

CO5540 CAREER AND LIFESTYLE DEVELOPMENT

Reformed Theological Seminary

Spring 2026
3 Credit Hours

Instructor

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Contact Information

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Office Hours

Upon Request

Class meeting time

Wk 1. February 10, 11; 1pm – 4pm
Wk 2. February 24, 25, 26; 1pm – 4pm
Wk 3. March 24, 25, 26; 1pm – 4pm
Wk 4. April 7, 8, 9; 1pm – 4pm
Wk 5. April 21, 22; 1pm – 4pm

Course Description

This course provides an understanding of career development through an examination of the world of work, sources of career information, and the concepts of vocational development. Emphasis is placed on an in-depth exploration of the theories and practice of career counseling with the primary goal of the clinical application to real-world situations. The course also integrates career counseling into “traditional” counseling effectively and examines the social contexts of career development and how these contexts can be integrated with existing career counseling theory.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

Students will demonstrate comprehension of the following (applicable CACREP standard in parenthesis):

- CO1. **Theories and Models** - Theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision-making (2.F.4.a)
- CO2. **Conceptualizing Approaches** - Approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, mental well-being, relationships, and other life roles and factors (2.F.4.b)
- CO3. **Information Resources** - Processes for identifying and using career, avocational, educational, occupational and labor market information resources, technology, and information systems (2.F.4.c)
- CO4. **Work environment assessment** - Approaches for assessing the conditions of the work environment on clients’ life experiences (2.F.4.d)
- CO5. **Assessment Strategies** - Strategies for assessing abilities, interests, values, personality, and other factors that contribute to career development (2.F.4.e)
- CO6. **Program Planning** - Strategies for career development program planning, organization, implementation, administration, and evaluation (2.F.4.f)
- CO7. **Diversity and Advocacy** - Strategies for advocating for diverse clients’ career and educational development and employment opportunities in a global economy (2.F.4.g; 2.F.4.j)
- CO8. **Skill Development** - Strategies for facilitating client skill development for career, educational, and life-work planning and management (2.F.4.h)
- CO9. **Assessment Tools and Techniques** - Methods of identifying and using assessment tools and techniques relevant to career planning and decision-making (2.F.4.i)
- CO10. **Ethics** - Ethical and culturally relevant strategies for addressing career development (2.F.4.j)
- CO11. **Theology of Work**. Approaches for conceptualizing the connection of individual work to God’s work.

Methods of Instruction

This course will be taught in the following format: traditional classroom environment.

Assignments (Student Performance Evaluation Criteria)

The program assesses its progress toward MAC program objectives using key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs addressed in this course are in parentheses.

A1. **In-Class Quizzes** (30%). In-class quizzes will cover reading material and material presented in class.

A2. **Resume Exercise** (20%). Students will be required to complete a traditional resume and an “online” resume as described in Chapter 2 of the Bolles text (M3).

- a. *Traditional Resume*: Students will be asked to put together a resume for their ideal job description. Students may find a job description online, in a trade publication or develop their own job within a counseling, ministry or human services setting. Please include transferable skills from previous employment. The goal of this assignment is for students to learn resume-writing techniques to assist future clients and clarify personal goals and skills related to their own career development.
 - i. Students will be asked to review each other’s resumes and provide feedback for each other.
- b. *Online Resume*: Students must turn in a 1-2 page paper describing the internet sites they reviewed, whether edits were required on social media sites (it is not necessary to describe the specific content edited), and what information was filled in, expanded, or added.

A3. **Theology of Work Presentation** (25%) (*Career KPI 1*). Tim Keller says one of the main purposes of work is love. In fact, he says that “unless you are working you’re not loving. Work is the way you love.” Students are asked to reflect on the biblical concept of work as a loving expression of God’s command to fill the earth and redeem every aspect of creational life. Students will be required to give a 5-7 minute oral presentation on their theology of work incorporating the Keller book and the course lecture. Creativity is encouraged. Literary examples, quotes, and movie clips may be used to compare and contrast the dignity of Christian calling with other views of work projected within the church and culture. Ex: work as a necessary evil

- a. Any visual aids used in your presentation (powerpoint, handouts, etc.) will be uploaded to Canvas by the due date.

