

HORIZON

COLLEGE & SEMINARY

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Advancing God's Kingdom by Preparing Competent Christian Leaders for Spirit-Empowered Life and Ministry

BI5110/TS5110 Women and Vocation

3 credit hours. Prerequisites: none.

Susan Wendel, PhD swendel@horizon.edu

Oct 16-17, Nov 13-14, Dec 4-5, 2020

6:00-9:15 pm Fridays, 8:45 am-4:15 pm Saturdays



Course Content and Goals

Course Description

In conversation with other Christian thinkers, this course develops a biblical theology of vocation and, subsequently, uses this theological framework as a lens for evaluating the vocations of women in scripture and beyond. In the process, students have the opportunity to articulate their own sense of calling in light of the witness of scripture and in comparison with stories of women from church history.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

The course equips both seasoned and aspiring leaders with a theology of vocation that provides a fresh perspective for discerning and articulating the vocations of both men and women in the church.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *Biblical and Theological Literacy*, students achieve the following outcomes:

1. Study passages from the Old and New Testaments that portray vocation from different vantage points (the calling of God's people, the calling of prophets and disciples, and the responsibility to bear God's image) and reflect on how these passages provide a framework for understanding your own calling.
 - *Assessment:* Reading and Reflection Exercises.
2. Read and analyze select scholarly articles on the roles of women in the Bible.
 - *Assessment:* Panel Article Analysis.
3. Explore how Christian thinkers have understood and articulated the idea of vocation for the past two thousand years and consider the relevance of these ideas for the present.
 - *Assessment:* Placher Reading Responses.
4. Evaluate the stories of women in biblical history and beyond with the aim of understanding how their accounts serve as examples of the embodiment of Christian vocation.
 - *Assessment:* Research Paper.

Course Work

Required Readings

Placher, William C. ed. *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2005. (ISBN: 9780802829276).

Vocation readings and workbook (provided in class)

Other Course Readings:

- Readings from ATLA and on Populi
- *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. Available at http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/apocryphal_acts_06_thecla.htm.

- Catherine Booth's sermons: "Dealing with Anxious Souls" and "Compel them to Come In." Available at http://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath_booth/practical_religion/cbooth_prac_rel_pap5.htm and http://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath_booth/practical_religion/cbooth_prac_rel_pap6.htm
- St. Augustine's *Confessions*. Posted on Populi

**Students are responsible to purchase textbooks from a third-party retailer. For your convenience, Horizon has partnered with Kennedy's Parable to provide textbooks.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. *Reading and Reflection Exercises* (20%).

Using the readings and workbook supplied in class, reflect on how biblical passages portray vocation and thus inform our own unique sense of calling.

- Related learning outcome: #1.
- **Assignment Length:** 5-7 pages. **Due date:** Nov. 2, 2020.

2. *Panel Article Analysis* (20%).

On the weekend of Nov. 13-14, 2020, there will be two student-led discussion panels that address important secondary literature on select biblical passages. Eight students (four students x two panels) will have the opportunity to provide an oral presentation in a panel while other students will provide a written analysis of the articles for the panels. Further instructions for both panelists and non-panelists will be distributed in class.

- Related learning outcome: #2.
- **Assignment Length:** 4-6 pages. **Due date:** Nov. 13-14, 2020.

3. *Placher Reading Responses* (25%).

Prepare four reading responses from the William Placher's anthology, entitled *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*. Detailed instructions for the responses can be found in **Appendix A** (below). They should be assembled and submitted as a complete package.

- Related to learning outcome: #3.
- **Assignment Length:** 6-8 pages. **Due date:** Nov. 27, 2020.

4. *Research Paper* (35%).

Option One: Write a 2400-word essay that has the following three parts: 1) research, outline, and provide an analysis of the story of a woman in biblical or church history; 2) discuss how her life embodies vocation within a unique historical context; 3) identify how her story informs your own sense of calling and contributes to the life of the Christian community.

