

Course Outline: 2018-19



Religious Studies 1010F Religion, Theology and Global Issues

Location: HUC V208
Day(s): Wednesdays
Time: 6:30-9:30pm

Instructor(s): Dr. Gary D. Badcock
Contact info: gbadcock@uwo.ca / HUC A221 / 519-438-7224 ext. 288

Prerequisites Required for this Course:

This course has no prerequisite.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

- Reflect in verbal and written communication a critically informed understanding of the importance of religion and theology in human experience;
- Understand and explain the specific ways in which religious and theological language shape a range of human attitudes to the meaning of work;
- Grasp some of the particular challenges arising in the modern period in particular both to religion and to work as particularly “meaningful” aspects of life;
- Engage in more holistic discussion of issues arising in public life, including in politics and economics.

Course Syllabus:

Course Description

This course introduces the study of religion and theology through a specific theme: the meaning of work. In the “gig economy,” work for many millions of people in the modern West has become precarious; rather than being a source of meaning in life, it has become a source of uncertainty and despair. Even for those with good jobs, “wage slavery” is a massive issue.

Does work have meaning? We are accustomed to the notion of work as means to an end: work is accordingly a means of earning money so as to achieve the end of economic independence, or as a

means of buying “stuff.” But what if work had a deeper meaning than either the ideal of personal freedom or crass consumerism can contain?

Given that we devote most of our lives to work in one way or another, it is scarcely surprising that religious thought regularly deals with it. This course will explore the question of the meaning of work through a range of themes emerging in -- or in relation to -- religious thought, particularly in the modern West. The course will thus indirectly provide an introduction to Western religion, alongside its treatment of work, and so help students to navigate in two intellectual worlds.

Course Outline

Week 1 (Sept. 12)

**Course Introduction/
Work as a Problem and Possibility**

Week 2 (Sept. 19)

Work in the Biblical Tradition: The Genesis Narrative

Readings:

Genesis 2:5–3:21, from any modern translation of the Bible, or at:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3A5-3%3A24&version=ESV>

Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 186-222
available on OWL

(The second reading, from a modern historical-critical biblical commentary first published in German in 1974, combines general discussion of the overall history and meaning of the Genesis text with detailed exegesis of individual verses. For our purposes, Genesis 2.15 and 3.17-19 are the key verses to explore – to read selectively by looking actively for what you need is to read intelligently!)

Week 3 (Sept. 26)

Work and Perfection: St. Benedict and Martin Luther

Reading:

St Benedict of Nursia, *Rule of St. Benedict*, chapter 48

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/50040/50040-h/50040-h.html#chapter-48-nl-on-the-daily-manual-labor>

Dom Benedict Hardy, OSB, “Work and Monasticism,” *Humanum* (2017), available at:

<http://humanumreview.com/articles/work-and-monasticism>

Gustaf Wingren, *The Christian’s Calling*, pp. 63-77
available on OWL

Week 4 (Oct. 3)

Work, Property and the Foundations of the Modern State

Reading:

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapter 5
<https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/locke1689a.pdf> , pp. 10-18

Richard Ashcraft, "Locke's Political Philosophy," in Vere Chappell, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*, Chapter 9
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-companion-to-locke/3E73136047995EBB477D0158B0699B02>

(The second reading will need to be accessed on campus, or else login to the Library system for remote access.)

Week 5 – Reading Week, No Classes

Week 6 (Oct. 17)

The Meaning of Work in the Industrial Age: Self-Interest and the “Invisible Hand”

Reading:

Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (excerpt)
http://spartan.ac.brocku.ca/~tmulligan/3p82inv_hand.html

Thomas Chalmers, *On Political Economy*, Conclusion (pp. 450-458)
https://books.google.ca/books?id=B8tAAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA450&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false

E. Rothschild, "Adam Smith and the Invisible Hand," *American Economic Review* 84 (1994), 319-322
https://www.jstor.org/stable/2117851?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

J. F. McCaffrey, "Thomas Chalmers and Social Change," *Scottish Historical Review* 60 (1981), 32-60.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25529400.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A8020ead40a9bbcbc1722d8758c6f8ce6>

Week 7 (Oct. 24)

In-Class Mid-Term Exam (1-hour, last hour of class)

The Weber Thesis: The “Protestant Work Ethic”

Reading:

Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Chapter 1, Chapter 4, A (pp. 3-12, 56-80)
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?docID=242182>

(The reading will need to be accessed on campus, or else login to the Library system for remote access.)

Week 8 (Oct. 31)

Marx: Alienation in Work and Religion

Reading:

Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, First Manuscript, section "Estranged Labour"

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>

Oliver Christ, "The Concept of Alienation in the Early Works of Karl Marx," *European Scientific Journal* 11 (2015), 551-563.

