IDS 359H: CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON VOCATION
Course syllabus, Fall 2013
TIME: TR 7:45am to 9:00am
LOCATION: MCL 112

Instructors: Dr. Laurie Matthias Katherine Jeffery	Office: LM: McLennan 156-E KJ: Waybright LL10B
Office phone: LM: 847.317.6492 KJ: 847.317.7032	LM: Cell phone: 757.810.5243 KJ: Cell phone: 267.909.7580 [Please, emergencies only.]
E-mail: lmatthia@tiu.edu; kjeffery@tiu.edu	*Note:* E-mail is the best way to reach me.
Office hours for LM: MW 9:00-10:30; TR 9:30-11:00 KJ: By appointment	*Note:* Since I (LM) recognize that my office hours may not be convenient for your schedule, I would be happy to schedule an appointment with you at another time.

Course Description: This honors seminar course will offer students the opportunity to answer the overriding question, "What does it mean to be called by God?" Course readings will focus on key questions about vocations from interdisciplinary perspectives, excerpts from key persons of church history on vocation, and current works on the theology of work. Fulfills the requirement of honors seminar for students in the honors program. Offered each fall. *(3 credit hours).*

Objectives: During this course students will:

1. Wrestle with the overriding question of the course, "What does it mean to be called of God?"
2. Conduct in-depth research on a person from church history, focusing on historical, cultural, and biographical reasons for his view on vocation.
3. Respond to another student's research, offering constructive criticism and leading class discussion.
4. Read a current work on the theology of work and as a member of a group, present its key ideas and a critique to the class.
5. Synthesize course material and personal views into a culminating essay that answers the course question on vocation.

Course Content:

The content of this course revolves around the overriding question: "What does it mean to be called by God?"

We will be exploring this question in several ways.

- Course readings which include interdisciplinary perspectives that attempt to answer key questions on vocation
- Course readings from church history across the ages
- Class discussions and interactions
- Various assignments that allow students to synthesize and evaluate course material
- Field trip to the Grohmann Museum of Work in Milwaukee, WI

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1		Topic	Assignments due
8/29	R	Introduction to and overview of course; course syllabus Explanation of assignments	Read Schwehn & Bass [S&B], pp. 1-8. Read Placher, pp. 1-11.
WEEK 2		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
9/3	T	Introduction to major themes What makes a life significant?	Read S&B, pp. 9-36.
9/5	R	Definitions of vocation Biblical Texts on Vocation	Read S&B, pp. 89-113. Read Placher, pp. 13-20.
WEEK 3		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
9/10	T	What makes a life significant?	Read S&B, pp. 117-130, 144-166.
9/12	R	What makes a life significant?	Read S&B, pp. 492-539.
WEEK 4		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
9/17	T	What makes a life significant?	Read S&B, pp. 166-180, 281-283, 294-297, 302.
9/19	R	What makes a life significant?	Write your own epitaph. Read article "The New Legalism."
WEEK 5		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
9/24	T	Vocations in the Early Church Report on Tertullian	Read Placher, pp. 23-38, 47-65.
9/26	R	Vocations in the Early Church Report on Augustine	Read Placher, pp. 65-103.
WEEK 6		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
10/1	T	Authenticity American values?	Read S&B, pp. 49-62, 255-263.
10/3	R	Vocation and Identity	Read S&B, pp. 188-200, 229-243.
WEEK 7		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
10/8	T	Vocations in the Middle Ages Report on Bernard of Clairvaux	Read Placher, pp. 107-139, 143-154.
10/10	R	Vocations in the Middle Ages Report on Thomas a Kempis	Read Placher, pp. 154-160, 176-201.
WEEK 8		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
10/15	T	Book Report Presentations	Prepare for Book Report Presentations
10/17		FALL BREAK—NO CLASSES	
WEEK 9		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
10/22	T	Debrief: Theology of work Nouwen's *Life of the Beloved*	Read Tolkien's "Leaf by Niggle"
10/24	R	FIELD TRIP to Grohmann Museum	NONE
WEEK 10		**Topic**	**Assignments due**