Option Two: Write a 2400-word research paper that discusses a particular biblical passage, or set of passages, about a woman or women in the bible. This paper should provide a critical discussion of key exegetical issues surrounding a particular passage, or set of passages, and address the secondary literature in detail (at least 10 sources including academic journal articles, monographs, and commentaries).

- Related learning outcome: #4.
- **Assignment Length:** 8 pages. **Due date:** Dec. 18, 2020.

Course Outline / Class Schedule

	Class Topic	Primary Reading	Secondary Reading	Supporting Assignments
10-16	Class Introduction: Towards a Definition of Vocation Called as a Covenant Community			
10-17	Called to a Prophetic Vocation	Judg 6:1-24; Jer 1:1-8; Isa 6:1-11 Luke 5:1-11; Luke 10; Gal 1:11-17; Acts 9:1-19; 1 Corinthians 12-14		
10-17	Called to Bear God's Image	Gen 1:26-28; 3:16-19 Rom 1:18-25; 5:12-20 Rom 8:18-30; 1 Cor 15; Col 1:15-20; 3:10-11		Reading Reflection Exercises Due: Nov. 2, 2020
11-13	Eve: The Mother of All Living Panel Discussion 1: 1 Timothy 2:8-15	Genesis 1-3 1 Timothy 2:8-15	Cooper, Hübner, Spurgeon, Heidebrecht	Panel Article Analysis
11-14	Sarah and Rebecca: Wives of Patriarchs Panel Discussion 2: 1 Pet 3:1-6	Genesis 12-28 1 Pet 3:1-6	Kiley; Brown; Slaughter; Baumen-Martin	Panel Article Analysis
11-14	Deborah and Jael: Prophetess and Warrior Women in the Gospel of Luke	Judges 4-5		Placher Reading Assignment Due: Nov. 27
12-04	Pauline Women: Women in Leadership & Women in the Household	1 Cor 11:2-16; 14:34-36 Rom 16:1-16; Col 3:18-25; Eph 5:21-33; 1 Tim 2:8-15		
12-05	Portraits of Women from Church History: Apostles, Martyrs, and Virgins	Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas (Placher, 39-58); Acts of Paul and Thecla (online)		
12-05	Portraits of Women from Church History: Mothers and Preachers	Monica in Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> V.8-VI.5 (on Populi); Catherine Booth (sermons online)		
	Summing Up: How Do We Discern Vocation?			Major Paper Due: Dec. 18, 2020

Academic Policies**General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work***Formatting Papers*

- Papers should be typed, double-spaced and follow the appropriate formatting guidelines (e.g. 1 inch margins).

- Follow the [Horizon Format Guide](#) consistently.
- The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded and will receive a grade reduction.

Failure to follow these guidelines warrants a grade reduction.

Submitting Your Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via [Populi](#). The resource at this link

<https://support.populiweb.com/hc/en-us/articles/223792507-How-to-submit-work-for-assignments> explains how to submit assignments on Populi (the link to the video is also available on the info tab of the Populi course page).

Late Assignments and Extensions

All assignments are due when stated by the professor or, if not specified, within 8 weeks after the first day of class. Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA
A+	97-100%	4
A	93-96%	4
A-	90-92%	3.7
B+	87-89%	3.3
B	83-86%	3.0
B-	80-82%	2.7
C+	77-79%	2.3
C	73-76%	2.0
C-	70-72%	1.7
D+	67-79%	1.3
D	63-66%	1.0
D-	60-62%	0.7
F	<60%	0

Academic Honesty

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of the work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words or research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the College [Student Handbook](#).

Disability Services Information

If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to pre-existing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, contact the Academic or Student Life departments at the beginning of the course. Horizon will work to meet your learning and/or physical needs where possible. If any conditions arise during the course that you wish to disclose, please contact us as soon as possible. In all cases you will need to provide current [documentation](#) of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Bob Williamson, Dean of Students, at bwilliamson@horizon.edu; Heather Wood, Associate Dean of Students, at hwood@horizon.edu; or Leanne Bellamy, Academic Coach, at lbellamy@horizon.edu.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to optimize their learning experience. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss one day of a module course or three days of class in a term or semester course without academic penalty. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. Students who are absent for more than the number of classes stated above will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances.

