

Theology 3340 Social Justice
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Fall 2005
University of Dallas
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Textbooks

1. *The Vocation of Business: Catholic Social Teaching for the Business Person*, John Médaille, University of Dallas, 2005.
2. *Managing as if Faith Mattered: Christian Social Principles in the Modern Organization*, Helen J. Alford, O.P., and Michael J. Naughton, University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.
3. *Rerum Novarum*
4. *Laborem Exercens*
5. *Centesimus Annus*
6. Additional readings to be handed out in class.

Course Description:

The central question which we will examine in this course is “What is the relationship, if any, between justice and economics?” We will be looking at this question through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching. Our investigation will be in four phases. First we will look at the historical background, both in the history of moral dialogue and in economic history. Second, we will give an in-depth reading to three of the major Social Encyclicals. Third, we will examine some “theoretical” responses to the teachings. Finally, we will look at actual business enterprises and government policies which have successfully embodied, or attempted to embody, Catholic Social Teaching within the worlds of business and government.

Requirements and Grading Policy

1. Grading will be based on the weekly quizzes (20%), a mid-term (20%), a final (25%), and a term paper (35%). The lowest quiz grade a student receives on a quiz will be dropped.
2. Attendance Policy. Regular and punctual attendance is a requirement. Late arrival to class will be marked as an absence. *More than three absences, excused or unexcused, will be liable to an FA.*

Term Paper

A term paper of 2,500 – 3,500 words is required. The student should be able to demonstrate his or her knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching in the analysis of some important theory, author, or current issue. Some possible topics are:

Authors:

Mortimer Adler and Louis Kelso, *The Capitalist Manifesto*

Hillarie Belloc, *The Servile State* and *The Restoration of Property*
Michael Budde & Robert Brimlow, *Christianity Incorporated*

Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*
 William Greider, *One World, Ready or Not:
 The Manic Logic of Globalization*
 Jane Jacobs, *Cities and the Wealth of Nations*
 D. Stephen Long, *The Divine Economy:
 Theology and the Market*
 Race Matthews, *Jobs of Our Own: Building a
 Stakeholder Society*
 John D. Mueller, *God and Money*
 Michael Novak, *The Spirit of Democratic
 Capitalism*
 E. F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful:
 Economics as if People Mattered*
 Muhammad Yunus, *Banker to the Poor*

Theories:

Distributivism

Neo-Scholastic or “Personalist” Economics
 Georgism (“Single Tax”)
 ESOPs and “Binary Economics”
 Micro-Banking
 Participatory Management
 Cooperatives (in General)
 The Mondragon Cooperative Corporation
 Neo-Conservatism

Current Issues:

Globalization
 Social Security
 Health Care
 Tax policy
 Third World development
 Land redistribution

Of course, there are many other possibilities. All topics must be approved in advance by the instructor and must be submitted on or before October 13th, along with at least three of the major sources you intend to use. Papers are due December 1st. The size of the class precludes permitting any late papers.

Standards for the Term Paper

The issues covered in these papers will deal with topics that are very much in public discussion and hence subject to a certain amount of partisan and ideological treatment. The student should be able to demonstrate that he or she can transcend such narrow treatments. In particular, the student must avoid two logical errors that are common in dealing with such issues, the *Straw Man Argument* and *Special Pleading*.

In a straw man argument, an author critiques not an argument that somebody has actually made, but a false caricature of that argument (the “straw man”) which he then proceeds to demolish. The best way to guard against indulging this fallacy is to take great care never to critique an argument that you do not fully understand, and understand on its own terms. You can know that you have understood an argument properly when you can state it in a form such that somebody who holds that argument would recognize it as his own.

Special pleading is a fallacy by which one merely refuses to consider any evidence counter to one’s own position. In this, one ought to emulate the practice of St. Thomas Aquinas, who in the *Summa*’s always considered the arguments of his opponents and the objections to his positions even before stating his own opinions. At least part of the genius of St. Thomas traces to the fact he could indeed understand opposing positions and consider contrary evidence. In the same manner, avoiding the straw man and special pleading fallacies will help the student develop habits of mind which will advance not only

his or her intellectual development, but will also be of practical value in making clear business decisions.

