SOC 410: Restoring Social Institutions:
A Christian View of Marriage, Family, Church, and Neighborhood
Student Syllabus for the Adult Degree Programs

Course Description

The social world is full of institutions, and it is held together by institutions. These institutions change over time, sometimes for better and sometimes for worse. In this course, we will explore the contours of four social institutions – marriage, family, the church, and neighborhoods. How are these institutions changing? Why are they changing? What is our own role in these institutions? Biblical norms for these social institutions will be considered, and we will work together to develop a Christian perspective to apply to other social institutions as well.

Course Introduction

In this course, more reading is dedicated to the family than to the other institutions; this is not because this institution is somehow more important than the others. Our focus is on the family because it is a "home institution" with which we are all familiar, as children or perhaps as parents.

As we look through various lenses at the family (historical, sociological, moral, biblical), we will also come to see marriage, church, and neighborhood more clearly, and we will be better prepared to apply our newly framed sociological sensibilities to other institutions as well—friendship, schools, healthcare, athletics, and even politics.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe what an institution is, how they come into being, and how they change.
2. Discern the powerful influence of modernity and postmodernity on contemporary social institutions.
3. Discover biblical norms for anchoring and guiding social institutions.
4. Outline various models for marriage, describe the crisis of contemporary marriage, and provide concrete suggestions for strengthening the institution of marriage.
5. Outline various models of the family, describe the crisis of the contemporary family, and provide concrete suggestions for strengthening the institution of the family.
6. Outline various models of the church, describe the crisis of the contemporary church, and provide concrete suggestions for strengthening the institution of the church.
7. Outline various models of the neighborhood, describe the crisis of contemporary neighborhoods, and provide concrete suggestions for strengthening neighborhoods.

Hopefully, by the end of this course, students will not only be able to do these things, but they will also begin to care about social institutions and to participate in them in ways that bring about restoration.

Course Texts

ESV value thinline Bible. (2016). Wheaton, IL: Crossway.
>   ISBN-13: 978-1433550652
>   ISBN-10: 1433550652

Garland, D. S. R. (2010). *Inside out families: Living the faith together*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
>   ISBN-13: 978-1602582453
>   ISBN-10: 1602582459

McKnight, J., & Block, P. (2012). *The abundant community: Awakening the power of families and neighborhoods.* Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
>   ISBN-13: 978-1609940812
>   ISBN-10: 1609940814

Snyder, H. A. (2004). *The community of the king* (2nd ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
>   ISBN-13: 978-0830827497
>   ISBN-10: 0830827498

Textbook Disclaimer

The textbooks for this course were chosen because their primary content directly relates to the objectives of this course. At times, there may be items or issues that are not presented from a proper Christian worldview. As such, the textbooks do not represent an endorsement by Geneva College or the relevant academic department at Geneva College.

Learning and Physical Disabilities Policy

Geneva College values diversity and inclusion and recognizes disabilities as an aspect of diversity. Our shared goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive, ultimately leading to the success of our students in and beyond college. Therefore, Geneva College complies with the ADA as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act by affording reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations should contact Geneva's Student Success Center (SSC) to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the SSC before or during the first week of classes. (Some accommodations may take time to put into place, so it is advised to request this appointment as early as possible.) Legally, no retroactive accommodations can be provided. Accommodations for disabilities are available only as recommended by the SSC. Students whose accommodations are approved will be provided confidential letters which

students should review and discuss with their instructors in relation to course requirements. Students who have questions about their right to benefits or have grievances under these statutes should contact the Director of the SSC. For more details, visit the [Student Success Center website](#) or call 724-847-5005.