Campus Health Policy

While on campus, please maintain 2 metres of physical distance between yourself and others. Do not come on campus if you are experiencing symptoms (even if they are mild) of fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, chills, runny nose, or a loss of your sense of taste or smell. If you have any of these symptoms, do not return to campus until advised by Public Health. You should self-isolate and contact HealthLine 811 for advice on whether you should be tested for COVID-19. This will help keep others safe and possibly spare them from self-isolation and testing. While you are in self-isolation, you may attend class online. The link to access your class is posted on the course page on Populi, under the Syllabus tab, under Links on the right side of the page.

Live-Streaming Etiquette

If attending class online via live-stream, keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.

- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Appendix A: Placher Reading Reflections Assignment

- **Length:** Provide a 1-2 page, double-spaced, written response for **four** of the reading selections listed below (4 responses x 1-2 pages each = 4-8 pages total).
- **Style:** Responses should follow the basic rules of conventional written English as they apply to paragraphing, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- **Choice:** Provide **one response for each of the four major sections** of Placher's book (total of four responses).
- **Focus:** The responses *should be interpretive and analytical*, not a random collection of thoughts or feelings about the text.
 - Keep your response focused on the reading. You may want to incorporate carefully selected short quotations (i.e., textual evidence) to illustrate your points. Explain why those quotations support your point. Work closely with the text; avoid broad generalities that cannot be adequately developed and supported in a page or two.
 - The prompts below are broad and will inevitably overlap. They are intended to stimulate your thinking about the text, but you will want to choose a specific focus for your response.
- **Four Sections:** Read the introduction at the beginning of each of the four sections of the book before reading and responding to a particular author.

Section I: Callings to a Christian Life: Vocations in the Early Church, 100-500

1. A Definition of Calling (pages 1-11)

- How does Placher (cf. Frederick Buechner, p. 3) describe vocation in his introduction?
- Do you agree or disagree with this description? Why or why not?
- What puzzles you most about Placher's view of calling?
- What additional information do you need to understand vocation better?

2. Martyrdom (Pages 23-47)

- In each of the three narratives, Christian calling clearly involves relinquishing something. What must be surrendered according to these authors?
- What biblical or theological basis is there for such relinquishing?
- To what extent to these figures serve as examples for contemporary Christians?

3. The Virtue of Self-Denial (pages 47-82)

- In what sense does the discipline of self-denial apply to contemporary Christians? What would this entail for individuals and for communities of believers?
- Should there be limits to Christian charity? Can you think of ways in which charitable intentions can be misguided? Critique the positions of Clement and Athanasius from today's perspective.
- How might Christian calling be related in these readings? Discuss the role of asceticism in Christian vocation – then and now.

4. Conversion (pages 83-103)

- What were the primary turning points in Augustine's life—those experiences that represented, in hindsight, God's guidance towards authentic and lasting transformation?
- How would you characterize these types of transforming experiences? Can you personally relate to any of them? Is this the way God calls? What alternative explanation, if any, might there be for the valuing of such experiences?
- What was Augustine's profession? How did he come to realize that this was not his vocation? Were his professional gifts and experiences still useful?

Section II: Called to a Religious Life: Vocations in the Middle Ages, 500-1500

1. Monastic Models (pages 107-142)

- How do these texts highlight changes in understanding of religious calling during the medieval period of the church (as compared to earlier centuries)?
- In particular, how did monastic life change from its earliest days in the third and fourth centuries through the medieval period? To what do you attribute these changes?
- What was the appeal of a religious calling in the Middle Ages?
- Which person's story or writings intrigued you most?
- To which figure's calling could you relate most closely?

2. Exemplars (pages 143-201)

- A theme addressed in this section is the tension between the "active life" and the "contemplative life" for Christians in various roles. What different reasons and resolutions for each are offered in the different texts?
- Another choice facing Christian religious leaders of this period was how and how much to enact voluntary poverty. What range of choices is given across the different texts, and how are the different options justified?
- There seem to be different expectations for men and women seeking Christian perfection in their callings. Discuss the differences and their apparent justifications.

