Theology, Ethics, and Business
University of Notre Dame
Fall 2022

Course #:
THEO 20639

Times:
Section 01/02 – 9:30 - 10:45 AM
Section 03/04 – 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

Location:
O'Shaughnessy Hall, Room 114

Instructor:
David A. Clairmont
Office Hours: Tuesday, 8:30 – 11:30 AM, by appointment
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Teaching Assistant:
Joseph Lim
E-mail: jlim5@nd.edu

Course Description

This course is intended to be an introduction to Catholic moral theology customized for those discerning a career as a business professional. In the wake of ethical failures at a number of prominent corporations, business leaders have renewed their calls for ethical behavior and have begun to establish criteria for hiring morally thoughtful employees and to institute ethics education in the workplace. This move has prompted a number of questions. Are institutions of higher education or small groups of well-meaning business professionals capable of training people to behave ethically? Is the real problem in contemporary business a lack of ethical knowledge, a lack of skill in applying rules to particular cases, or a lack of sensitivity to morally relevant issues? In the first part of the course, we will examine philosophical, theological, and economic interpretations of our current business situation, and we will consider various approaches to thinking about the ethical dimensions of business by examining Catholic theology as a virtue ethics tradition, considering how virtue relates to happiness, law, moral judgment, the nature of work, and one's professional vocation. In the second part of the course, we will examine the tradition of Catholic social teaching, with special attention to the relationship between workers and management as well as the norms of justice that ought to govern those relations. Course requirements include midterm and final examinations and a research paper.

The Core Curriculum at Notre Dame
“The Catholic intellectual tradition affirms that both the desire and the capacity for truth are gifts of God, which are meant to lead to the full flourishing of the human person and the building up of the common good. Hence, as a Catholic university, Notre Dame is happy to speak not only of ‘the pursuit of truth for its own sake’ (ND Mission Statement), but of that gaudium de veritate, which is ‘the joy of searching for, discovering, and communicating truth in every field of knowledge’ (Ex corde ecclesiae §1). Notre Dame gratefully cultivates the unique gifts and sacrifices of every student, each of whom, regardless of faith or background, is a creative agent in the common pursuit of wisdom. Together we seek in the core curriculum ‘an intelligibility and a coherence to all reality’ (NDMS), moving from truths as discovered and taught by individual disciplines toward the ultimate unity of truth. Rather than an arbitrary set of requirements, the core curriculum is a doorway inviting us to consider a final integration, a ‘higher synthesis’ (Ex corde ecclesiae §16) of science and wisdom, faith and reason, theory and practice, indeed, of all things created and uncreated in Christ, ‘in whom all things hold together’ (Col. 1:17) and are ‘brought to their completion’ (NDMS).” [Department of Theology, 2018]

This course fulfills the second university theology requirement for a course in “Doctrine in Development and Dialogue” for which the Department of Theology has established as the primary learning goal that “Students will understand and appreciate how theology, as reflection on a living Tradition, is at once and inseparably both doctrinal and dialogical.” The proximate learning objective through which we approach this goal is that “Students will acquire in-depth knowledge on an issue or perspective in which theology engages the doctrines of the faith in dialogue.” [https://theology.nd.edu/about/the-university-requirement-for-theology/]. In this course, our primary doctrinal reference points will be the moral teachings of the Catholic Church (principally the virtue tradition but also Church teaching on social justice) and the perspective serving as our primary dialogue partner will be modern business practice and its internal modes of ethical reflection.

Learning Goals

In addition to this overarching learning goal and objective of the second theology course set by the department, the following learning goals will structure our approach to theology, ethics, and business this semester:

1. To position moral theology (the Catholic terminology for what business professionals call “ethics”) among the various branches of Catholic theology and to identify virtue ethics as the philosophical approach to ethical thinking that most closely resembles Catholic moral theology.

2. To develop facility in thinking multi-dimensionally about ethics, focusing especially on how moral descriptions of relevant situations (What is going on?) affect our moral judgments about how to act in those situations (What are we to do?).

3. To identify the basic elements of a Catholic approach to ethics—including love, virtue, happiness, law, conscience, sin, mercy, beatitude, and social justice—and to interpret business contexts and actions in light of these elements, with special attention to how Christian virtues may be expressed in business and other professional settings.