The Grading System in the ADP

The grading scale for the Adult Degree Program is A, B, C, D, and F. Geneva includes pluses (+) and minuses (-) in the determination of the grade point average (GPA). Grade points are assigned for each semester hour of credit earned according to the following system:

Letter Grade	Percentage	GPA	Explanation
A	93.00% - 100.00%	4.0	Excellent
A-	90.00% - 92.99%	3.7	
B+	87.00% - 89.99%	3.3	
B	83.00% - 86.99%	3.0	Good
B-	80.00% - 82.99%	2.7	
C+	77.00% - 79.99%	2.3	
C	73.00% - 76.99%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70.00% - 72.99%	1.7	
D+	67.00% - 69.99%	1.3	
D	63.00% - 66.99%	1.0	Less than Satisfactory
D-	60.00% - 62.99%	0.7	
F	< 60.00%	0.0	No Credit Given
WX, WP, WF			Withdrawal

Policy on Academic Honesty

Geneva College has adopted a campus wide policy on academic honesty; the main portions of which are summarized here. Students should become aware of the fuller policy found in Appendix A of the student handbook.

When an instructor has reason to believe that dishonest behavior has occurred, the parties involved should be confronted as soon as possible by the instructor and notification made to the Department of Professional and Online Graduate Studies (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Sanctions may be levied on the student, which could range from an informal warning to expulsion, based on the seriousness of the student's offense (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students may appeal any disciplinary action by following the procedure laid out in the College's Policy on Academic Honesty (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students are encouraged to visit www.plagiarism.org in order to clarify what constitutes plagiarism as well as a number of other academic standards. This website also provides directives as to how to avoid committing this act and how to properly cite academic sources.

Turnitin Policy

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Students must agree to the End User License Agreement (EULA) for Turnitin. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on Turnitin.com. Assignments that are not submitted through Turnitin will not be graded and will not receive credit.

Participation Policy

In the online environment, **participation is marked by the completion of an *academic event* in *each session* (week) of the course.** Academic events include, but are not limited to, submission of a class assignment, participation in class discussion forum, or completion of a quiz/exam.

If no academic event is completed within the first session (Week 1) of a course, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course. Beyond the first session, if no academic event is completed for a class session, the student will be considered as having not participated in that week of class, which in some cases may result in zeros on the missed assignments and a half-letter grade deduction from the student's final course grade.

If a student does not complete an academic event for two consecutive sessions, the student will either be administratively withdrawn from the course or will receive a final course grade of F, depending on how much of the course has transpired at the time of the second week of nonparticipation. For more details, please review Geneva's Student Handbook (Undergraduate and Graduate).

Course Evaluation

Assignment Type	Points Breakdown	Points
Discussion Forums (8)	30 points each	240 points
Written Assignments (4)	60 points each	240 points

Applied Summary Project Posts (3)	30 points each	90 points
Applied Summary Project	One Submission	185 points
Total		755 points

Assignment Descriptions

Discussion Forums

Class participation is monitored by postings and responses in the discussion forum. Typically, class participation is composed of two parts:

a. Part 1 – Requires you to go to your discussion forum and post a response to a question or prompt that is written in your syllabus by 11:55 pm (EST) Wednesday of your scheduled session week. Your instructor will generally respond to your post within 24 hours. Depending on the nature of the assignment, the instructor may have a follow up question for you, ask you for clarification or further details, or direct your conversation to someone else for rebuttal.

b. Part 2 – Respond back to your instructor's post. In addition, post a response to at least two of your fellow classmates' postings, using 1 or 2 paragraphs. Your response should further the discussion (e.g., ask a question, provide information or examples, or introduce a different opinion). In particular, one response to a classmate MUST be in the form of a question that seeks to further the conversation. Your question must be posed by 11:55 pm (EST) Friday of the scheduled session week so that your classmate has adequate time to answer it.

Likewise, if a question is posed to you by Friday night, you are also required to answer it.

Part 2 of these online activities (response to instructor, response to classmates' questions of you, and responses to your classmates) must be completed by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of each session.

