Trinity International University

M.A. Leadership Program

Faith, Work, Economics and the Church LR 7400

Course Description:

This course enables students to reflect critically upon how vocation and economic principles affect the life and work of the church. Students will examine biblical/theological and economic principles concerning vocation, wealth, poverty and human flourishing. A historical review of how the church has addressed these topics will also be explored. The focus will be on helping students to understand effective and sustainable strategies for helping the church respond to these issues in order to facilitate human flourishing. This class will equip learners to integrate biblical, theological, economic and social scientific principles as the foundation for the pursuit of truth and proper foundation for responding to these critical concerns.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand a holistic biblical perspective on life, work, and economics.

2. Identify and critically reflect upon the historical ways the church has attempted to deal with vocation, poverty, wealth and human flourishing.

3. Identify and critically reflect upon current predominate relief and development theories.

4. Distinguish between crisis management responses to poverty and long term responses to poverty that remove the barriers and create positive strategies for elevating people from poverty.

5. Develop a thoughtful strategy for the student's church or organization to address issues of vocation, poverty, wealth and human flourishing.

Required Texts:

Erickson, Millard. 2013. Christian Theology. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. (Each leadership major is required to have this book. For each class specific chapters will be assigned that will apply to that particular class. Students are not required to read the entire text for any one particular class, but it is hoped that by the completion of the major, the entire text will have been completed). ISBN: 978-0801036439. Pages to be assigned.

Lupton, Robert D. 2012. Toxic charity: how churches hurt those they help (and how to reverse it). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. ISBN: 978-0062076212. 208 pages.

Rae, Scott and Austin Hill. 2010 The virtues of capitalism: a moral case for free markets. Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing. ISBN: 978-0-8024-8456-7. 160 pages.

Stevens, R. Paul. 2012. Work matters: lessons from scripture. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co. ISBN: 978-0802866967. 184 pages.

Wallis, Jim. 2011. Rediscovering values: a guide for economic and moral recovery. New York, NY: Howard Books. ISBN: 1439183198. 288 pages.

Suggested Reading List:

Alcorn, Randy. 2003. Money, possessions and eternity. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale.

Blomberg, Craig. 2000. Neither poverty nor riches: a biblical theology of possessions. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Brueggemann, Wlater. 2013. Truth speaks to power: the counter cultural nature of scripture. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Claar, Victor V. and Robin J. Klay. 2007. Economics in Christian perspective: theory, practice and life. Downers Grove, IL: IVP.

Corbett, Steve and Brian Fikkert. 2009. When helping hurts: alleviating poverty without hurting the poor…and yourself. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

DeKoster, Lester. 2010, second edition. Work: the meaning of your life: a Christian perspective. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Library Press.

Nelson, Tom. 2011. Work matters: connecting Sunday's worship to Monday's work. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Hunter, James Davidson. 2010. To change the world: the irony, tragedy and possibility of Christianity in the late modern world. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Greer, Peter and Phil Smith. 2009. The poor will be glad: joining the revolution to lift the world out of poverty. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Grudem, Wayne. 2003. Business for the glory of God: the bible's teaching on the moral goodness of business. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Kilner, John F. 2011. Why the church needs bioethics. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Muhummad, Yunus. 2010. Building social business: the new kind of capitalism that serves humanity's most pressing needs. New York, NY: Public Affairs.

Novak, Michael. 1990. The spirit of democratic capitalism. Lanham, Maryland: Madison books.

Richards, Jay W. 2010. Money, greed and God: why capitalism is the solution not he problem. New York, NY: HarperOne.

Schneider, John R. 2002. The good of affluence: seeking God in a culture of wealth. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. DeKoster, Lester. 2010, second edition. Work: the meaning of your life: a Christian perspective. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Library Press.

Self, Charlie. 2013. Flourishing churches and communities: a Pentecostal primer on faith, work and economics for spirit-empowered discipleship. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Liberty Press.