4. To become familiar with the principles of Catholic social teaching and Catholic theology of work and vocation.
5. To form an approach to analyzing business issues in different cultural contexts in light of Catholic teaching and other sets of cultural values.
6. To reflect on the basic goods and guiding principles that structure your chosen profession by writing a research paper on the environment and ethical practice of your profession.

Health and Safety Protocols and Accommodations

Health and Safety Protocols:

All students are expected to abide by the University’s most up-to-date health and safety protocols, the most recent update to which (effective as of August 11, 2022) is available at the following website: https://covid.nd.edu/news/fall-22-covid-19-updates/. Our course will follow these mandated university health and safety protocols, ensure compliance with all university approved accommodations including especially for the needs of those not able to attend class in person, and aim to be as flexible as possible with course logistics and assignments to assist students whose work is interrupted by the ongoing pandemic.

Accommodations:

The Center for Student Support and Care includes the Sara Bea Accessibility Services office [https://supportandcare.nd.edu/for-students/current-students/accessibility-support/] to coordinate approved academic accommodations for students. Your instructor will work with that office to ensure that you receive all the accommodations you are due under the University’s policy. If you anticipate that you will be absent because of an official University commitment or because of a significant health or family issue outside the standard campus protocols during the pandemic, please notify your instructor in advance if at all possible (or as soon thereafter as you are able). You may be asked to provide documentation to support your request for excused absences. If you anticipate an issue, it better to discuss it with the instructor sooner rather than waiting until you are in the midst of a difficult situation.

Responsibilities

You are expected to come to each class having completed all of the assigned readings. Attendance will be taken; your third unexcused absence, and each absence after that, may result in the lowering of your final grade for the course by up to a third of a letter mark (ex. B+ → B). An unexcused absence is one that you do not clear with me prior to the class you miss. Classes will include both short lectures and discussions, so please try to formulate questions based on your readings that you can contribute to our classroom conversations. Each of us has a responsibility to see that the discussions are lively and informative. Between two and three hours of preparation for each hour spent in class is a realistic estimate of your workload. You are also responsible for holding to proper standards of classroom decorum: come to class on time, be attentive and polite to the instructor, teaching assistant, and your fellow students, keep an open mind, and do not interrupt each other (which means, among other things, turn off your cell phones when you enter the classroom).
Readings

There are four required texts for this course.

Michael J. Himes, Doing the Truth in Love: Conversations about God, Relationships and Service (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1995)

All of the other readings for this course are available through Canvas or the web links provided here. Additional helpful resources are available at the following websites:

The Bible [New Revised Standard Version is the suggested translation, but you may also access the New American Bible translation online at: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_INDEX.HTM]
The Catechism of the Catholic Church [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM]

Grading:

Your final grade for the course will be based on the quality of your work in six categories:

  Class Participation 10 %
  Discussion Posts on Circular Letters 10 %
  Ethical Life in the Professions Research Paper 20 %
  Quizzes 20 %
  Mid-term Examination 20 %
  Final Examination 20 %

The details of each of these components are presented below.

Quizzes

You are required to complete four short quizzes over the course of the semester. The quizzes will be in short answer format and based on the required readings up to the last class date prior to the quiz. These will be available on Canvas roughly a week prior to the due date and you are
You are expected to complete the quizzes by the end of the day on which they are due, turning in the completed quiz through Canvas in MS Word format or as otherwise specified. In most cases, our class discussions during the preceding days will include a detailed examination of each of the readings which should prepare you adequately for the quizzes. Both quizzes and exams are to be taken in a “closed book, closed note” format, which means you should not consult your books or class notes (or any other written or electronic resources) once you open the assignment in Canvas.

Midterm and Final Examinations

You will have a cumulative mid-term examination and a cumulative final examination. These examinations will likely include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. You will be given a review sheet prior to the exam which will include the essay questions that will appear on the exam, so you will be able to think about them ahead of time. The exams are take-home exams and you are limited to two hours to complete each assignment, during which time you are not permitted to look at your books, articles, notes, class handouts, prior graded assignments, or any other resources (print or digital). The exam scale (which is the same scale that will be used to determine your final grade) is as follows:

- **A** 95-100
- **A-** 90-94
- **B+** 87-89
- **B** 84-86
- **B-** 80-83
- **C+** 77-79
- **C** 74-76
- **C-** 70-73
- **D+** 67-69
- **D** 64-66
- **D-** 60-63
- **F** 59 and below

All exams will be posted in Canvas and you should submit the completed exams through Canvas in MS Word format by the end of the day on which the assignment is due.

