

<p><b>Capstone: Life, Money, and Generosity (UNCP5525)</b>  <b>Tentative Spring 2019</b>  <b>Mondays: 4:30-6:50 PM</b></p>		
<p><i>Prof. Betty Bagnani, Ph.D.</i></p>		<p><i>Classroom location: Stokes 301N</i></p>

**Brief overview of course:**

If you want to know what a man is really like,  
 take notice of how he acts when he loses money.  
**Simone Weil**

This course is about becoming. It encourages students to reflect on the type of person they are becoming and the type of person they want to become. It asks students to review the process of their education at BC and to explore the role their family and friendships have played in who they are becoming.

After that wide reflection, this course attempts to simultaneously reflect on money and an integrated life. As implied by the Simone Weil quote above, we explore how money can cause tensions that can affect the kind of person we become. In this way, we may more deeply explore the nuanced question of how to become the person we want to be post-graduation. We explore assumptions about money that may or may not be influenced by our experiences on BC campus, study abroad, and/or service trips; as well as explore writings on money and the integrated life.

The framework of the course is funnel-shaped. The first part of the course starts wide with students reflecting on their education at BC, their responses to Father Himes’ three questions, and the role of family and friendships. It allows students to reflect on their assumptions about and tensions around money. In the middle, the course narrows to consider some tools relating to budgeting and debt. The final part of the course reverses the funnel as it widens from these tools to consider readings that integrate money with other areas such as psychology, sociology, and behavioral economics. In so doing, the instrumental value of money will be contrasted with wider, intrinsic goods.

Within this space, we consider generosity. What is it? How does it fit in the conversation about next life-phase? about “men and women for others”? After completing an interview and reflections papers, each student is encouraged to more fully reflect on what kind of person they seek to become in a life that will contain money and so much more.

**Information about:**

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Office Hours:	Mondays: 12:00-1:00
	Wednesdays: 2:00-3:00,
	And by appointment.

Related courses taught at Boston College:

- Portico
- TechTrekGhana
- Financial Accounting (intro & intermediate)
- Financial Statement Analysis
- Corporate Finance (intro & intermediate)
- Investments (undergrad, masters, PhD)

**Course Materials:**

Books:

- Lowney, Chris, Heroic Living, Loyola Press, 2009.
- Fisher, Sarah Young et al, Personal Finance in Your 20s and 30s, Penguin Random House, 2016. **\*\*\*This may change to 2018 text.**

All other readings are on this course's Canvas site.

**To consider:**

...How can we convey ... to the developing being within ourselves—that in order to obtain the most serious good of life, it is necessary to give exactly the right amount of attention to the aspect of life represented by money? Can we and they grow to be *attentive* to what is secondary in human life while being *deeply attentive* to what is primary? For, if we do not give sufficient attention to what is secondary in life, then, sooner or later, what is secondary will take all our attention and leave us no energy or time to pursue what is most essential.

**Jacob Needleman**

**Course Assignments:**

1. Throughout semester:
  - a. **Examen Journal**  
I have used weekly examens in class in the first-year *Portico* course and in the *Introduction to Financial Accounting* course. Links will be made to Chris Lowney’s writings in this area. Each student will keep a journal relating to his/her individual examens.
  - b. **Reverse Budget**  
To encourage students to actively examine their relationship with money, students are encouraged to keep track of how they spend money this semester. This can be completed using methods of a student’s choosing that may include:
    - the free app called Wally (or other app). No need to connect this to your checking account. You can enter amounts.
    - their own personal log
    - looking back at credit card and bank statements
2. Other written assignments:
  - a. **Interview**
  - b. **Weekly papers that connect to readings**
  - c. **Final paper in 2 parts: 1 part is your budget for next year the other is a discussion paper.**
3. **Lead one class discussion with class teammate**
  - a. Sign up for one class with another student
  - b. \*\*We will discuss in class what is involved in leading class discussion
  - c. Help lead the class discussion on Monday

**Grade Distribution for Capstone:**

	<u>Allocation %</u>
Class Discussion Leadership	15%
Written Assignment: Interview	15%
Written Assignment: Reflection Papers	20%
Written Assignment: Final Paper: Parts 1 and 2	25%
Class Participation	25%

**Reading Schedule for Life, Money, and Generosity: Spring 2018**

\*\*NOTE: These readings will be adapted in consolation with the Student Leaders. Readings are listed here to give you an idea of what might be discussed.