A4. **Theory and Practice Paper** (25%) (*Career KPI 2*). A significant goal of this course is to promote students’ efforts to develop a meta-perspective on the theory and practice of Career Counseling, one that will permit them to see common assumptions lying behind various theories. It will encourage them to develop a personal model of career counseling, and to gain practical experience in applying this personal model. To facilitate this goal, students will be asked to process and synthesize the material presented in this course.

The paper must include the following sections:

Section 1. Personal Theory of Career Counseling. Students will present their personal theory of Career Counseling in 2-4 pages. The theory described in this section will be used in the practical application section of this assignment. Students are encouraged to incorporate their learning in this course with their understanding of general counseling theory and practice learned earlier in the program.

Section 2. Practical Application. Students are required to apply their Personal Theory of Career Counseling either to themselves or to a client. Section 2 should be 2-3 pages in length.

A5. Course Evaluation (0% of grade but required for successful course completion) Course evaluations are crucial for assessing and improving the MAC program. Therefore, each MAC course includes an assignment to complete an anonymous online course evaluation. You will verify whether you have completed the evaluation through a Canvas quiz. This will not count toward your grade but is necessary for successful completion of the course.

Required Course Materials (Texts, Readings, and Videos):

- M1. Sharf, Richard (2013). Applying Career Development Theory to Counseling, Sixth Edition. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978-1285075440
- M2. Keller, Timothy (2012). Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work. New York, NY: Penguin Publishing.
- M3. Chapter 2 of Bolles, Richard N. What Color Is Your Parachute? 2018: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers (pp. 21-30). Kindle Edition. (Available on Canvas)

Recommended Materials (Texts on reserve in the library – Students will be asked to read certain excerpts from some of the works listed below)

Career Counseling Theories and Practice

- M4. Bolles, Richard N. (2020). What Color Is Your Parachute? Job-Hunter's Workbook, 5th Edition. Ten Speed Press. ISBN- 13: 978-0399581892
- M5. Zunker, Vernon. (2015). Career counseling: A holistic approach, 9th Edition. Belmont, CA: Cengage.
- M6. Rosenthal, Howard. (2017). Encyclopedia of Counseling: The Authentic Purple Book, 4th Edition.

Christian Calling and Vocation

- M7. Brennfleck (2005). Live your calling. San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.
- M8. Brouwer, Douglas (2006). What am I supposed to do with my life? Asking the right questions. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.
- M9. Guinness, Os (1993). The call: Finding and fulfilling the central purpose of your life. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- M10. Hardy, L. (1990). Fabric of this world: Inquiries into calling, career choice, and the design of human work. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.
- M11. Harvey, Dave. (2010). Rescuing ambition. Wheaton, IL: Crossway
- M12. Jensen, David. (2006). Responsive labor: A theology of work. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- M13. Neafsay, John. (2006). A sacred voice is calling: Personal vocation and social conscience. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- M14. Nelson, Tom (2011). Work matters: Connecting Sunday worship to Monday work. Wheaton, IL: Crossway
- M15. Parker, Palmer (1999). Let your life speak: Listening to the voice of vocation. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Career Counseling Assessments

- M16. Richard N. What Color Is Your Parachute? 2018: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers. (2020). ISBN-13: 978-1607740100
- M17. Tieger, P.D. (2014). Do what you are: Discover the perfect career for you through the secrets of personality type. New York: NY: Little Brown and Company

Recommended Websites:

Occupational Information

Occupational Outlook Handbook – <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

O*Net Online – <http://online.onetcenter.org>

Professional Associations

National Career Development Association – www.ncda.org

Self-Assessment

www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/Jtypes2.asp

www.strengthsfinder.com

Salary Information

www.salary.com

www.salaryexpert.com

Counseling Jobs

American Counseling Association Career Center

<http://www.counseling.org/CareerCenter/>

Course Process and Schedule

The lecture portions of this course will be taught in an intensive fashion on the selected dates. It is important that you be prepared when class begins. Assigned readings must be completed prior to the start of class.

The course schedule will be added before the semester begins.