Class Participation:

Given the size of this class, tracking participation will be necessary to ensure that you have both incentive and opportunity to ask questions about the assigned readings and to comment on what you are hearing in the lectures and class discussions. There will be time for conversation about the lecture and the assigned readings with the other students during each class session. You will be awarded class participation points according to the following standard based on the number and quality of comments you make during the semester:

- 0-1 comment  
  - C range
- 2-3 comments (or fewer but of exceptional quality)  
  - B range
- 4-5 comments (or fewer but of exceptional quality)  
  - A range
- 6 or more (or fewer but of exceptional quality)  
  - A+
You are encouraged to participate on your own initiative, but you also may be called upon to answer a question or comment on an assigned reading, especially if it is late in the semester and you have not participated frequently in class discussions. If you are concerned that you were not able to offer a comment in class, please send an email to the instructor with your comment and it will be counted toward your class participation for that day. If you are concerned about your class participation grade, you are welcome to contact me for an estimated participation grade up to that point in the semester.

“Circular Letters” and Posting to the Class Discussion

Meaningful theology is conversational theology and, while our class discussions will provide some time to initiate conversations, it is important to have a forum to continue those conversations in greater depth. For this reason, your instructor will be providing a short commentary on each of the class sessions. This is in the spirit of Catholic religious orders (such as the Congregation of Holy Cross which founded the University of Notre Dame) whose leaders would write to their members from time to time with some thoughts on issues or events of concern to the community. These were called “circular letters” because they were written by the leaders of the community for circulation to all its members. This class will have its own “Circular Letters” through the “Discussions” function on Canvas. The plan will be to post a short “letter” after each class on the topic for that session or on a particular question or issue raised during the class discussion that day. You will be expected to make posts to the “Discussions” forum. Each post should be one paragraph, three-five sentences, on the topic for that day. You may post on any of the open forum topics at any time during the semester, up until the last day of class. Your postings will be evaluated in the following way:

- 1 post C range
- 2-3 posts (or fewer but of exceptional quality) B range
- 4-5 posts (or fewer but of exceptional quality) A range
- 6 or more (or fewer but of exceptional quality) A+

You might also want to consider reading these letters and the various responses throughout the semester, since these will help you in preparing for your midterm and final exams, especially when it comes to the essay questions.

“Ethical Life in the Professions” Research Paper

For the final project of the semester, you must complete a research paper (approximately 10-12 pages, typed, double spaced, 12-point font) undertaking an ethical analysis of the profession you plan to enter upon graduation. (If you are unsure what you plan to do after graduation, you are welcome to write on any profession you find interesting.) The paper will have two parts, each directed at answering one of the two main guiding questions for our course: “What is going on?” and “What am I to do?” In the first part of the paper, you will describe and analyze the ethical environment of your profession. The ethical environment will certainly include some reference to market and other economic factors that give rise to practical challenges, but what we are looking for here is an analysis of the wider social, cultural, and perhaps even religious environment that will affect the ways you interpret the value of the work you are doing and the kinds of ethical decisions you will need to make. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic and the renewed calls for racial justice in this country and around the world are examples of such factors.
that will affect your professional life, but you should begin the first part of the paper by thinking about how you view the world at this moment, given all that is going on, and then offer your description of how the various environmental trends you observe will likely affect your professional life in an ethically significant way—in other words, how will these factors either facilitate or impede your ability to work ethically in your profession. In the second part of the paper, you will make a theological and ethical analysis of the profession itself, according to the framework we will be exploring in class where you will identify and relate your profession’s basic social goods, its professional rules and regulations (including relevant laws), and the virtues needed to work well in that profession. You will also be asked to think about the connections between the work you are doing in paid employment outside the home and those activities going on inside the home or in your communities that will challenge you to live professional lives of consistent character. You must have an approved abstract and outline by Monday, October 10. The final paper is due by the end of the day (11:55 PM) on Wednesday, November 30 submitted through Canvas. Further detailed instructions about the paper will be available in a separate document on Canvas.