<b>Weeks 1 and 2: Reflections on a life lived so far</b>
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**Class #1 (1/14): Reflecting on key choices made at BC**

Read/watch/complete before Class #1:

1. *On Discernment, Three Key Questions*, Fr. Michael Himes, 2010
2. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Chapters 1-2.**
3. [\*This is Water—video based on 2005 graduation speech by David Foster Wallace.\*](#) (This video is 9.23 minutes long. There are other videos of the entire speech, if you are interested.)
4. Assignment as delineated for Class #1 on Canvas.

**Class #2 (Wed, 1/23): Self-Knowledge**    2 STUDENT LEADERS : \_\_\_\_\_ 1,2

\*\*\* This semester, Wed, Jan 23 is a “substitute Monday day.” We will be holding class.

Read/watch/complete before Class #2:

1. Brief Introduction to the Examen
2. “Aristotle’s Insights on Planning a Life,” in Creating the Good Life: Applying Aristotle’s Wisdom to Find Meaning and Happiness, James O’Toole, 2005.
3. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Chapters 3 and 6.**
4. “Self-Knowledge” in Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives, Gretchen Rubin, 2015.
5. Assignment as delineated for Class #2 on Canvas.

**We will start Class #2 with an Examen.**

### **Week 3: Reflections on family and friends**

**Class #3 (1/28):**

2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_ 3,4

Read/watch/complete before Class #3:

1. Aristotle on friendship
2. Author of *Friendfluence* interview: *The Surprising Ways Friends Make Us Who We Are*, Carlin Flora, 2013, Huntington Post, August 12, 2013.
3. "Making the Most of Friendfluence," from *Friendfluence* by Carlin Flora.
4. [Friendship in an Age of Economics](#) by Todd May, NYT, July 4, 2010.
5. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Chapters 7**
6. [How to Deal with Losing College Friends After Graduation](#) by Amy Morin, Forbes, May 3, 2017
7. Assignment as delineated for Class #3 on Canvas.

### **Week 4: Reflections about money**

**Class# 4 (2/4):**

2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_ 5,6

\*\*\* At beginning of Class#4: ask questions about interview.

Read/watch/complete before Class #4:

1. Excerpts from *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Money*, by Michael J. Sandel, 2012.
2. "How Much is Enough?" in *Creating the Good Life: Applying Aristotle's Wisdom to Find Meaning and Happiness*, James O'Toole, 2005
3. [Dan Ariely: Making Money Less Abstract](#)  
*But first some background on Ariely: [https://youtu.be/NIRjYBX\\_9ls](https://youtu.be/NIRjYBX_9ls)*  
This 2 minutes explains his bandage research
4. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Chapter 8**
5. [Why We Don't Talk about Money](#), Society for Grownups, Sept 3, 2015.
6. Assignment as delineated for Class #4 on Canvas.

## **Week 5: Meaning & Happiness**

**Class #5 (2/11):** 2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_7,8

Read/watch/complete before Class #5:

1. Excerpts from *Happy Money: The Science of Happier Spending*, by Elizabeth Dunn (Univ of British Columbia) and Michael Norton (HBS).
2. "Remarks on Happiness," Roberto Goizueto, 2012
3. "Against Perfectionism" in Finding Meaning in an Imperfect World, Iddo Landau, 2017.
4. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Ch 10**
5. "[Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?](#)" Stephen Marche, The Atlantic, 2012.
6. Assignment as delineated for Class #5 on Canvas.

