DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to explore, seriously and constructively, a Christian way of thinking about workplace values and ethics. Our focus is on business (from small scale enterprise to the large corporation) and the professions (from the four traditional areas of medicine, law, theology, and university teaching to accounting, marketing, engineering, and other younger domains) with a special focus on clergy/ministerial/pastoral ethics. We will range across a wide spectrum of topics and problems, trying to understand the most important aspects of their contemporary lived (not just theoretical or academic) reality. At each point, on each topic, in each arena, we will try to understand what values and ethical insights could and should be brought to bear from a biblical Christian framework. We want to pay attention to the ways our fellow Christians past and present have thought about these topics and challenges. Where Jesus and Scripture provide clear strong guidance, we want to have clear, strong convictions. Where there must be room for differences of opinion, we want to respect that as well.

We will focus primarily on three areas of application. First, what does this mean for our own personal work, calling, profession, and career? how can we be thoughtful, faithful, ethical disciples and good leaders in our work lives? Second, what does this mean for the church and its leadership, its own organizational structures and practices, its moral education and support of good ethics? Third, what does all of this mean for the non-ecclesiastical companies and organizations where we or our parishioners work or can have some influence: how do we salt and light the ethics of organizations out in the marketplace?

OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who complete this course will be able to

1. Define the basic concepts and terminology of ethics, especially as these relate to vocation, profession, and the domain of work.
2. Understand, justify, and communicate their own personal ethical values and perspectives for life and work as Christians in church and world.
3. Understand and describe the biblical account of good character and community (virtue ethics), especially as detailed in the Beatitudes and Pauline virtues, and how this can be related to business and professional contexts.
4. Understand and describe the biblical account of ethical guidelines for right decisions and actions, especially as detailed in the Decalogue and Love Commandments and how this can be related to business and professional contexts.
5. Understand, describe, and utilize a biblically-grounded process for ethical discernment, decision-making, and resolution of dilemmas.
6. Understand and constructively dialogue with Christian and non-Christian perspectives on business and professional ethics other than their own.
7. Take biblical Christian insights, values, and ethics into their churches and Christian organizations --- and into a diverse, global workplace--- in constructive, positive ways.

INSTRUCTOR:

David W. Gill, Ph.D., is Mockler-Phillips Professor of Workplace Theology and Business Ethics and Director of the Mockler Center for Faith and Ethics in the Workplace at Gordon-Conwell. His books include a Christian ethics text Doing Right: Practicing Ethical Principles and a business ethics text It’s About Excellence: Building Ethically Healthy Organizations. He has taught Christian and/or business ethics for more than 30 years and lectured across North America and Europe. He is an experienced business and organizational ethics consultant and trainer.
REQUIRED READING:
Selected Readings ---to be distributed in class.

ASSIGNMENTS:
(submit all papers in electronic form as Word documents attached to e-mail to dgill@gcts.edu)

1. Case Analysis. A 1000-1250 word summary with critical commentary on either (a) a business/professional ethics case or problem that you have personally experienced or witnessed or (b) a workplace-related ethics case or problem you have read about in the news during the past six months. Describe the case in 200-250 words (Description due Feb 8) --- then provide your own best Christian analysis of the case/problem (facts, values, options, etc.) and how it should be managed or resolved (20% of grade) Analysis due Feb 29
2. Professional Ethics Statement. A 1000-1250 word statement of your own professional calling and the ethical standards to which you will strive to comply, drawing on both Scripture and relevant business/professional ethics literature. (20% of grade) Due March 14
3. Book Review. A 750-1000 word critical review of a significant Christian or general market book on some aspect of business or professional ethics. (20% of grade) Due April 4
4. Topical Research Paper & Class Presentation. A 1000-1250 word paper providing a biblical/theological perspective on an important topic in business or professional ethics. (20% of grade) Due April 25
5. Final exam. A two hour essay-style take home exam reviewing the entire course (20% of grade)

Schedule

1. Feb 1 Introduction
   Defining ethics terminology & concepts; ethics starting with problems and/or purposes; Biblical revelation and/or common grace; ethics/values diversity; ethics with and w/o God; personal vs. group/organizational ethics and values;
   Read: Gill, Chs 1 & 2;