10/29	T	DAY of PRAYER: NO CLASS	
10/31	R	Vocations after the Reformation Report on Martin Luther Debrief field trip	Read Placher, pp. 205-232.
WEEK 11		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
11/5	T	Vocations after the Reformation Report on John Calvin	Read Placher, pp. 232-261.
11/7	R	Vocation and Talents	Read S&B, pp. 317-322, 330-357
WEEK 12		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
11/12	T	Vocations after the Reformation Report on William Law	Read Placher, pp. 262-285, 294-299, 303-310.
11/14	R	Vocations after the Reformation Report on Jonathan Edwards Report on John Wesley	Read Placher, pp. 310-324.
WEEK 13		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
11/19	T	Voices that influence vocation	Read S&B, pp. 359-395.
11/21	R	Voices that influence vocation	Read S&B, pp. 395-425.
WEEK 14		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
11/26	T	Vocations in a post-Christian World Report on John Henry Newman	Read Placher, pp. 327-332, 343-349, 353-359, 371-377.
11/28	R	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASSES	
WEEK 15		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
12/3	T	Vocations in a post-Christian World Report on Dietrich Bonhoeffer	Read Placher, pp. 378-404.
12/5	R	Vocations in a post-Christian World Report on Thomas Merton	Read Placher, pp. 405-443.
WEEK 16		**Topic**	**Assignments due**
12/10	T	Can I control my vocational choice?	Read S&B, pp. 427-450
12/12	R	Telling the Story of Your Life	Read S&B, pp. 451-480.
WEEK 17		FINAL EXAM: ALL STUDENTS MUST ATTEND Tuesday, December 17th, 8:00 to 10:00am	Final Paper on Vocation

ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: Complete details on each assignment will be given in class. These will each include detailed instructions.

ASSIGNMENT	*VALUE*	*DUE DATE*
1. RESEARCH REPORT	35%	Various; see schedule
2. RESPONSE TO REPORT	10%	Various; see schedule
3. BOOK REPORT PRESENTATION	20%	Oct. 15th
4. FINAL ESSAY	20%	Dec. 17th
5. STEWARDSHIP	15%	Throughout the course
TOTAL	**100%**	

Required texts

Placher, William C., ed. *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-8028-2927-6

Schwehn, Mark R. & Bass, Dorothy C., eds. *Leading Lives That Matter: What We Do and Who We Should Be.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006. ISBN: 978-0-8028-2931-3

Recommended texts

Guinness, Os. *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life.* Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003. ISBN: 978-0849944376

Keller, Timothy. *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work.* New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-525-95270-1

Nelson, Tom. *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011. ISBN: 978-1433526671

Nouwen, H. *Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World.* New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 978-0824519865

Veith, Gene. *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011. ISBN: 978-1433524479

Volf, Miroslav. *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock. ISBN: 1-57910-641-2

IDS 359H: CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON VOCATION
RESEARCH PROJECT

Topic: _____
Due Date: _____

Directions:

1. Read at least one biography on your historical church father. The purpose of this requirement is so that you can establish for yourself the biographical, historical, and cultural context for his views on vocation.

2. Read as much of his writings as possible. Begin with the selection/s in your text, but also find the larger work from which it is taken, and read the selection in its broader context. Read other works as well, particularly if they address the topic of vocation.

3. Write a 15-20 page paper (excluding title and reference pages) that focuses on his contributions to the discussion of vocation and what it means to be called of God.

4. E-mail a draft of your paper to the person who will respond to it at least 48 hours in advance.

5. Prepare a 10-15 minute presentation for the class. Include highlights of your written paper presented in an engaging way. Address questions and themes that have arisen in class discussion. Use audio/visual aids.

