant Word, competent in its interpretation, proclamation and application in the contemporary world.

Article 4: To work with the churches towards the maturing of students so that their experiential knowledge of God in Christ is evidenced in their character, outlook, conduct, relationships and involvement in society.

Article 6: To develop in students a vision for God's redemptive work throughout the world and to formulate the strategies that will lead to effective missions, evangelism and discipleship.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

1. Formulate an understanding of systems of human flourishing that is rooted in Scripture.
2. Compare and evaluate approaches to stewardship and Economics in several periods of Church History.
3. Integrate these Scriptural and Historical insights into a proper theology of work and stewardship.
4. Apply the understanding gleaned above to a specific ministry assignment.
5. Define and recall terms relating to the study of Economics as a discipline, and demonstrate a familiarity with basic concepts relating to current economic models and systems.
6. Develop an ability to analyze case study articles for their ability to inform the work of the church in various economic contexts.
7. Evaluate current barriers to human flourishing in local and global economic systems, and develop action steps to address them as a ministry decision-maker.

Draft 12-20-14

## Lesson Topics

The 14 weekly lessons of this course are arranged into six modules, as follows:

### Getting Started:

Sakai Tutorial, Instructor Introductions, Course Overview

### Module A: Biblical, Theological, Historical Foundations (4 weeks)

Lesson 1: Biblical Foundations

Lesson 2: Historical Foundations

(Forum Post)

Lesson 3 (2weeks): Theological Foundations & Synthesis

(Topic for Redemptive Action Presentation Due in Forums)

(Integration Paper)

### Module B: Stewardship: Literacy and Models (3 weeks)

Lesson 4: Elements of Modern Economics, Understanding the World of Work

(Forum Post)

Lesson 5: Systems Which Flourish, Value Creation

Lesson 6: Why Economics Matters

(Objective Exam)

Lesson 7: Reading Week

(Interview & Reflection Assignment)

### Module C: Integrative Case Studies 1: Local Realities (2 weeks)

Lesson 8: Clergy, Churches & Denominations as Local / Global Economic Agents

(Forum Post Due on Case Study)

Lesson 9: Personal Theology of Work

(Required Webinar based on Forum Posts)

### Module D: Integrative Case Studies 2: Global Realities (2 weeks)

Lesson 10: Trends in Global Christian Finance

(Forum Post Due on Case Study)

Lesson 11: Global Economic Systems, Slavery, and Fair Value

(Required Webinar based on Forum Posts)

Module E: Synthesis & Application (2 weeks)

Lesson 12 (2weeks): The Role of the Minister in Economic Well-Being  
([Redemptive Action Presentations & Peer Review](#))  
([Reading / Viewing Report](#))

**Required Materials**

Sherman, Amy L. *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011. (271p)

Keller, Timothy J., and Katherine Leary Alsdorf. *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work*. New York: Dutton, 2012. (287p)

Corbett, Steve, and Brian Fikkert. *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor-- and Yourself*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009. (230p)

Van Duzer, Jeffrey B. *Why Business Matters to God: (and What Still Needs to Be Fixed)*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2010. (205p)

Nelson, Tom. *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2011. (224p)

Course Readings - Various, PDF (posted on course site at relevant modules).

**Course Requirements**

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework. Descriptions of the assignments are listed below.

You must read the required textbooks in their entirety. The schedule for this reading is listed in the individual lessons. The total amount of reading is the equivalent of about 1250 single-spaced pages (including Case Study Articles).

Please note that the reading load varies considerably from week to week. You may want to use light reading weeks to get ahead on future reading. Please see the [Weekly Workload Chart](#) (available by clicking the link or navigating to the "General Files" folder in Resources) to aid in your planning <not available at this time>.

**1. Video Presentations & Reading**

You must view/listen to the video module introductions and the lectures in narrative power point form, as listed in the individual lessons.

You will be asked to turn in [a report](#) <not available at this time> at the end of the course, indicating approximately what percentage of the reading you have read and of the lectures you have viewed.

## **2. Objective Examination**

There will be one examination due during week 5, which relates to the material presented in Module A & B. This exam will be a combination of objective (multiple choice, fill-in-the blank, Matching) and short-answer questions. It will cover only the material presented in these two modules. The exam will be proctored (see section on proctoring below), and taken using the “Tests & Quizzes” tool.

## **3. Forum Posts**

There are four forum posts due throughout the course (weeks 2,4,8,10)  
Students will use the forum tool in Sakai to respond to a series of prompts.

In addition to posting your thoughts on the forum prompts, students should also respond to one (1) other student’s post.

## **4. Integration Paper**

Each student will write one three (3) page paper which integrates the Scriptural, Historical, and Theological principles taught in Module A, answering the lecture questions presented in the lectures for Lesson 3. This paper will be submitted in the Assignments tool in Sakai, and should follow the format outlined in the Integration Paper Rubric <not available at this time>.