Sterns, Richard. 2010. The hole in our gospel: what does God expect? Nashville, TH: Thomas Nelson.

Wallis, Jim. 2013. On God's side: what religion forgets and politics hasn't learned about serving the common good. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

What You Can Expect In Our Classroom:

In order to create a productive learning environment, you can trust me to ensure that all comments and questions will be treated with respect, to explain points of confusion when the class is stuck, to ask questions with purpose and to guide discussion in the most promising directions. In order to create a productive learning environment, you are expected to treat all comments and questions with respect and civility. Most of all, you are asked to take chances! Speak your mind, even/especially when you disagree with others or with me; ask questions when you are confused or curious about something — chances are that you are not alone.

Gender References in Speech and Writing: The following statement reflects the principles of both Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Trinity Graduate School:

In recognition of the divine act of creation whereby the *imago Dei* (image of God) has been equally given to women and men, the faculty of Trinity International University offers the following statement on gender references in speech and writing. We do this as a demonstration of the reality of our belief in the *imago Dei* and as an example of our serious desire to see all men and women treated with the worth and value with which both were invested since the creation of the world:

As members of the faculty of Trinity International University and leaders in the church of our Lord, we recognize that God has given his gifts to both men and women in the body of Christ. Therefore, as we teach in class, speak in the pulpit, or write our books and articles, we commit ourselves, before God, to be sensitive to the presence and needs of both sexes and the forms of address that will represent both genders rather than unthinkingly adopt potentially offensive conventions of speech.

Our decision is based on the fact that God's gift of the *imago Dei* to both women and men has forever settled the question of their equal worth, value, and meaning as persons.

As believers desiring to support such an affirmation, we intend, by God's help, to avoid any unwarranted usage of exclusive language. We will seek to avoid referring to all men and women as if only one gender were in view when actually we are intending to address the whole group.

Furthermore, we pledge ourselves as faculty to encourage students, staff members, and the wider Christian community to use language and illustrations that include women and men in teaching, writing, witness, and worship.

Academic Integrity:

The community at Trinity International University promotes a commitment to integrity in all areas of life. Academic integrity is essential in the search for and promotion of truth. This pursuit of truth, while being an important goal in itself, is integral to other essential beliefs foundational to the Trinity community: (1) all individuals, being in the image of God, are to be respected for their intellectual contributions; (2) the use of one's God-given talents is the responsibility of every individual, and, for the Christian, excellence is a sacrifice to the Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God; and (3) relationships within our community are to be nurtured in an environment of trust.

Therefore, plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be condoned within the Trinity community. Plagiarism, whether intentional or indirect, gives the impression that the words or ideas in a person's writings are one's own, whereas in reality they are taken from someone else's written or oral presentation(s), even when a reference to the original source is made in footnotes or bibliography. Cheating is an expression of fraud and deception, as the student gives the impression of doing better on assignments, quizzes or exams than he or she deserves.

Plagiarism and cheating have a negative effect on the Trinity community in that they do not promote truth, they break the relationship of trust, they do not encourage the individual to develop his or her creative talents, and they erode the moral fiber so vital in an academic community. For a further description, see the *Graduate Student Handbook.*

Any student who breaks the standard of academic integrity by cheating or plagiarism will be dealt with severely by the faculty and staff and will be reported to the Dean of Students. The result may be failure of the course, expulsion from the institution, or a revocation of a degree already granted by Trinity.

Attendance Policy:

The development of good habits confirming Christian character and a sense of Christian stewardship implies that TGS students are responsible to attend class lectures, participate in class discussions, and complete course requirements.

Students are required to attend each of the class sessions. Promptness is also important both for respect of the instructor and other students, and for attaining all pertinent information.

Absence is not an excuse for missed work. Depending on the circumstances, the professor has the right NOT to grant make-up work.

Disabilities:

Students desiring accommodations on the basis of physical, learning, or psychological disability for this course are to contact the Student Success Center on campus.

