TH 672, THEOLOGY OF WORK

Denver Seminary
2 Semester Hours / Spring 2011
Instructors: W. David Buschart and Don J. Payne
(Jan 18)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the history of biblical and theological understandings of work, its nature, value and place in God's economy, with attention to the philosophical and cultural influences on Christian understandings of work.

DENVER SEMINARY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course most directly contributes toward the realization of the following Denver Seminary student learning outcome: Integrated biblical and theological competence.

- This course contributes toward the development of a comprehensive and discriminating mastery of the theological, historical and biblical content and interpretive procedures that undergird a distinctively Christian understanding of and approach to work. This content and procedures will be engaged through class lectures, discussions and two papers.
- The student's progress toward this mastery will be assessed through assessment of the two papers and the examination.

It is the intention and hope of the professor that the way the course is conducted will also advance each student's development of a biblical vision for love of God and others, and a deeper appreciation for and commitment to Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to provide resources for the further development of each participant's worship, life, thought and ministry in Christ. Toward these ends, the following objectives will guide our work:

1. To develop a better understanding of and appreciation for historical and contemporary Christian theological reflection on work.
2. To identify and examine the implications of this reflection for the thought and life of individual Christians.
3. To identify and examine the implications of this reflection for the thought and life of the Church and churches.

SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

The following assignments and requirements are intended to move us toward realization of the course objectives and competencies. The details of these assignments are set forth in the "Description of and Guidelines for Assignments" and "Course Overview Outline" below.

1. Attend class sessions in body and spirit.
2. Thoughtfully complete the assigned reading.
3. Actively and constructively participate in class discussions.
4. Research and write a book review.
5. Research and write a research paper.
6. Make a class presentation.
7. Prepare for and write the examination.

GRADING

Each assignment will be evaluated and assessed on the basis of 100 points. Combining these assessments, the grade for the course will be determined on the following basis:

Class participation	10%	
Book review	20%	
Major project	45%	(Research Paper 30%, Presentation 15%)
Examination	25%	

The standard Denver Seminary 100-point grading scale will be applied to each assignment and the cumulative course grade:

	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+	
93-100 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D	59 or below = F
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-	

REQUIRED TEXTS, TO BE PURCHASED

Cosden, Darrel. *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004.
Crouch, Andy. *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008.
Stevens, R. Paul. *The Other Six Days*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
Volf, Miroslav. *Work in the Spirit*. New York: Oxford, 1991.

TEXTS ON LIBRARY RESERVE

O'Brien, David J., and Thomas A. Shannon, eds. *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*.

- Read *Laborem Exercens*, by Pope John Paul II.

Oden, Thomas. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. San Franciso: Harper and Row, 1983.

- Read pp. 26-34.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pp. 189-202 in Darrel Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004).
Pp. 256-67 in R. Paul Stevens, *The Other Six Days* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

PROFESSORS' ASSISTANCE

We wish to be of assistance to you in any way possible, personally or professionally. Our office hours will be posted in Moodle and outside our offices. If you cannot meet with one of us during these hours, one of us will be happy to arrange another time with you. Our campus e-addresses are david.buschart@denverseminary.edu and don.payne@denverseminary.edu; our campus direct phone lines are 303-762-6907 (Buschart) and 303-762-6943 (Payne).

DESCRIPTION OF AND GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

CLASS SESSIONS: ATTENDANCE, INFORMATION AND PROTOCOL

1. Attendance: Engaged attendance at all class sessions is assumed. Along with the assigned reading, participation in class sessions constitutes the foundational common ground for our work together.

2. Information: Students are responsible for all information communicated during class sessions—whatever type of information (e.g., announcements, instructions) and by whatever means communicated (e.g., oral statement, handout, overhead). In the event of absence, the student is responsible to obtain any materials distributed or information communicated during the class session missed.
3. Protocol: Laptop computers are welcome in the classroom for the purposes of taking notes and accessing documents related to the day's class session. If not being used for these purposes, computers should not be used during class session. Pagers and cell phones should be turned-off during class sessions.

