

UN 535 (Cross Listed as EC 435)
Capstone: Business as a Calling
Spring, 2000

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Office Hours: M2-3, W3-4, Th3:15-4

Syllabus

This seminar explores the question of business as a calling, as an activity that yields great personal satisfaction quite apart from the money it brings. Is business a noble activity or is it a rather crass but necessary pursuit? How does the economist's model view business? How is it viewed by society at large? Does a view of business as a calling help us to bridge the spiritual and the temporal? Does it have a positive impact on relationships with family and with community? For an economy to work, do we need moral and political capital as well as economic capital? If so, how do we sustain our moral and political capital, or rebuild it if it is eroding, or develop it where it is missing? Does how we look at business make a difference?

Format:

A good deal of reading and discussion of the readings. Seminar format, with professor as facilitator and students taking turns leading the discussion. Short reflective papers and a final summary paper. The grade will be based on participation in class (30%), the short reflective papers (40%), and on the final summary paper (30%).

Readings:

Novak, Michael. Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life.

Sennett, Richard. The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism

Bloom, Allan. The Republic of Plato, 2nd. ed.

Carnegie, Andrew. Autobiography.

Lewis, Michael. Liar's Poker.

Helgesen, Sally. The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership.

Coles, Robert. The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism.

Purdy, Jedediah. For Common Things: Irony, Trust, and Commitment in America Today.