Evaluation of your project:

- Have you demonstrated that you thoroughly explored several resources to support your paper and presentation?
- Is it evident that you are well familiar with the material? Do you really know the topic?
- Have you demonstrated that you engaged in analysis (thinking deeply about the information in light of course goals), synthesis (bringing many ideas together in a new way) and evaluation (choosing what is valuable and what can be eliminated)?
- Does the paper demonstrate good writing (avoiding grammatical, mechanical, and stylistic errors)?
- Are sources properly cited?
- Is your presentation engaging? Does it not only keep your classmates' attention but also cause them to think along with you?
- Are audio-visual aids used to supplement and enhance classmates' understanding of the information?

Please understand that as the evaluators of your work, we will ask ourselves the questions above and will assign your grade based on how we answer them. This assignment is worth 35% of your overall course grade (see syllabus).

IDS 359H: CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON VOCATION
RESPONSE TO RESEARCH PROJECT

Responding to the research paper written by: _____
(classmate)

on _____ (historical figure)

Presentation date: _____

Directions:

1. One of your classmates will send you a draft of his or her research paper at least 48 hours in advance of the day it is due (see schedule in syllabus). *Note:* If this does not occur, please notify your professors.

2. Read the paper at least three times. The first time you should just try to get a sense of what is being said. The second time you should begin to evaluate its strengths and also look for any weaknesses you may find. The third time you should consider any questions you would ask the author about the paper or questions for general class discussion.

3. Write a 1-2 page summary of your evaluation of the research paper. *Note:* There is no need to paraphrase the content of the paper in any way. Jump right into the critique.

4. After your classmate presents his or her research in class, you will be responsible for leading class discussion about the topic. Prepare open-ended questions to ask the author and then all of your classmates. You will have up to 10 minutes for this activity.

Evaluation of your response:

- Have you demonstrated that you thoroughly read the research paper?
- Does your critique address both strengths and weaknesses?
- Is your critique of the paper both thoughtful and fair? In other words, does it demonstrate critical thinking as well as charitable reading?
- Does the paper demonstrate good writing (avoiding grammatical, mechanical, and stylistic errors)?
- Did you effectively lead class discussion in response to the research presentation? Were your questions prepared in advance? Did you craft them in such a way to encourage responses?

Please understand that as the evaluators of your work, we will ask ourselves the questions above and will assign your grade based on how we answer them. This assignment is worth 10% of your overall course grade (see syllabus).

IDS 359H: CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON VOCATION
BOOK REPORT PRESENTATION

Due date: _____

Directions:

1. Choose 3 other classmates to form a group of 4.

2. Choose one of the following books to read as a group: *Every Good Endeavor* by Tim Keller, *Work Matters* by Tom Nelson, or *God at Work* by Gene Veith.

3. All members of the group must read the entire book.

4. Together, prepare a 15-20 minute presentation for the class. Include the primary themes of the book (summary) as well as your group's response to the book (evaluation). Your presentation should include how the author addresses some of the themes and questions that have arisen in class discussions. Use audio/visual aids.

5. Ensure that all group members share equally in the presentation.

5. Anticipate a question and answer session of about 5 minutes after your presentation. Questions will come from professors and classmates.

Evaluation of your project:

- Has your group demonstrated that you have genuinely read, assimilated, and articulated the primary themes of the book?
- Is your evaluation of the book both thoughtful and fair? In other words, does it demonstrate critical thinking as well as charitable reading?
- Have you connected the theology of work presented in the book with questions and themes that have arisen in our class discussions? Has this been done in a thoughtful and interesting way?
- Is your presentation engaging? Does it not only keep your classmates' attention but also cause them to think along with you?
- Are audio-visual aids used to supplement and enhance classmates' understanding of the information?
- Is your presentation professional; i.e., does it make good use of time, flow well, and avoid errors? Are you dressed professionally?
- Does every member of your group equally share in the presentation?