NOTE: How to earn full credit in discussion forums:
1. Become familiar with the discussion forum rubric, which is available to you in all of your Moodle classroom discussion forums.
2. Be thoughtful in your responses and incorporate examples from your personal and professional experiences and references to the course material (e.g., readings, lecture, videos, audio clips, scripture, etc.) when appropriate. Remember to cite all sources and references according to proper APA style.
3. Respond to the discussion contributions of at least 2 peers and be sure to adequately address all posts your instructor may pose to you throughout the week. This level of participation is REQUIRED as the minimum in all discussion forums (see the rubric for more detail).

Your posting and responses will be graded by your instructor. For a detailed discussion of your responsibility in discussion forum postings, please see the "Guidelines for ADP Students in Online Discussions" document in your Moodle orientation course.

Written Assignments

Throughout this course, students will complete four written assignments that will require them to delve into the course material and apply the content to their lives and thinking. Specific instructions for completing these written assignments can be found in the course outline below.

- Session 2: Written Assignment 1
- Session 4: Written Assignment 2
- Session 6: Written Assignment 3
- Session 7: Written Assignment 4

Each of these written assignments will be graded on content, style, and timeliness. They should adhere to all page length requirements and typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations, etc.).

All written assignments are due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of the designated session week.

Applied Summary Project Posts

Throughout the course, students will submit three Applied Summary Project Posts. These posts are designed to encourage students to work on the research component of their Applied Summary Project. Specific instructions for completing the Applied Summary Project Posts can be found in the course outline below.

- Session 1: Applied Summary Project Post 1
- Session 3: Applied Summary Project Post 2
- Session 5: Applied Summary Project Post 3

Students will complete each of the three Applied Summary Project Posts in a discussion forum; however, these postings are intended to only be an exchange between the student and instructor.

Each of these posts will be graded on content, style, and timeliness. They should adhere to all directions and word count requirements. Be sure to follow typical APA style and formatting when appropriate (proper APA citations, etc.). You will receive approval responses from your instructor and some potential additional direction.

All Applied Summary Project Posts are due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of the designated session week.

Applied Summary Project

Part A: Revise Written Assignments 1-4 using instructor feedback and corrections. Once you have finished Part B of your Applied Summary Project, you will need to add a table of contents to your document. The table of contents should list each of the parts included in your Applied Summary Project and indicate where they are located within the document. Additionally, add an executive summary to the beginning of your document (after the table of contents). The executive summary should briefly introduce each of the four social institutions studied throughout the course and concisely describe the crisis present in these contemporary institutions.

Part B: Using the social institution you chose as the focus of your research in Applied Summary Project Post 1, develop an analysis of the institution by responding to the prompts listed below. You will need to draw upon several sources in order to support your analysis. In addition to the sources provided to you in this course, be sure to include references to at least two books and two academic articles of your choosing. Your analysis should include the following components:

- Historical overview of your chosen institution (1 page)
- Biblical/theological wisdom for the purpose and practice of this institution ("Creation" – 1 page)
- Describe how this institution has been impacted and distorted by the effects of sin ("Fall" – 1 page)
- Discuss the need for faithful reform of this institution ("Redemption" – 1 page)
- Describe a practical plan for your own investment in this institution ("Redemption" – 1 page)

In total, the Applied Summary Project should be 13-17 pages in length (not including cover sheet, table of contents, or reference page) and adhere to typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations, etc.).

The Applied Summary Project is due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday Session 8.

Professional Skills in Your Online Courses

All courses in your Geneva College Online program will provide you with an opportunity to develop valuable skills that can positively influence your professional and career development. Each course at Geneva provides numerous opportunities to develop skills employers desire in their employees and job candidates in areas including, but not limited to, written communication, research, critical thinking, and decision-making. However, targeted skill sets are also developed through the learning in particular courses.

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to add these particular skills to your bank of professional assets:

Categorizing/Classifying Skills

Skillful in compiling, organizing, and using data to enhance planning and effectiveness

Problem Solving Skills

Ability to identify and define problems and solutions

Cultural/ Social Sensitivity

Effective in establishing and maintaining productive and positive working relationships with diverse audiences

Written Communication Skills

Ability to organize knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments and to convey meaning through well-constructed text