READING

Completion of all course readings is assumed. Along with engaged presence in class sessions, assigned readings constitute the foundational common ground for our work together. This foundational reading is delineated in the "Course Schedule" below. You will report on your completion of the required reading in conjunction with the examination.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

1. Character and Quality
   A. Papers should be characterized by the following:
      (1) Accuracy (Is what I say correct? Is it true to the case?)
      (2) Comprehensiveness (Have I covered all the points that need to be covered?)
      (3) Clarity in structure (Is there a self-evident and meaningful order to the paper?)
      (4) Clarity in content (Will the reader correctly understand what I have tried to say?)
      (5) Specificity (Have I moved beyond generalities and made specific statements?)
      (6) Thorough and accurate documentation (At every point where I have consciously drawn upon the ideas of others, have I provided the information necessary for the reader also to consult the sources I have used?)
   B. All course work is to be characterized by high quality and integrity. Any instance of plagiarism will be addressed in accord with the "Policy on Academic Integrity" in the Seminary's student handbook.
2. Peer Review: A complete draft of each paper is to be reviewed (i.e., read and critiqued) by a current Denver Seminary student, and this student's critique is to be taken into consideration when writing the final version. (As an alternative, you may have some other seminary-educated person [e.g., your pastor, an elder, a mentor] review your paper instead of another student.) At the bottom of the title page of the paper include the following statement: "A complete draft of this paper was reviewed by a current Denver Seminary student on _(Date)_." Failure to do this will result in a 10-point deduction on the assessment for the assignment.
3. Form
   A. All written assignments are to be written in gender-inclusive language. See the Seminary document "Writing with Inclusive Language" for guidance.
   B. In matters related to format, follow Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
   C. A title page and appropriate documentation should be included. The title page should include title of paper, number and name of the course, and your name.
   D. Throughout your paper, include complete and accurate documentation for your paper. You may choose either footnote or endnote (not parenthetical) format as described in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 7th edition.

4. Writing Assistance: The seminary makes available the services of a writing center (located in the library). If you could benefit from the help of a writing tutor, contact the Dean of Students Office for more information.
5. Submission
   A. It is assumed that all assignments will be submitted at the dates and times indicated above. A deduction of 3.0 points per day will be taken on assignments submitted 1-2 days late; and 6.0 points per day for 3-4 days (e.g., 3 days = -18 pts.). Papers may not be accepted after 4 days. The first "day" begins with the time the paper is due. No deduction will be taken for Sunday (or Sabbath), unless you choose to work on the assignment on Sunday (or Sabbath). If a paper is submitted late, it is the student's responsibility to attach a note indicating (1) whether or not an extension has been granted by one of the professors, (2) if an extension has been granted, the date and time to which it was made, and (3) the date and time that the paper was submitted.
   B. Retain for yourself a copy of each assignment you submit.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%)

There will be opportunity for interaction in all regular class sessions. Participation will be evaluated on the basis of a combination of attendance, quantity of participation and quality of participation. At the end of the term, each student will provide a self-evaluation of participation, using a form that will be provided. This self-evaluation will inform the professors' assessment of the student's participation in the course.

BOOK REVIEW (20%)

1. Write a book review of either Cosden, *A Theology of Work*, or Volf, *Work in the Spirit*. (Note: Both books will be read in their entirety, but you write a review of one of them.) Half the class will write on Cosden, and half will write on Volf. You will sign-up for one of these on February 2.
2. The strongest reviews will incorporate documented engagement with other required course texts or other sources.
3. The body of your review is to be 5 pages in length, not including notes, charts/diagrams (optional), and list of sources cited. It should include the following:
   A. Description of the major thesis/theses of the book and the supporting arguments (approx. 1.5 pages)
   B. Critique and assessment of this thesis/theses and arguments (approx. 2.5 pages)
   C. Implications for how pastors and others should seek to minister to Christians with specific reference to their work (approx. 1 page)
4. Your review is due at the beginning of class on February 16, and will be the basis for a discussion that day.

MAJOR PROJECT (45%)

INTRODUCTION TO MAJOR PROJECT: The major project consists of two parts: a research paper, and participation on a panel. Each student will sign-up for the major project—research paper on February 9. The instructors will formulate a schedule of due dates for papers and panel presentations on February 23. The final list of potential topics and the number and size of the panels will be in part determined by the number of students enrolled in the course.

MAJOR PROJECT—RESEARCH PAPER (30%)

1. Research and write a paper. Below is a list of five thematic domains within which papers will be written. There will be a limit to the number of students who can write papers in each domain. The specific topic for each student's paper will be formulated in consultation with and approved by Prof. Buschart or Prof. Payne, and in conjunction with a sign-up process on February 9:
   A. Toward a Biblical-theology of Work: The Old Testament
   B. Toward a Biblical-theology of Work: The New Testament
   C. A Spiritual-theology of Calling, Vocation, and Work
   D. Sacred/Secular, Clergy/Lay: Valid Distinctions with Respect to Work?
   E. Eternity, Eschatology, and the Value of Work
2. The body of your paper should be 11-12 pages in length, not including notes, charts/diagrams (optional), and list of sources cited.
3. Your paper will be due sometime March 16 through May 4, on a date to be determined through a sign-up process. On this date, you will participate on a panel. See "Major Project—Panel Participation" below.

