The Meaning of Work and Leisure
PHIL228701 – 3 credits
Summer Session II: June 25 – August 1, 2018
Monday & Wednesday, 6:00 PM - 9:15 PM

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Email: jon.burmeister@bc.edu
Office: Stokes N301
Office Hours: Wednesday, 4:15pm - 5:45pm, and by appointment

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry. Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
We spend much of our lives working, or preparing ourselves to work. We spend much of the rest of our time pursuing leisure. But what are our goals in doing so? For example, how important is it for our work to be meaningful? Is leisure simply the absence of work, or should it be something more? And what role do each of these play in a fulfilling life?

This course will respond to these questions through the lenses of philosophy, political science, religion, sociology, and economics. From Aristotle to Marx, from Genesis to Seneca, from Max Weber to Hannah Arendt, this course will study various accounts of what work and leisure have been, and what their ideal forms might be. A theme running throughout the course is the coming age of technologically automated physical and mental labor, and its impact on the future of work and leisure.
Texts & Readings – Required

- **Handouts of selections from:**
  - J.M. Keynes, “Economic Possibilities of our Grandchildren”
  - Seneca, *On the Shortness of Life*
  - Keith Thomas, “Work and Leisure in Pre-Industrial Society”
  - Herbert Applebaum, *The Concept of Work: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern*
  - Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics and Politics*
  - Genesis chapters 1-3
  - Martin Luther, *Treatise on Good Works*
  - Ian Hart, “Luther on Ordinary Work”
  - Amartya Sen, “Adam Smith’s Economics”
  - Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
  - Russell Muirhead, “The Promise of Fulfillment,” from *Just Work*
  - Thorstein Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*
  - Juliet Schor, *The Overworked American*
  - Pedro Domingos, *The Master Algorithm*
  - Brynjolfsson and McAfee, *The Second Machine Age*

- **Full Texts:**

**Please purchase hard copies of the full texts**, as computers are not allowed in class.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will come to a better awareness of their own current views on work and leisure.
2. Students will better understand the history of work and leisure, by studying accounts of human life in different cultural and economic conditions over the last several millennia.
3. Students will better understand influential accounts of the nature of work and leisure, i.e., what they are in their ideal forms, and what place they have in a meaningful human life.
4. Students will be able to critically evaluate various accounts of work and leisure, first by thinking along with the authors, and then by thinking for themselves.
5. Students will be better equipped to consider the future of work and leisure, in two respects: a.) what might be best for the future of society, and b.) what might be best for their own future selves – for how they order and direct the rest of their lives.

**Course Reading Assignments**

It is expected that you will spend, on average, 10-12 hours per week on out-of-class reading assignments.
**Attendance**

Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

**Attendance Policy**

For unexcused absences, the policy is as follows: 1 class missed is 1% off your final grade. 2 classes missed is 7% off your final grade. 3 classes missed is 15% off your final grade. **A fourth missed class leads to an automatic failure.**

Apart from emergencies or illness, requests for excused absences must be made at least 2-3 days in advance, and agreed upon by myself. (Holiday/family travel plans, concerts, etc., will not qualify as excused absences.)

**Written Assignments**

There will be 2 textual-analysis essays. These essays will be due by 11:59pm on the due dates below, and should be submitted digitally, via our course’s Canvas site.

**Essay #1, due Friday, July 20**

**Essay #2, due Saturday, August 4**

On 4 Mondays, a 1-2 page response paper will be due, brought to class in a hard-copy form. These papers will consist of a brief summary of one of the readings for that day, along with your reactions to some part of the reading.

Each student will also write two short reflection essays: a ‘field work’ essay, and a ‘final response essay’ (at the end of the course) which puts one’s own views into dialogue with thinkers from the course.

The penalty for late assignments is 3% (one third of a letter grade) per day.

**Canvas**

Our course’s Canvas page is an online instructional tool accessible to those registered for the course. You can access it either from the Agora Portal, or at bc.edu/lms. (For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click here.)

**Class Participation**

This category – which makes up 15% of your overall grade – consists of:

1.) **In-class speaking (10%)**: This includes asking questions, responding to questions, and being a part of class discussions. Your grade on this depends not only on the quantity, but also on the quality, of your questions/comments.
2.) In-class engagement (5%): This term refers to your activity in the classroom aside from actually speaking, such as punctuality, thoughtfulness, and engaged listening. Because this is a text-based class, ‘in-class engagement’ also includes bringing the assigned text to class, and using it in class.

**Course Grading**

- 4-5 pg. Essay 22%
- 5-6 pg. Essay 26%
- Response Papers (4) 20%
- Class Participation 15%
- ‘Field Work’ Essay 5%
- Final Response Essay 12%
- 100%

**Class Communications**

I check my email only a few times a day, and often not at all after 8pm or on weekends; please allow this to inform your expectations of my response time to your emails.

**Electronics; General Class Behavior**

- Because of the ease with which the internet’s infinite distractions can be accessed, the use of laptops is not permitted in class.
- Phones and all other electronics are to be in the silent/off position and kept off one’s desk, out of hand, out of lap for the duration of the class period.
- Beverages and small snacks are allowed in class, but please take care not to be distracting to those around you.

**Course Schedule**

This schedule is tentative, and subject to modification as the course dictates

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<tr>
<th>Texts</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JUNE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 25 Keynes; Seneca</td>
<td>Work + Leisure: Where Are We Headed?</td>
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<td>Wed 27 Thomas/Applebaum; Aristotle</td>
<td>How Should We Spend Our Time?</td>
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<td><strong>JULY</strong></td>
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<td>Mon 2 Aristotel; Genesis; Josef Pieper</td>
<td>Leisure and Human Flourishing</td>
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<td>Wed 4 No Class – 4th of July</td>
<td>Leisure as a Kind of Activity</td>
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<td>Mon 9 Pieper; Martin Luther</td>
<td>What are the Preconditions for Leisure?</td>
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<td>Wed 11 Adam Smith; Max Weber</td>
<td>Leisure vs. Work?</td>
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<td>Mon 16 Max Weber</td>
<td>What Counts as ‘Noble’ Work?</td>
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<td>Wed 18 Karl Marx</td>
<td>Work Transformed: Industry and Capital</td>
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<td>Mon 23 R. Muirhead; Hannah Arendt</td>
<td>The Reformation of Capitalism</td>
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<td>Alienated/Unfulfilling Labor</td>
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<td>Fulfilling Labor; ‘Labor’ vs. ‘Work’</td>
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Assignment Calendar

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon., July 2</td>
<td>Response Paper #1</td>
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<td>Mon., July 9</td>
<td>Response Paper #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri. July 13</td>
<td>Field Work Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon., July 16</td>
<td>Response Paper #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri., July 20</td>
<td>Essay #1</td>
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<td>Mon., July 23</td>
<td>Response Paper #4</td>
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<td>Thurs., August 2</td>
<td>Position Paper</td>
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<td>Sat., Aug. 4</td>
<td>Essay #2</td>
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Written Work

Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.

The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:
A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
F (.00)

The graduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:
A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00)
B- (2.67), passing but does not count toward degree
C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit
F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the Office of Student Services.

Accommodation and Accessibility
Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility.

Academic Integrity
Plagiarism, the attempt by a writer to represent the work of another as his or her own, will not be tolerated. (This includes summarizing from online cliff notes, such as Sparknotes.) Any violation of this policy – however “small” – is a serious offense against both one’s own intellectual development and the larger intellectual community. Acts of plagiarism will therefore be met with severe consequences, up to and including a permanent record in your BC file.

Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information at www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html