2. Feb 8 Purpose/Mission, Virtue (Character & Culture), and Principles (Codes & Conduct)
   How purpose drives ethics and values; two great traditions in moral philosophy and theology; biblical insight on (a) the purpose of work, (b) character and community from the beatitudes and pauline virtues, and (c) moral principles and rules from the Decalogue and Love Commandments; core values and codes of conduct in business
   Read: Gill, Interlude, Appendixes A & B; Rae/Wong Chs 1 - 4
   Submit: 100-250 word description of workplace ethical dilemma or case

3. Feb 15 Decision-making and Troubleshooting Methods
   Recognizing, analyzing, and resolving ethical dilemmas; Christian approaches; secular organization approaches;
   Read: Gill, Ch. 3
   Discussion of Class cases

Reading Week Feb 22

4. Feb 29 Professional & Ministerial Ethics: Perspectives & Issues
   Professional codes; medicine, law, higher education, and clergy; newer professions; issues in ministerial/pastoral ethics
   Read: Noyce
Case analysis paper due

5. **Mar 7 Human Resources Management Issues**
   Recruiting, hiring, promotion and termination issues; compensation and benefits; employee relations; performance reviews; work/life balance; workplace safety; rights, duties, & respect; biblical perspectives on manager and employee, master and slave, etc.
   Read Rae/Wong Ch 7

6. **Mar 14 Finance & Marketing Issues**
   Investments, ownership, debt, interest, budgeting, accounting, reporting, and other financial issues; sales, promotion, advertising, and other marketing issues; biblical perspectives on stewardship, greed, usury, covetousness, generosity, responsibility, diligence, honesty, truthfulness, deception, etc..
   Read: Rae/Wong, Chs 8-9
   **Professional Ethics Statement due**

7. **Mar 21 Environment & Technology Issues**
   Energy, pollution, depletion, safety, health, aesthetics; from tools and techniques to technologies; information, communication, and biotechnology; ecological and technological values; biblical perspectives on creation care, environmental stewardship, human values and technological effectiveness.
   Read: Rae/Wong, Chs 10-11.

**Reading Week Mar 28**

8. **Apr 4 Globalization & International Business Issues**
   Outsourcing and offshoring jobs and manufacturing/agricultural expertise; global trade opportunities, benefits and challenges; fair trade; economic dislocation and development; multinational business and microenterprise; political/legal/economic/cultural diversity; biblical perspectives on nations and trade.
   Read: Rae/Wong, Chs 5-6.
   **Book Review Due**

9. **Apr 11 Organizational Ethics Leadership & Training**
   Proactive, holistic organization building/rebuilding/reforming; mobilizing organizations to clarify/identify purpose, mission, and vision, core values and practice-guiding principles; organizational ethics and values training/communication, implementation, and evaluation/auditing; ethical leadership and management.
   Read: Gill, Chs. 4-7; Rae/Wong, Ch 12

10. **Apr 18 Business & Professional Leadership Panel Discussion**
    Five veteran business leaders, pastors, and other professionals will share their perspectives and engage the class in a free-swinging discussion on ethics and leadership.

11. **Apr 25 Student Presentations**
    Topical Research Paper due

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**
Academic credit for a course requires regular attendance, not just completion of the assignments. Your personal participation and contribution is essential to the program. Attendance means being present for the entire scheduled class meeting, not just some part of it. In the event of an excused absence, for any reason, you are responsible for any information or class content missed and may be assigned additional make up work because of the absence. If you are absent from a significant portion of the course, or if you are frequently late for class meetings, even due to extenuating circumstances, this may result in a lower or even failing grade for the course. Please inform your professor well in advance of any urgent circumstances that may necessitate your being late or absent.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
Students are expected to review, understand, and comply with the academic integrity standards and commitments of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Our community values serious intellectual engagement and personal faithfulness more highly than grades or degrees. We are committed to being above reproach in our academic work as a reflection of our Christian faith and character. We are committed to honesty in all aspects of our work. Ask for help from your professor or your counselors and support group if you find yourself tempted to engage in any of the following violations of academic integrity --- or are just having great difficulty in your studies: Any of these violations will result in a failing grade in the course and a report to the dean.

- Submitting the your own same work, in whole or in part, in more than one course without explicit permission from your professor/mentors;
- Plagiarism, i.e., large and/or multiple unattributed, uncredited quotations or paraphrases of ideas from published or unpublished sources; Submitting as your own work paper(s) obtained from other sources or writers;
- Unpermitted collaboration with fellow students or others in preparing assignments.