COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course offers students an opportunity to explore concepts of calling and vocation by learning directly from legal practitioners about the many different kinds of law-related work they perform and some of the basic legal principles they use in their work. Students will participate in class lectures, classroom seminars, and other activities led by Calvin College faculty and staff as well as by alumni attorneys who will describe the work they do, introduce some core legal principles, explain how their work integrates into the legal process, and discuss their callings as legal professionals.

CORE LEARNING OUTCOMES
In satisfying the requirements of the Developing a Christian Mind core category, students completing this course will be able to describe the guiding principles of a Reformed liberal arts education, articulate ways in which Christian faith bears upon the practice of law, and reflect on practices that help them to live out their faith commitments in the world. Throughout the course, students will actively participate in a learning community.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Pre-test (in class on January 3): 2%
Students must answer the following question in two to three sentences:
• What does Christian faith have to do with the practice of law?

Class Participation (all class sessions): 20%
Students must complete all assigned readings and be active participants in each class session.

Writing Assignments (due at the beginning of class on January 5, 9, 11, 15, 22): 50%
Students must submit memoranda of four to six double-spaced pages to include the following:
• a detailed overview of the content of each assigned reading (with appropriate citations)
• consideration of how the assigned readings relate to one another.

Post-test (in class on January 24): 3%
Students must answer the following question in two to three sentences:
• What does Christian faith have to do with the practice of law?

Final Examination (due at the beginning of class on January 24): 25%
Students will write four essays of 300–500 words each on the following topics as they pertain to the practice of law:
• Creation
• The Fall
• Redemption
• Vocation

REQUIRED TEXTS
COURSE READINGS

January 3 – Course Introduction

Reading:

Panel Discussion:
Ross Leisman, Esq. (’84) – Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones PLC
Craig Lubben, Esq. (’78) – Miller Johnson Snell & Cummiskey PLC

Part I: Law and Theology

January 4 – Constitutional Law and the Doctrine of Creation
[Memorandum #1 due on January 5]

Reading:
Read pages 9-26, 49-51, and 62-83.

Class Discussion

January 5 – Constitutional Law and the Doctrine of Creation (cont’d)
[CLASS MEETS DOWNTOWN AT THE FEDERAL COURTHOUSE, 399 FEDERAL BLDG., 110 MICHIGAN ST. N.W. (#6 BUS: LYON & OTTAWA)]

Presentation:
Hon. Robert Jonker (’82) – U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan

January 8 – Criminal Law and Human Fallenness
[Memorandum #2 due on January 9]

Reading:

Plenary Session (2:15 p.m. College Chapel)
Class Discussion (following Plenary Session)

January 9 – Criminal Law and Human Fallenness (cont’d)

Panel Discussion:
Curtis Witte, Esq. (’79) – Damon Ver Merris Boyko & Witte PLC
Roland Lindh, Esq. (’87) – Attorney & Counselor at Law
Danielle Walton, Esq. (’91) – Oakland County Prosecutor’s Office
January 10 – Criminal Procedure and Human Redemption  [Memorandum #3 due on January 11]

Reading:

Lecture:
Nathaniel Knapper, Esq. (’08) – FBI Detroit Division

January 11 – Criminal Procedure and Human Redemption (cont’d)

Film:
My Cousin Vinny (Palo Vista Productions, 1992)

Class Discussion

January 12 – Civil Procedure, Tort Law, and Human Redemption  [Memorandum #4 due on January 15]

Reading:

Lecture:
Perrin Rynders, Esq. (’82) – Varnum LLP

January 15 – Civil Procedure, Tort Law, and Human Redemption (cont’d)

Film:
A Civil Action (Touchstone Pictures, 1998)

Class Discussion

Part II: Calling and Vocation

January 16 – Vocation and the Kingdom of God

Reading:

Class Discussion

January 17 – Vocation and the Kingdom of God (cont’d)

Panel Discussion:
Joel Visser, Esq. (’01) – Corporate Counsel, Dow Chemical Company
Jon Van Gorp, Esq. (’91) – Mayer Brown LLP

Panel Discussion:
Sharon Brinks, Esq. (’76) – Kentwood 62B District Ct
Mark Verwys, Esq. (’70) – Law Office of Mark H. Verwys PLLC
January 18 – Legal Practice: Property Law
Reading:
Lecture:
Karl Ondersma, Esq. (’92) – Gardner, Linn, Burkhart & Flory LLP
Lecture:
Christian E. Meyer, Esq. (’90) – Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

January 19 – Legal Practice: Contract Law [Memorandum #5 due on January 22]
Reading:
Lecture:
Charles N. Ash, Esq. (’95) – Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

January 22 – Legal Practice: Family Law and Public Interest Law
Reading:
Lecture:
Hon. Kathy L. Hoogstra (’82) – Circuit Judge, Michigan 14th Judicial Circuit
Lecture:
Pamela Hoekwater, Esq. (’98) – Legal Aid of Western Michigan

January 23 – CONCLUSION
Lecture:
Randy Vogelzang, Esq. (’74) – Calvin College
Class Discussion