MAJOR PROJECT—PANEL PARTICIPATION (15%)

1. Participate on a panel of people who have each written a paper on the same topic.
2. Make a 5-minute opening presentation based on your research paper. (Each panelist makes their own presentation.) You may make a presentation based on either the entire paper or a selected portion(s).
3. Your presentation should be supported by a 1-page substantive outline and executive summary, and accompanied by an annotated (i.e., 1-sentence description/highlight per item) list of recommended reading.
4. Following the opening presentations, the panel will engage in question-and-answer with both the instructors and members of the class.
5. The date of your participation on a panel will be the same as the due date for your paper (see above).
6. Panelists will be graded individually in accord with each student's opening presentation and participation in the question-and-answer time.

EXAMINATION (25%)

1. The examination for this course will be an open-book, open-notes, summative and integrative take-home essay-exam.
2. The basis for the exam will be lectures, the required reading, discussions and student presentations.
3. For the exam, you will write 1-3 essays, each consisting of responses to 2-5 questions.
4. The exam essay questions will be distributed at the end of class on April 27. The completed exam is to be submitted at the beginning of class on May 11.
5. There is no time-limit prior to the due date. The completed exam is to be typed (same format guidelines as for papers), and no more than 6 pages long. All references to required reading are to be documented in parenthetical fashion, simply with the author's last name and page number; for example, (Cosden, 57). If you use other sources, they are to be documents in end-/foot-notes and included in a list of "Sources Cited" at the end of the essay.

HIGHLIGHTING SOME DATES

Feb. 2	Selection of book for book review
Feb. 9	Sign-up for major project topic
Feb 16	Book review; Discussion of book review
Feb. 23	Instructors formulate schedule for research papers and panels
Mar. 23	*No class session – Spring Break*
Mar. 16- May 4	Research paper & panel
Apr. 27	Receive examination guide and questions
May 11	Submit examination; Submit participation self-evaluation; Participate in discussion of examination

COURSE OVERVIEW OUTLINE

SECTION ONE:
INTRODUCTION

Reading

- Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, pp. 3-23, and 243-55
- Crouch, *Culture Making*, pp. 9-98
- Volf, *The Spirit of Work*, pp. 3-45
- Note: Either Cosden, *A Theology of Work*, or Volf, *The Spirit of Work,* will be read in its entirety for the book review, due Feb. 16. Whichever book is not read for the book review will be read, in its entirety, in conjunction with Section Four of the course (see below.).

Part One: Work and Contemporary Christian Thought and Life
Part Two: Towards a Typology: Kinds of Work and A Glossary of Work ("work," "calling," "vocation," etc.)
Part Three: Framing the Discussion Theologically

Panel: A panel of people from "the marketplace" will be conducted during this section of the course.

SECTION TWO:
BIBLICAL TEACHING—
IMAGES OF WORK IN THE GRAND NARRATIVE

Reading

- Genesis 1-3; Exodus 31; Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 8
- Nehemiah 1-4
- Proverbs 10-29 (read or scan for texts with specific reference to or implications for work)
- Ecclesiastes 1-2, 4-5, 11
- Amos 8:1-6
- Matthew 5:1-6; 6:1-34
- Colossians 3:22-25
- Revelation 21:1-22:5

Part One: Pentateuch
Part Two: Historical
Part Three: Poetic
Part Four: Prophetic
Part Five: Gospels
Part Six: Epistles
Part Seven: Revelation

SECTION THREE:
HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY—
SEEKING TO SERVE

Reading

- Volf, *The Spirit of Work*, pp. 46-65 [either Volf or Cosden will be read in its entirety for the book review, due Feb. 16]

Part One: Early
Part Two: Medieval
Part Three: Protestant Reformation
Part Four: Modern
Part Five: Postmodern / Contemporary

SECTION FOUR:
THEOLOGY—
THE WHAT, WHO, HOW, AND WHY OF WORK

Reading

- Cosden, *A Theology of Work* [either Cosden or Volf will be read in its entirety for the book review, due Feb. 16]
- Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, pp. 69-201 [either Volf or Cosden will be read in its entirety for the book review, due Feb. 16]
- Crouch, *Culture Making*, pp. 187-268
- John Paul II, *Laborum Exercens* <library reserve>
- Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, pp. 26-34 <library reserve>
- Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, pp. 24-242

Panels: Student panels will be conducted during this section of the course.

Part One: Revisiting the Grand Narrative (including anthropology & eschatology)
Part Two: "Sacred"/"secular" and "clergy"/"lay"
Part Three: Calling and vocation
Part Four: Workplace ethics

SECTION FIVE:
MINISTRY FOR "THE WORKPLACE"

Part One: Contemporary initiatives (both local church and para-church)
Part Two: Strategies for greater effectiveness

Panel: A panel of people in "full-time vocational ministry" will be conducted during this section of the course.