What’s the Point of Education?
A Three-part Class on Faith, Reason, and Human Flourishing

Fall 2010

Wednesdays from 7-8:30pm, 10/6, 10/13, 10/20
Wilson 219
Professor Lindsay Whaley, Ryan Bouton D’01, Rev. Don Willeman
Teaching Assistants: Andrew Schuman D’10 (aschuman@watermaninstitute.org) and Bethany Mills D’10 (bmills@watermaninstitute.org)

Description:

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping us and in carving out the paths that our lives follow. But how do we become educated? Is there a particular goal to formal education? Is religious belief part of education or something that should be kept distinct? In this three-week introductory class, we will discuss how the Christian faith informs our view of learning and knowledge, leading us to the conclusion that human flourishing is the fundamental rationale behind education.

The course consists of three sessions, each taught by a member of the Waterman Institute Advisory Group. Upon enrolling in the class, each participant will receive a copy of C.S. Lewis’s *The Abolition of Man* and G.K. Chesterton’s *Orthodoxy*. Related discussion groups may be offered once the scheduled sessions have concluded.

Class Schedule:

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>1: October 6</td>
<td>What is the point of coming to Dartmouth?</td>
<td>Lindsay Whaley</td>
<td>1) Peter Schramm, “On Reclaiming Liberal Education in the University”</td>
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<td>2) Steven Pinker, “Does Science make belief in God obsolete?”</td>
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<td>3) Jens Zimmerman and Norman Klassen, <em>The Passionate Intellect</em> (chapter 1)</td>
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<td>2: October 13</td>
<td>What we know, how we know it, and why this matters</td>
<td>Ryan Bouton</td>
<td>James Davison Hunter, <em>To Change the World</em> (chapters 1&amp;2)</td>
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<td>3: October 20</td>
<td>A Christian paradigm for the life of the mind</td>
<td>Don Willeman</td>
<td>John Calvin, <em>Institutes of the Christian Religion</em> (pp. 35-74)</td>
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**Expectations of students:**

This course will address educational issues of specific interest to Christian students, but is designed to be of relevance to students of other faith traditions and to agnostic students who are intrigued by questions about the relationship between mind, character, and education. Students participating in this class agree to attend all three sessions of the class and to complete the assigned readings for each of the sessions of the class before that session meets. There will be an "office hour" connected to each of the three sessions--students are encouraged to attend, but this is not a formal expectation of the class.

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**Additional Resources (available in our library):**


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**Additional Information:**

- To sign up for this class, contact Bethany Mills (bmills@watermaninstitute.org)
- All required readings will be provided as PDFs via email
- Additional resources are available in our Lending Library. Contact Bethany Mills if you’d like to use them.
- If you miss a class, get in touch with the TAs for notes