Theology Department Inclusive Language Policy

Reflecting the commitment of the University to create a welcoming and respectful classroom environment, all students are asked to use gender inclusive and culturally respectful language in their oral and written communications with the instructor, teaching assistants, and fellow students. This reflects expected standards of the university, the academy, and other professional contexts. Specifically, the Theology Department policy requires the following: “to adopt respectful and gender-inclusive language for human beings throughout all academic coursework, inclusive of classroom presentations and conversations, course syllabi, and both written and oral student assessment materials…The Department of Theology recognizes the ongoing debate and conflicting views about gender-sensitive language for God. As a result, the department currently adopts no formal policy statement concerning language for God. At the same time, the department is committed to promoting exchange of ideas and sharing of faith relative to the use of language for the divine.” For more information about this policy, please see: http://theology.nd.edu/about/inclusive-language-statement/.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses and will not be tolerated in this class. Any student discovered committing these offenses will automatically receive a failing grade for the assignment and may be subject to a failing grade for the course. For more information, please consult the University Academic Code of Honor, available for your reference online at: https://honorcode.nd.edu/ and the Procedural Appendix to the Honor Code, available at: https://honorcode.nd.edu/assets/349548/honor_code_procedural_appendix_final_v26_2019.5.6_1_.pdf. If you still have questions after consulting these resources, please see me and I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the policy. While you are welcome to study together if you like, you are required to write your own quizzes, exams, and papers. Keep in mind that the essay questions for the exams will be distributed ahead of time. You need to write
your own essays; the arguments you develop must be your own and must not draw uncited from the work of another student. In your essays, you may use either the “notes and bibliography” citation method (more customary in theology and other humanities disciplines) or the “author-date” method, both of which are described in the online Chicago Manual of Style, accessible through the following website: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Schedule

—PART I—
Introduction to Theology and Ethics

8/24/22  Introduction and Course Overview

RECOMMENDED READING
  Kerry Temple, “What’s Best for Them” [“Files” in Canvas]

8/29/22  Approaches to Theology

REQUIRED READING
  John C. Cavadini, “Why Study God?” [“Files” in Canvas]
  Paul Tillich, “What Faith Is” [“Files” in Canvas]

8/31/22  Approaches to Ethics

REQUIRED READING
  Robin W. Lovin, “The Origins of Ethics” [“Files” in Canvas]
  Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, p. 9-19

—PART II—
Christian Theology, the Interpretation of Work, and the Life of Virtue

9/5/22  Theology and the Mystery of God

REQUIRED READING
  Michael Himes, Doing the Truth in Love, p. 1-37

1 Please note: The course schedule is subject to revision during the semester, and the instructor will give you notice in advance if changes are anticipated.
Pope Benedict XVI, “God Is Love” (*Deus Caritas Est*), par. 1-25
[http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html]

### 9/7/22  Christian Theologies of Love

**REQUIRED READING**

Thomas Merton, “Love and Need: Is Love a Package or a Message?” [“Files” in Canvas]

### 9/12/22  Theology and the Response to God

**REQUIRED READING**

Michael Himes, *Doing the Truth in Love*, p. 38-82

### 9/14/22  Theology and the Community of God

**REQUIRED READING**

Michael Himes, *Doing the Truth in Love*, p. 83-144

### 9/19/22  Thinking Theologically About Work

**Quiz # 1 Due** (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day, on readings and lectures from 8/29/22 to 9/14/22)

**REQUIRED READING**

Jonathan Malesic, “Nothing Is to Be Preferred to the Work of God” [“Files” in Canvas]

### 9/21/22  Work and Virtue: Examples from Science and Engineering

**REQUIRED READING**

Jiin-Yu Chen, “Virtue and the Scientist: Using Virtue Ethics to Examine Science’s Ethical and Moral Challenges” [“Files” in Canvas]
Peter Kilpatrick, “The College of Engineering at Notre Dame and its Interaction with its Catholic Mission and the new Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Studies” [“Files” in Canvas]

### 9/26/22  Varieties of Virtue in Philosophy and Religion
REQUIRED READING
Karyn Lai, “Confucian Business Ethics: Reliability, Relationships, and Responsiveness” [“Files” in Canvas]
Hayfaa A. Tlaiss “How Islamic Business Ethics Impact Women Entrepreneurs: Insights from Four Arab Middle Eastern Countries” [“Files” in Canvas]