Papers will be graded according to the following standards: proper formatting, 10%; quality and diversity of sources, 20%; ability to handle opposing arguments, 25%; cogency and clarity of arguments, 45%. *Proper formatting* refers to the length of the paper as well as the proper use and formatting of footnotes and of the bibliography. Use a recognized style manual such as the *Chicago Manual of Style* or the *MLA Style*. *Quality and diversity of sources* means that your sources should reflect a variety of views about your topic; a *univocal* bibliography is not acceptable. "Univocal" means that the sources have the same point of view. Sources should be from people qualified to comment on the topic. There should be a minimum of five sources, at least two of which are book-length and the rest substantial articles from recognized authorities. Regarding the *ability to handle opposing arguments*, refer to the discussion of the straw man and special pleading fallacies. If you are having difficulties, you may meet with me to discuss the problem.

Most importantly, your argument should be *clear and cogent*. Are the premises clear and explicit? Many people do not even realize the basis of their own arguments. Are the premises well supported by the sources? Do the conclusions follow from the premises? Is the style clear? Is the argument persuasive? A term paper is an opportunity for a student to test his own abilities to handle complex ideas and to express his own *informed* opinions. It should be an exercise in clear thinking and persuasive writing. If you are unsure, take your paper to the writing lab.

Syllabus

<p>9/1 Introduction</p> <p>Part One: Historical Background of the Question</p> <p>9/6 Justice and Economics <i>Reading: The Vocation of Business (VOB), Chapter 1.</i></p> <p>9/8 The State of Moral Dialogue since the Enlightenment <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 2.</i></p> <p>9/13 The Purpose of Business <i>Reading: Managing as if Faith Mattered (MFM), Chapters 1 & 2.</i></p> <p>9/15 Property and Culture <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 3.</i></p> <p>9/20 Justice in the History of Economics <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 4.</i></p> <p>Part Two: The Social Encyclicals</p> <p>9/22 <i>Rerum Novarum</i> <i>Reading: Rerum Novarum; VOB, Chapter 5</i></p> <p>9/27 <i>Laborem Exercens</i> <i>Reading: Laborem Exercens, Sections I-III: VOB, Chapter 6.</i></p> <p>9/29 <i>Laborem Exercens</i> <i>Reading: Laborem Exercens, Sections IV-V; MFM, Chapter 4.</i></p> <p>10/4 <i>Centesimus Annus</i> <i>Reading: Centesimus Annus, Chapters I-III; VOB, Chapter 7.</i></p> <p>10/6 <i>Centesimus Annus</i> <i>Reading: Centesimus Annus, Chapters IV-VI.</i></p> <p>Part Three: Ideas in Tension</p> <p>10/11 Tensions between CST and Economic Theory <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 8.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Term Paper Topics due 10/13!</i></p> <p>10/13 Towards an Evolved Capitalism</p>	<p><i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 9.</i></p> <p>10/18 Marginal Productivity and the Just Wage <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 10.</i></p> <p>10/20 Mid-term</p> <p>10/25 Neo-Conservatism <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 11.</i></p> <p>10/27 Distributivism <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 12.</i></p> <p>11/1 Islamic Economics <i>Guest Speaker</i></p> <p>Part Four: The <i>Praxis</i> of Justice in Business</p> <p>11/3 Land Redistribution: Taiwan and the “Land to the Tiller” Program <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 13.</i></p> <p>11/8 Globalization and Development <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 14.</i></p> <p>11/10 The Mondragón Cooperative Corporation <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 16.</i></p> <p>11/15 Guest Speaker, Robert Waldrop, President, The Okalahoma Food Cooperative</p> <p>11/17 Micro-Banking <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 15.</i></p> <p>11/22 ESOPs and Profit Sharing <i>Reading: MFM, Chapter 6; VOB, Chapter 17 (optional)</i></p> <p>11/29 The Just Wage in the Corporation <i>Reading: MFM, Chapter 5.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Term Papers due 12/1!</i></p> <p>12/1 Marketing and Product Development <i>Reading: MFM, Chapter 7.</i></p> <p>12/6 A Spirituality of Work <i>Reading: MFM, Chapter 8 & 9.</i></p> <p>12/8 The Vocation of Business <i>Reading: VOB, Chapter 19.</i></p>
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