<https://eujournal.org/index.php/esj/article/viewFile/5340/5164>

Week 9 (Nov. 7)

A Socialist-Romantic Response to Industrial Work: The Arts and Crafts Movement

William Morris, *News from Nowhere*, Chapter 6 (pp. 35-44)

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=oLBGAQAAMAAJ&pg>

On the history of the book, *News from Nowhere*, a good source is <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/from-socialist-news-to-fine-art-printing-william-morriss-news-from-nowhere>

Kayla MacMartin, "News from Nowhere: Art for Art's Sake or the Emotional State?"

<https://course-journals.lib.sfu.ca//index.php/eng435/article/download/19/41?inline=1>

Have a good look at the website <https://williammorrissociety.org>

Do an Internet search for some or all of the following: "William Morris" and "metalwork," "textiles," "architecture," "stained glass," "Kelmscott Press," or "typography."

Week 10 (Nov. 14)

The Dignity of Work and of the Worker in Christian Socialism: the Genesis of the Welfare State?

Reading:

William Temple, *Christianity and Social Order*, Chapters 4-7

https://books.google.ca/books?id=EXBIAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Week 11 (Nov. 21)

The Cold War and the Polish Pope:

John Paul II's Theological Critique of the Soviet "Worker's Paradise"

Reading:

John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*

http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html

Week 12 (Nov. 28)

The Neoliberal Outlook: a Free Market “Faith”?

Reading:

Robert H Nelson, “Economics as Religion,” in H.G. Brennan and A.M.C. Waterman, eds., *Economics and Religion: Are They Distinct*, pp. 227-236

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226870405_Economics_as_Religion

Gary D. Badcock, ed., *God and the Financial Crisis*, Chapter 1

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=CD5DAAQBAJ&pg>

Pierre Bourdieu, “The Essence of Neoliberalism,” in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (December, 1998)

<https://mondediplo.com/1998/12/08bourdieu>

Week 13 (Dec. 5)

Globalization, the New Nativism, and the Future of Work

Reading:

Term is drawing to a close, essays are due, and our reading this week will be kept “short and sweet”:

Uri Friedman, “What is a Nativist?” in *The Atlantic*, April 11, 2017

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/04/what-is-nativist-trump/521355/>

Come to class prepared to talk about the political challenges faced at the present moment in history. If you have lots of time on your hands, you can also read Max Stackhouse, ed., *God and Globalization*, vol. 1, ~ pp. 25-52. Note that while this book pre-dates the Trump revolution, and so belongs to the neoliberal era, the commentary on the role of religion in public discourse is still relevant to the debates of the present. It is, however, not expected that most students will have a great deal of time “on their hands” at this time of the year, and so the Stackhouse reading is available only on Reserve in the Library, and has not been placed on OWL. You can also access (some of) it on Google Books:

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=xqEqDQAAQBAJ&printsec>

Course Materials:

There is no textbook required for this course. Instead, the weekly readings listed in the Syllabus are available in electronic format.

Assignments & Method of Evaluation of Assignments:

Assessment:

1. A 1-hour mid-term examination, to be held in the final hour of class on October 24 (20%).
2. Attendance and participation (10%).
3. A research essay of about 2000 words on a topic to be announced, due by November 28 (40%).
4. A final examination (30%).

Additional Statements:

1. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices during Tests and Exams

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited, to laptops, PDAs, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

2. **Statement on Academic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg113.html>.

3. Plagiarism-detecting Software/Computer Marking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

4. Support Services:

- UWO Registrar's Office: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
- Huron's Faculty of Theology, Office of the Dean:
http://www.huronuc.on.ca/faculty_of_theology/info_for_current_students
- Faculty of Theology office: srice@uwo.ca, 519-438-7224, ext. 289
- Huron's Writing Skills Centre: http://www.huronuc.on.ca/student_life/writing_services

- UWO's Mental Health website: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to this website for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.
- UWO Student Support and Development Services: http://communications.uwo.ca/current_students/student_services.htm
- Services provided by Western University Student Council: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

5. Accommodation for absences:

a) Non-medical absences:

Regular attendance at class is expected. Students who miss class without medical explanation (see 5.b below) will lose one mark for each class missed, to a maximum of 10%, unless clear explanation of extenuating circumstances can be provided. Non-medical explanations should be directed to the Instructor by email: gbadcock@huron.uwo.ca . Students who miss more than 50% of classes without adequate explanation may be failed.

- ### b) Medical absences:
- See also the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness —Undergraduate Students, at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>)

For work representing 10% or more of the overall grade for the course, a student must present documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation must be submitted as soon as possible to your Faculty Dean's office (Huron Arts & Social Science students should take their documentation to the Academic Counsellor, through the Academic Services Centre at Huron), together with a Request for Relief specifying the nature of the accommodation requested. The request and documentation will be assessed and appropriate accommodation will be determined by the Dean's office in consultation with the instructor(s.) Academic accommodation will be granted ONLY where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities.

The UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) and Request for Relief are available at the Student Centre website (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>), Huron University College Academic Counselling website (www.huronuc.on.ca) or from the Dean's Office or Academic Services Centre at Huron.