## **5. Workplace Interview and Reflection Assignment**

In this assignment, you will begin to apply the skills you have been learning relative to ministering to congregants who are in the workplace. You will do this by interviewing someone in your local congregation who works full-time in a non-ministry related field (their employer is *not* a Christian organization). This person must not be related to you. Full-time homemakers (non-family member), business owners, professionals, construction contractors, mechanics, teachers – all are ok; we ask that this person be working full-time, and be a mature believer (not a recent convert).

To complete the assignment, you will ask 10 questions during an interview with your subject. We have provided seven questions for you in the assignment rubric <not available at this time>, and you are to then write and ask three of your own questions. Avoid closed-ended questions, or questions unrelated to the topic. Once your interview is finished, you will submit the questions you asked, a summary or paraphrase of the answers given to each, and then a 2-page reflection on your experience. Possible topics or ideas to comment on are included in the rubric.

## **6. Redemptive Action Presentation**

Each student will construct & upload a Narrated Powerpoint presentation using the Resources Tool, and complete a peer review form <not available at this time> for 2 other students’ presentations. The goal of this assignment is to have you teaching the

class about your topic – your work can greatly expand the breadth and thoroughness of how this course covers the role of God’s people in the world of work and economics.

Students should choose a topic by Week 4 of the course. Please post your topic and rationale to the appropriate forum by the end of Week 4 of the course.

Develop a 20 minute presentation (the file you submit in Sakai will be a narrated powerpoint recording) in which you:

- i) Explain the historical, geographical, and relevant macroeconomic contexts which have led to the problem topic you have chosen.
- ii) Analyze the problem from a biblical, Christian historical, and theological perspective.
- iii) Present an actionable solution that a local congregation could take to contribute to a solution to the problem. This should include action steps, change management ideas, and timetables for this solution.
- iv) Defend this solution using scripture, theology, and examples from church history.

The rubric <not available at this time> will provide a sense of how you will be evaluated by the instructors, and how they will grade your presentation.

Possible topics (only one per student, recommended to come up with your own):

Micro - Finance and the Developing World: Entrepreneurship as Gospel, or Social Justice?

Micro - Finance and North American Missions: Entrepreneurship as Gospel, or Social Justice?

“The Alien Among You”: Local church responses to Immigrants in their communities

The Church and the City: Fiscal Asset or Liability?

Digital Privacy and State Security

Sanctions, Boycotts, and non-Consumption as Activism

Christianity and Debt: Mortgaged Church Buildings

Christianity and Debt: Clergy student debt, Bi-Vocational Ministries

Revelation and World Trade: Living in Light of an Eschatological “Reset”

Short-Term Missions to the Developing World: A Burden or a Blessing?

The Widows and the Aged: Pensions and Municipal/Corporate Bankruptcy

## Grading Policy

| Assignment                      | Max. Pts Possible | % Total Grade |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Video Lectures & Reading Report | 10                | 10%           |
| Exam #1                         | 15                | 15%           |
| Forums & Case Studies (4)       | 20                | 20%           |
| Integration Paper               | 10                | 10%           |
| Workplace Int. & Refl. Ass'n    | 15                | 15%           |
| Redemptive Action Presentation  | 30                | 30%           |

## Grading Scale

The number of points available for the course is 500, and then the total will be divided by five. Final letter grades will then be applied with cutoffs as follows:  
A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60.  
A grade of A+ will be given very rarely, when the student's work is truly exceptional. (At Gordon-Conwell, a grade of A+ and a grade of A are both counted the same way in calculating the student's GPA. Thus, a GPA above 4.0 is not possible.)

## Course Policies

### Instructor Feedback

The Instructors will attempt to respond to questions or messages within 24-48 hours, excluding Sundays. They will also do their best to provide feedback on assignments and post grades on Sakai within one week of submission.

### Document Formatting and Submission

Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting on the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted. If you use a different word processor than MS-Word, please convert the files to PDF before submitting them. Otherwise please submit Word files. Assignments should be double spaced with 1" margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Citations should preferably follow Turabian style, although MLA style is also acceptable.

### Late Work

All late work will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. Extenuating circumstances will



be considered as appropriate. Work turned in later than the last day of week 14, will normally require that an extension be approved by the Seminary. If you anticipate a problem, contact me as soon as possible.

### **Netiquette**

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette>.

### **Additional Seminary Policies**

#### **Academic Standards**

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one's own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one's writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

#### **ADA Policy**

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

#### **Extension Policy**

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the "last day to submit written work", as noted on the seminary's Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the "last day to submit written work." Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

#### **Grades**

Grades are posted on line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted

grades. Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party, should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Note that the final grade posted in Sakai is not official; the official final grade will be posted in the CAMS student portal.

Contacting the Semlink Office

email: [semlink@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:semlink@gordonconwell.edu)

phone: 978-646-4144 (office hours only)

Office hours: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday

Draft 12-2014