## **Weeks 6 and 7: Some specifics**

**Class #6 (2/18):** SPENDING AND BUDGETING

Read/complete before Class #6:

1. "Life, Pizza, Budgeting, and Love"
2. Personal Finance in Your 20s and 30s ***Bring this book into class***  
Ch 1: Intro  
Ch 2: Bank Accounts and Ch 13: Savings Options  
Ch 3: Budgeting
3. Handout & Sample Excel Budget
4. **Heroic Living, Lowney: Reconsider Chapter 9 - Living in Freedom**

**Class #7 (2/15):** DEBT

Read before Class #7:

1. Your journal so far this semester.  
Now that you have been away for two weeks, this is an important step to reconnect to the course and to put this class topic in context.
2. Personal Finance in Your 20s and 30s: ***Bring this book into class***  
Ch 4: Credit History and Scores  
Ch 6: Credit Card Debt  
Ch 7: Student Loan Debt
3. Handout on Debt & Credit Cards

**No Class: 3/4 - Spring Break**

<b>Week 8: Being human and deciding about money</b>
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**Class #8 (3/11):** 2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_9,10

*** At beginning of Class#8: hand in Interview.
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Read/watch/complete before Class #8:  
Just how reliable is our self-knowledge?

1. [Why People Lie](#), from CNBC: Dishonesty: The Truth about Lies, Aired May 28, 2015. Based on his book The (Honest) Truth about Dishonesty: How We Lie to Everyone—Especially Ourselves.
2. [The Hidden Reasons People Spend Too Much](#) (Wall Street Journal YouTube Video)
3. Money 20: “Top 5 questions asked about spending” (pp. 58-70) and “Action Plan” (pp. 73-74)
4. **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: Ch 11**
5. Assignment as delineated for Class #8 on Canvas.

<b>Weeks 9 &amp; 10: Beyond paying bills: Generosity</b>
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**Class #9 (3/18):** 2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_11,12

Read/watch/complete before Class #9:

1. “Generosity,” in Small Treatise on the Great Virtues: The Uses of Philosophy in Everyday Life, by Andre Comte-Sponville, 1996.
2. “Introduction,” in The Paradox of Generosity, by Christian Smith & Hilary Davidson, 2016.
3. [Wealthiest One Percent Come Home](#), Ted Talk Jamaica Plain by Chuck Collins, 2015, Note: This speaker spoke at BC on Feb 28, 2017 and lives in Boston.
4. “Show me The Money,” an article on crowdfunding by Elizabeth Kelsey, November 2016.
5. Assignment as delineated for Class #9 on Canvas.

**Weeks 9 and 10 (continued): Beyond paying bills: Generosity**

**Class #10 (3/25):** 2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_13,14

Read/watch/complete before Class #10:

1. [Peter Singer TedTalk](#): The Why and How of Effective Altruism
2. [A consideration of charity and justice from St. Mary's College](#)
3. [A Letter to Our Daughter, Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan](#), Facebook.com, Dec 1, 2015.
4. "Voluntouring," an article on service learning.
5. Assignment as delineated for Class #10 on Canvas.

**Weeks 11: Charity and Justice**

**Class #11 (4/1):** 2 STUDENT LEADERS: \_\_\_\_\_15,16

Read/watch/complete before Class #11:

1. "The Justice Circle." By Dan Hartnett, S.J.
2. "Acknowledged Schizophrenia" in *The Wisdom of Money* by Pascal Bruckner.
3. Assignment as delineated for Class #11 on Canvas.

**Weeks 12 and 13: Living an integrated life**

**Class #12 (4/8):**

\*\*\* At beginning of Class#12: hand in your budget.

Before Class#12:

1. Read **Heroic Living, Chris Lowney, 2010: last pages: pp. 187-194**
2. We will use most class time for an in-class case.

**No Class: 4/15: Patriots Day - NO CLASS**



**Class #13 (4/22):**

\*\*\* Note this is Easter Monday. BC cancels all classes prior to 4:00 but does hold all classes after 4:00—which includes our class!

\*\*\* At beginning of Class#13: Hand in your final paper.

Before Class#13:

1. Hand in your final paper.
2. We will work on one in class case on money

**Class #14 (4/29):**

Before Class#14:

1. Tell me about any food allergies.