9/28/22 Structural Challenges to Cultivating Virtue

REQUIRED READING
David Graeber, “Dead Zones of the Imagination: On Violence, Bureaucracy, and Interpretive Labor” [“Files” in Canvas]
William Schweiker, “Accounting for Ourselves: Accounting Practice and the Discourse of Ethics” [“Files” in Canvas]

10/3/22 Personal Challenges Cultivating Virtue

REQUIRED READING
Wendell Berry, “The Ecological Crisis as a Crisis of Character” in The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture [“Files” in Canvas]

10/5/22 Works of Mercy and the Virtues

Quiz #2 Due (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day, on readings and lectures from 9/19/22 to 10/3/22)

REQUIRED READING

10/10/22 Virtue and the Analysis of Moral Acts

Essay Abstract and Outline Due (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day)

REQUIRED READING
Pope John Paul II, “The Splendor of Truth” (Veritatis Splendor), par. 6-27, 77-80

10/12/22 Exploring the Ten Commandments (part 1)

Midterm Examination Due (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day,
cumulative on readings and lectures through 10/10/22)

Please note: Consult chart of Chan’s book on Canvas for your next four assignments.

REQUIRED READING

10/15/22 – 10/23/22

—Mid-Semester Break—

10/24/22  
**Exploring the Ten Commandments (part 2)**

REQUIRED READING
Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, *The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes*, p. 82-140.

10/26/22  
**Exploring the Beatitudes (part 1)**

REQUIRED READING

10/31/22  
**Exploring the Beatitudes (part 2)**

REQUIRED READING

—PART III—

*Social Justice from Home to the Workplace*

11/2/22  
**Human Dignity and the Common Good (part 1)**

REQUIRED READING
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>11/7/22</td>
<td><em>Human Dignity and the Common Good (part 2)</em></td>
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<td><strong>Quiz # 3 Due</strong> (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day, on readings and lectures from 10/12/22 to 11/2/22)</td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace/Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, <em>Vocation of the Business Leader</em> [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>11/9/22</td>
<td><strong>Case Study – Human Dignity and the Common Good</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>Rosemary Donley, S.C., “Nursing’s Mission: Spiritual Dimensions of Health Care” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>Susan Salter Reynolds, “The Poetry of Caregiving” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>11/14/22</td>
<td><strong>Stewardship and the Option for the Poor</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>Thomas O’Brien, Elizabeth Collier, and Patrick Flanagan, <em>Good Business</em>, p. 87-140</td>
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<td>11/16/22</td>
<td><strong>Case Study – Stewardship and the Option for the Poor</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>Melvin L. Oliver and Thomas M. Shapiro, “Race, Wealth, and Equality” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>Daniel Giedeman, “Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Freedman’s Savings Bank” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>11/21/22</td>
<td><strong>Justice and Subsidiarity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>11/23/22</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS MEETING (Thanksgiving Break)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/28/22</td>
<td><strong>Case Study – Justice and Subsidiarity</strong></td>
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**Quiz # 4 Due** (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day, on readings and lectures from 11/7/22 to 11/21/22)

**REQUIRED READING**
Angela Senander, “Beyond Scandal: Creating a Culture of Accountability in the Catholic Church” [“Files” in Canvas]
Avery Dulles, S.J., “Catholic Social Teaching and American Legal Practice” [“Files” in Canvas]

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>11/30/22</td>
<td><strong>Solidarity, Rights, and Responsibilities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Research Paper Due</strong> (submitted through Canvas by the end of the day)</td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>12/5/22</td>
<td><strong>Case Study – Solidarity, Rights, and Responsibilities</strong></td>
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<td>Chavella T. Pittman, “Racial Microaggressions: The Narratives of African American Faculty at a Predominantly White University” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>12/7/22</td>
<td><strong>Professional Vocation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED READING</strong></td>
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<td>Luigi Zingales, “Presidential Address: Does Finance Benefit Society?” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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<td>Martijn Cremers, “Faith, Flourishing, and Finance” [“Files” in Canvas]</td>
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**FINAL EXAMINATION**
(Although the exam will be available on Canvas and not administered in class, you are expected to submit it by the end of the exam period that the registrar has scheduled for this class.)

Section 01/02 [9:30-10:45] – Friday, December 16, 8:00-10:00 AM

Section 03/04 [11:00-12:15] – Wednesday, December 14, 4:15-6:15 PM