Please understand that as the evaluators of your work, we will ask ourselves the questions above and will assign your grade based on how we answer them. This assignment is worth 20% of your overall course grade (see syllabus). *Note:* It is possible that not every member of your group will receive the same grade for this project; we as professors will differentiate if necessary.

IDS 359H: CHRISTIAN WISDOM ON VOCATION
FINAL ESSAY

Due Date: _____

Directions:

1. This essay asks you to respond to the overriding course question: "What does it mean to be called of God?"

2. Keeping this question foremost in your mind, review all of your class notes. Review and reread selections from the text as needed.

3. Evaluate all of the material, and choose what themes, issues, or questions you wish to address. *Note:* It is expected that you will not be able to address them all well. Therefore, part of the point of this assignment is to make wise, deliberate choices and to know why you are making them.

4. Before writing, plan what you are going to say. Organize your thoughts.

5. Write a thoughtful 5-7 page essay (excluding title and reference pages) that answers the overriding question.

6. Refer to course materials, using proper citations.

7. Bring your essay to the final exam time, and prepare to share it with some of your classmates.

Evaluation of your essay:

- Have you demonstrated that you have thoughtfully considered the course material?
- Is it evident that you are well familiar with the material? Have you accurately represented the sources you are citing?
- Have you demonstrated that you engaged in analysis (thinking deeply about the question and its implications), synthesis (bringing many ideas together in a new way) and evaluation (choosing what to focus on and what to ignore)?
- Does the essay demonstrate that you have personally "owned" the information, wrestling with the complexities and embracing the unassailable truths?
- Is the essay well organized? Is there a logical flow with smooth transitions?
- Does the essay demonstrate good writing (avoiding grammatical, mechanical, and stylistic errors)?
- Are sources properly cited?

Please understand that as the evaluators of your work, we will ask ourselves the questions above and will assign your grade based on how we answer them. This assignment is worth 20% of your overall course grade (see syllabus).

GRADING SCALE

A = 96 – 100%	**B-** = 82 – 85%	**D+** = 68 – 70%
A- = 92 – 95%	**C+** = 80 – 81%	**D** = 65 – 69%
B+ = 89 – 92%	**C** = 76 – 79%	**D-** = 61 – 64%
B = 86 – 90%	**C-** = 71 – 75%	**F** = 60% or lower

Late work:

Work is due at the beginning of class. As discussed above, it is important for each one of us as members of the learning community to come prepared for class. Completing work late means that you are not fully prepared for the class session, which may negatively impact your learning as well as that of your classmates. However, because we recognize that sometimes there are unexpected events that make it impossible for you to complete work on time, we will accept late work with the following provisions:

- Work may be turned in by the start of the next class meeting. It will receive half (½) credit. [Note: Occasionally a student will "forget" an assignment and will turn it in after class the same day. This ½ credit policy applies even in these cases.]
- Work that is not turned in by the next class meeting will earn a zero. There are no exceptions to this policy.
- In-class activities and presentations *cannot* be completed late or made up.
- Technical difficulties (i.e., computer and/or printer problems) do *not* constitute a reasonable excuse for late work. Assume that you may have a problem, and plan accordingly.
- In the case of an extended illness, we will work out a schedule for completing work with you.

Extra credit:

There will be no extra credit. We think you already have enough work to do for this course, and we would prefer that you focus your energies on doing the assigned work well.

Spelling, grammar, neatness, etc.

To help encourage you to maintain high standards in all of your work, spelling, grammar, punctuation, presentation, etc. will all "count" on every assignment. If you need to develop your skills in these areas, we urge you to visit the *University Student Success Center* for assistance.

General Expectations

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship means careful and considered use of the gifts and resources that God has given us. Stewardship as defined in this course includes attendance, punctuality, participation, appropriate behavior, and positive interaction with others. Stewardship will be worth 15% of the overall course grade. Any infraction of the policies as stated below will affect the overall stewardship grade. The severity of the penalty will depend upon the severity of the infraction and is at the sole discretion of the professors.

