UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2016
Instructor: Dr. D. Lyle Dabney
Course #: THEO 2310
Sections: 105 & 106
Course Title: Explorations in Christian Theology
Topic: God at Work

Description:

This course will examine the topic of work in Christian theology. At the beginning of the twenty-first century the United States is experiencing a profound socio-economic transformation. Having begun as an agrarian society, we then morphed into an industrial social economy in the nineteenth and twentieth century and are now in the midst of becoming an information society. Each of these eras in our economic history has witnessed cultural and social transitions that brought change to the way we live and work—and the way we understand our life and labor. This second level course in Christian theology will examine the questions concerning our work that are now being raised in both business enterprises and in the recent scholarly literature on the subject. What is the significance and meaning of our labor? Why is creativity such an integral part of contemporary work? Can the working life of an entrepreneur be more than just a career? What role does God or ‘spirituality’ play in the workplace?

This course on “God and Work” will begin with a discussion of David Miller’s introductory text, available on-line, God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement. Using that survey as a point of departure, the class will proceed to examine some of the most important developments in the history of the Christian tradition with regard to these questions and will then take up a conversation with some of the contemporary voices in the debates. In the light of that material, we will turn to a consideration of the Biblical witness and how these matters are depicted in its narrative in order to help the student to begin to articulate a faith that works.

The goals of this course are three: first, to enable the student to become conversant with the major forms of the teachings of the Christian tradition about work in both their historical development and current configurations; second, to bring the student to an understanding of the underlying logic shaping these doctrines in the tradition; and third, to help the student begin to think through a faith that works today. In this way the class will be further prepared to meet the Student Learning Outcomes for the Knowledge Area of Theology adopted by the University in May of 2005. According to that document, each student should be able to perform the following three tasks:

1. Describe theologically the basic content of the Catholic faith in relation to other Christian and religious traditions as well as other world views,
2. Interpret theological texts and frameworks in their historical contexts, and
3. Articulate implications of Christian faith for growth in holiness and the promotion of justice in the contemporary world.