Section III: Every Work a Calling: Vocation after the Reformation (1500-1800)

1. Acquiring a Christian Disposition (pages 205-253)

Focus on the readings from Martin Luther and Teresa of Avila:

- Briefly outline Luther's redefinition of Christian calling. Use primary texts to illustrate his key ideas.
- Is Luther's distinction between the morality of the job and the morality of the person who holds the job helpful? How might it apply to our present-day society?
- Teresa of Avila's spiritual biography seems directed toward parents. Summarize her advice to parents. How does this compare with Luther's advice to parents?
- Why might this era of church history focus more on the inner dispositions of Christian virtue than on visible religious practices? How does this focus relate to present-day Christian perspectives?

3. Personal and Social Awakenings (pages 294-324)

- These selections shed light on the foundational ideas of several early religious movements (e.g., Quakers, Diggers, Congregationalists, Methodists). Point out key differences in their perspectives that have implications for our understanding of vocation.
- According to some of these authors, calling comes from God by way of a personal "awakening" or "conversion" experience in which the disposition of a person is forever altered. How are these experiences described by Fox and Edwards? What common themes do they share?
- Social responsibility arises as a key element of calling in several of these readings. How is it made concrete by Fox, Winstanley, Law, and Wesley?

Section IV: Christian Callings in a Post-Christian World, 1800-Present

1. Faith and Work in Industrializing Society (pages 337-377)

- Compare Kierkegaard and Newman's perspectives on signals or signs of calling. As you picture the ones who are "called" using the images of Kierkegaard and Newman, in what ways do they differ?
- In some of these readings, the calling of the poor seems to be resignation to, if not acceptance of, a particular station in life. Do these authors reconcile their position with the scriptures to your satisfaction?

- Bushnell is unambiguous about his understanding of human calling. What is the basis (or metaphor) of Bushnell's argument? What, if anything, strikes you as problematic about this perspective on calling?
- Describe, in your own words, Weber's thesis about the causal relationship between the "Protestant ethic" and the "spirit of capitalism." Is this a persuasive argument?

2. Courage and Costs (pages 377-404)

- Describe the social activism of Rauschenbusch. In what ways do his suggestions for societal change contribute to his particular interpretation of calling?
- Why does Bonhoeffer say that obedience is the way into faith and not the other way around? What hinders obedience from proceeding into faith? What is problematic for Bonhoeffer in the idea that one might offer one's life to Christ?
- In what senses does Weil see schoolwork as analogous to spiritual development? Did you find her reasoning compelling? Why or why not?
- What does Weil mean by using the term "sacrament" in connection with schoolwork? How might this apply to all ordinary work?

3. Work and the Worker (pages 405-443):

- Compare the perspectives of Sayers and Barth on the place of work in the kingdom of God. From each point of view, what is the purpose of work and how ought one to approach one's work? Under what circumstances, if any, might one's work be one's calling?
- Barth gives an extremely detailed definition of vocation (p. 430). Attempt to put his definition in your own words. What are the most distinguishing characteristics of this definition? How does he attempt to separate the concept of divine calling from that of work?

For further guidance on reading this material, see Nock, Elaine C. "Study Guide" for Placher's *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation*.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography for Panels

Panel 1:

- Cooper, Marjorie J. "The Prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:12 in Light of Eve's Having Been Deceived (1 Tim. 2:14-15)." *Presbyterion* 44 (2018): p 115-125. ATLA
- Heidebrecht, Doug. "Reading 1 Timothy 2:9-15 in Its Literary Context." *Direction* 33 (2004): 171-184. ATLA
- Hübner, Jamin. "Revisiting the Clarity of Scripture in 1 Timothy 2:12." *JETS* 59 (2016): 99-117. ATLA
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Panel 2:

- Baumen-Martin, Betsy J. "Women on the Edge: New Perspectives on Women in the Petrine Haustafel." *JBL* 123 (2004): 253-279. ATLA
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