Attendance

Attendance is required. You are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. Your contribution to this class is vitally important for us as a learning community. Unexcused absences will result in point deductions from the stewardship grade. Confined-to-bed illness with a physician's excuse, death in your immediate family, and approved sports/music absences will be excused; other *major* emergencies *may* be excused at the professors' discretion. *Important note:* If you are going to miss class for a reason that you think is excused, please call or e-mail one or both of us *before* class to let me know. If you cannot call before class (i.e. you have a car accident on the way to class), you MUST contact us within 24 hours for the absence to be excused. It is *your* responsibility to get notes and other information if you miss. In-class activities and presentations *cannot* be made up.

Punctuality

Consistent tardiness demonstrates a lack of respect for our learning community. Leaving class early should not occur except under extreme circumstances and with prior approval of the professors. Tardiness will also result in point deductions from the stewardship grade.

Participation

You are expected to actively participate in class. Active participation assumes that you come to class with the reading and other assignments completed so that we all start with the common foundation of background reading. If you choose not to complete your reading, you will be less than fully prepared, and that choice will affect your classmates as we discuss and build on the concepts that were presented in the reading.

Participation also assumes that you will be prepared to participate by bringing the appropriate materials and textbook/s to each class session. Class discussions often spring from the readings, and you will be expected to refer to the text.

Classroom behavior

Respect and courtesy to fellow students and the professors are expected at all times. While it is up to the discretion of the professors as to what qualifies as inappropriate behavior, the following list includes a sampling of behaviors that are expected:

Cell phone ringers and other electronic equipment (including laptops) should be turned off in class, and no phone calls or texts should be made/taken during class time.

Talking and other unnecessary noises should be avoided during presentations.

Your attention should be on the classroom discussions and presentations (i.e., you should not be working on other coursework, sleeping, or be otherwise inattentive).

Interaction with others

This class will involve interaction within our learning community. Each of you should feel safe to express your opinions here. It is important to remember that while we may disagree with someone else's views, we must always remember to treat one another with dignity and respect.

Additionally, activities required in this course may involve working in groups. You are expected to make positive contributions to your group. You are to be a considerate and diligent group member. Problems with and within groups should be handled in the following way if at all possible: Individuals should share concerns with any individual s/he has concerns about. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, consider the resources of the other group members in helping resolve the matter. Finally, if the matter cannot be resolved at this level, consult the professor. Serious matters (e.g., failure to work with other members of the group [including individual or sub-group repeated attempts to dominate the group or withdraw from the group], failure to contribute your part to the group, etc.) can lead to strong consequences at the discretion of the professors. Such consequences may include a deduction in the stewardship grade, no longer being allowed to work with the group (i.e., completing project on your own), deduction of points on the project itself, and/or a failing grade on the assignment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Honesty and integrity are expected in all of your work: The college catalog says, "Trinity considers academic dishonesty in the forms of cheating and plagiarism to be serious academic infractions and a breaking of the college Community Expectations. An instructor may give a failing grade for the course based on deliberate cheating or plagiarism. In such case, the student may not drop the course prior to the announced last day to withdraw from a course." **Plagiarism** is defined as utilizing another person's ideas, works, or words as if they were one's own, without identifying the source. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form, including in written papers, exams, notebooks, or oral presentations. If you have questions regarding what is or is not considered plagiarism, please clarify them with us *before* the assignment is due.

Cheating is any form of fraud or deception that results in a better grade or a better impression of the student's performance than s/he actually earns or deserves. Cheating is not tolerated in any form at any time. Any willing participant in an act of cheating will be held responsible.

Incidents of plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with severely by the instructors. The penalty will include, at least, failure of the assignment involved, but could include failure of the course. Incidents of plagiarism and cheating will be reported to the Academic Dean, who has the authority to undertake further disciplinary measures in accordance with TIU policy on community standards violations.