Cell Phones:

Please turn off all cell phones before entering the classroom or leave them at home or in your dorm room, as cell phone rings and other cell phone tones will interrupt/disturb the class. More than one violation of the "no cell phone policy" will result in a reduction of a student's final grade.

Written Assignments:

Note: All writing assignments should be written at the graduate level.

Requisite formatting (unless specified otherwise) includes: one inch margins, 12 point Times Roman font, double- spaced, pagination, correct English (including spelling, punctuation, topic/thesis sentence with paragraphs), citations as needed, and bibliography when required. Grade deductions will be made when these conventions are not followed.

Evaluative Criteria:

- *Integration Papers*

Students will produce three written papers (3-5 pages each) exploring two main areas. Initially, the intersection of theoretical concepts contained in the course with students' theological understandings. Secondly, a discussion of how student will apply theoretical conceptual learning's to a real life application project.

An example of potential themes covered in the first section of the integration paper:

A. God

- God continually at work (providence)
- Granting through Revelation (general and special) the communication of standards.
- Leadership is a calling
- God also holds in account, those who exercise leadership
- Leaders are in a continual battle with their own internal motivations (problem of sin – the battle with selfish tendencies)
- Identity of Biblical/Theological principles can help in providing motivation
- God has ways of rewarding faithfulness (many Biblical examples)

B. Creation

- The arena of God's activity and human responsibility
- Sphere of "common grace"
- The world of God's image-bearers
    - In all affairs, dignity is to be maintained and respected
    - Still always in need of leadership in terms of servanthood, and effective modeling
    - Opportunity for and invitation to imitate God through stewardship (Genesis 1:26-27).
    - Concern for agency, providence, justice and love
- The arena where sin in various forms is at work.

- The call for commitment to principles (a kind of discipleship process)

C. Renovation

- Virtuous Citizenship
- The production of "economic shalom"
- Properly oriented leadership can help cultivate the blessings of the created order

The specific details for the paper format and evaluation rubric will be provided on Moodle.

- *Case Study Project*

Students will create and/or be involved in a mentor guided case study project. The case study project asks you to select and research a significant topic in leadership as it relates to this class and write a case study problem based on your study. It should have an informative title, reflect substantive independent study, and present a thoughtful synthesis of the primary and secondary literature. A case study problem provides a pedagogical context for presenting and learning information. Pedagogically, they should involve higher order thinking skills (analysis, evaluation, and judgment), stimulate group discussion, and require collaborative effort.

Students will prepare a written case paper summarizing key processes and learning's from the experience. In addition to the written report students will present their papers during our final class. The specific details for the case project, report, evaluation rubric and presentation will be provided on Moodle.

-*Alternate Final Project*

Students may wish to discuss an alternate final assignment based on their particular learning goals and situations. Instead of the case study, students may wish to develop a strategic plan for how their church or organization might practically implement themes learned in this class. E.g., redesign your churches current approaches to helping the poor. If this option is chosen, then the student must interact with the professor to design a project that includes, research, reflection and actual strategies.

- *Factors Contributing to Course Grade*

Integration papers (3@ 15each)	45 points
Case Study or alternate assignment	45 points
Case Study Presentation	10 points
* Total Potential Points	100

Grading scale for the course

93-100	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
63-66.9	D
60-62.9	D-
00-59.9	F

The following criteria are used at Trinity Graduate School in assigning letter grades:

"A" Designates outstanding work: superior achievement of course objectives

"B" Designates good work: commendable achievement of course objectives

"C" Designates acceptable work: satisfactory achievement of course objectives

Note: Courses for which a student receives a grade of "C-" or lower will not be counted toward meeting degree requirements.

"D" Designates minimal work: marginal achievement of course objectives

"F" Designates failure: unacceptable work. Normally assigned also to courses dropped after the eighth week of the semester, except in emergency circumstances.