Policies and Important Information

Written Work Format. All written work must conform to current American Psychological Association (APA) style unless otherwise specified. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor prior to the start of this course. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. The instructor and student will discuss the available accommodations for the course. If the student with a disability does not disclose that s/he has a disability, then the student is agreeing to take full responsibility for any related consequences that may occur.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides MAC students access to the Ebscohost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library or from your home computer by using the following link and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class: <http://search.ebscohost.com/>

Use of Artificial Intelligence. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. You may use AI programs (e.g. ChatGPT) to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, be aware that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant RTS policies. Of course, there are many cases where I may not be able to tell if you cheated or not. Note however that, for any reason, including doubts about whether the paper was written with external help, any student can be required to come in for an oral examination on their paper. In such a case, a grade for the oral examination will replace that for the paper.

Submission of work. All work to be submitted on Canvas by 11:59 PM on the due date, or before class time when specified.

Late work. All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be deducted 1/3 letter grade for each late day.

Grading Scale:

A (97-100)	B- (86-87)	D+ (75-77)
A- (94-96)	C+ (83-85)	D (72-74)
B+ (91-93)	C (80-82)	D- (70-71)
B (88-90)	C- (78-79)	F (Below 70)

Attendance Policy. Regular attendance is expected and required. Excessive absences (more than 3 class meetings) will result in the loss of points equal to one letter grade per absence. If serious illness or an emergency prevents a student from attending any class, please notify the instructor before the class begins. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any materials handed out or presented during the missed class from a classmate.

Class Participation. Students are expected to participate in all components of the class. Each student is expected to read all the assigned materials in advance for each class and have prepared written comments and questions for class discussion. Contributions should reflect knowledge of the reading assignments or other sources.

Student Learning Outcome Table

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in later sections of this syllabus.

CACREP Standard	Course Objective	Material(s)*	Assignment(s)	Lecture(s)
2.F.4.a	CO1. Theories and Models	M1 Sharf (1-15)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L5

2.F.4.b	CO2. Conceptualizing Approaches	M1 Sharf (1-15)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L5
2.F.4.c	CO3. Information Resources	M1 Sharf (2-6), M2	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L2
2.F.4.d	CO4. Work environment assessment	M1 Sharf (2-6)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L2
2.F.4.e	CO5. Assessment Strategies	M1 Sharf (2-6)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L2
2.F.4.f	CO6. Program Planning	M1 Sharf (7, 10, 16)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1, L3
2.F.4.g	CO7. Diversity and Advocacy	M1 Sharf (1-15)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L5
2.F.4.h	CO8. Skill Development	M1 Sharf (4)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L2
2.F.4.i	CO9. Assessment Tools and Techniques	M1 Sharf (2-6)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1-L2
2.F.4.j	CO10. Ethics CO7. Diversity and Advocacy	M1 Sharf (1)	A1 Discussion Board, A2 Exams, A5 Paper	L1
	CO11. Theology of Work	M2 Keller (1-12)	A4 Presentation, A5 Paper	L4-L5

* Textbook chapters are denoted in parentheses

Course Objectives Related to MAC* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: CO5540 Career and Lifestyle Development

Professor: Katie Majeste

Campus: Jackson

Date: Spring 2026

MAC* Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i>		Rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong ● Moderate ● Minimal ● None 	Mini-Justification
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.	Moderate	Students will review ethics through completing online discussion on the text, through writing a paper, and through the exams.
Social & Cultural Diversity	Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.	Moderate	Students will cover diversity all throughout the course by completing insight cards on the text, through writing a paper, and through the section exams.
Human Growth & Development	Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas.	Minimal	There will be some consideration of development in the theories studied.
Career Development	Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making.	Strong	Throughout the course, students will complete insight cards, write papers, and be tested on theories of career counseling and development
Counseling & Helping Relationships	Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans.	Strong	Students will utilize helping relationship skills in the application of career theories and will concentrate of skill development.
Group Counseling & Group Work	Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness.	Minimal	Students will consider some theories that utilize the group setting.

Assessment & Testing	Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.	Moderate	Students will utilize assessments throughout the course lectures and course assignments
Research & Program Evaluation	Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling.	Minimal	Students will review some research around career theories and approaches
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling.	Moderate	Students will conceptualize and apply career theories for a variety of contexts.
Integration (Biblical/Theological)	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices.	Moderate	Students will review theology of work and demonstrate through a presentation and paper
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Moderate	Students will review theology of work and demonstrate through a presentation and paper