



Moreau

PROGRAM

First-Year Seminar

MOR 10101

Fall 2026

course description

This course provides you an opportunity to study and practice living well. Your inquiry will be informed by diverse texts, contemporary authors from our community, the perspectives of instructors and peers, and co-curricular experiences. You will address perennial questions about worth, purpose, and relationships with others, the world, and God. Animated by Notre Dame's Catholic mission and a sacramental vision of God working through persons, you will engage such questions in community. You will join peers in stepping back from the routines and tasks of life, considering your life at Notre Dame as a whole, and participating in the life-long endeavor of living well. You will conclude your Moreau experience in your final year when you reflect on your efforts to live well and anticipate how to flourish after graduation.

learning goals

- You will be able to practice disciplined attention to self, others, the world, and God, and articulate how you can live accordingly.
- You will be able to participate actively in your holistic formation by articulating how you are loved and how you are called to love.

agenda of sessions

Unit 1: Invited

1/ Encounter	<i>How can we engage both peers and authors throughout this course?</i>	Aug 24–28
	Pete McCormick, C.S.C. (Campus Ministry)	
2/ Tradition	<i>How can we participate in Notre Dame's vision of education?</i>	Aug 31–Sept 4
	University of Notre Dame, "Mission Statement" (1993)	
	Congregation of Holy Cross, <i>Constitutions</i> (1986)	
	Kevin Grove, C.S.C. (Theology)	

Unit 2: Beloved

3/ Gratitude	<i>How can we carefully attend to the gifts of the world and our lives?</i>	Sept 7–11
	Helen Keller, "Three Days to See" (1933)	
	Francis of Assisi, "The Canticle of Brother Sun" (1224)	
	Jennifer Newsome Martin (Theology and Program of Liberal Studies)	
4/ Roots	<i>How are we formed by others, especially those closest to us?</i>	Sept 14–18
	Robert Waldinger and Marc Schulz, <i>The Good Life</i> (2023)	
	Alvaro Dávila, "Re-Discovering My Spiritual History" (1994)	
	Salima Rockwell (Athletics)	

5/ Dignity	<i>How can we recognize self-worth independent of our performance?</i>	Sept 21–25
	Kerry Temple, “What’s Best for Them” (2016) Henri Nouwen, <i>Life of the Beloved</i> (1992) Eric Sims (Economics)	
6/ Hope	<i>How can we respond to suffering and brokenness?</i>	Sept 28–Oct 2
	Makoto Fujimura, <i>Art and Faith</i> (2020) Maya Angelou, “Still I Rise” and “Just Like Job” (1978) Laura Miller-Graff (Psychology)	
Unit 3: Called		
7/ Friendship	<i>How can we become good friends?</i>	Oct 5–9
	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (c. 330 BCE) C. S. Lewis, “The Inner Ring” (1944) Marlyn Battista and Zack Imfeld (Residential Life)	
8/ Community	<i>How can we promote belonging that is inclusive of all people?</i>	Oct 12–16
	Martin Luther King Jr., “Loving Your Enemies” (1957) Dorothy Day, <i>By Little and By Little</i> (1945, 1948, 1952, and 1968) Hugh Page (Theology and Institutional Transformation)	
9/ Work	<i>How can our labor foster communal flourishing?</i>	Oct 26–30
	Derek Thompson, “The Religion of Workism” (2023) Dorothy Sayers, “Why Work?” (1942) Micki Kidder (Enrollment)	
10/ Rest	<i>How can we practice patient and life-giving leisure?</i>	Nov 2–6
	Blaise Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> (1669) Josef Pieper, <i>Leisure</i> (1948) Nancy Michael (Neuroscience)	
11/ Vocation	<i>How can we discern our callings?</i>	Nov 9–13
	Vincent Harding, “I Hear Them...Calling” (1972) Thomas Merton, <i>No Man Is an Island</i> (1955) Denise Levertov, “Annunciation” (1989) John Jenkins, C.S.C. (Philosophy)	

reflections on readings and refraction

The foundation of this course is group discussion informed by rich texts. You should prepare for class by engaging the weekly texts and video and then by contemplating how they might guide you in living well.

Most of our readings and refraction videos present invitations to think or act differently. Identify at least two core ideas that emerge from a conversation among the assigned materials. Rather than treating each text in isolation, focus on how these materials collectively challenge or nuance your assumptions or habits. For each insight, provide a representative quotation from a text. You are welcome to wrestle with the authors and question their claims, provided you offer a clear rationale. Be highly particular in describing how these insights challenge you to live more purposefully. If a parent or friend would not recognize your voice in this reflection, you are being too vague. To ensure the depth of engagement required for this intellectual formation, fill at least two handwritten pages in your commonplace book.

reflections on co-curricular events

This seminar provides you with opportunities to explore course topics beyond the classroom and incorporate them into your practice of living well. Co-curricular events are scheduled, communal experiences for which pre-registration is required. Their goal is to help you explore the course topics through reflective experiences that expand your imagination on the topic. You are required to attend three co-curricular events and reflect upon them in the final section of your commonplace book.

reflections on life labs

Life Labs are engaging, interpersonal activities related to course topics that you complete on your own. You and your classmates will complete these activities during the same time period, enabling a shared communal experience. Each lab follows a twofold cycle: a specific practice followed by reflective integration. You are required to complete the BelovedLife Lab and Called Life Lab, composing a reflection on both in the final section of your commonplace book.

reflection on your senior-year self

This final “Letter to My Senior-Year Self” assignment invites you to compose a letter that functions as a “time capsule” of your current formation and a roadmap for your future time at Notre Dame. The recipient of the letter is you—three years from now. Use 800 to 1000 words to address the following two prompts. If your “senior self” would not recognize your voice in this reflection, then you are being too vague. The assignment is due one week after your final class session.

Look Backward: Identify at least two ideas from across the course readings, refraction videos, co-curricular events, or life labs that have prompted you to think or act differently. Be specific in describing how these insights challenge you.

Look Forward: Identify at least two practices that you intend to cultivate during your remaining years at Notre Dame. Explain how you hope those actions will allow you to affirm at graduation that you are both beloved and called to love. During your Moreau Senior Capstone course in Spring 2029, you will review and update this reflection.

assessment

All of your assignments will be evaluated on a complete/incomplete basis with respect to the specified criteria. Your course grade will be determined by the number of completed assignments, using the following weighting scheme.

- 50% weekly written reflections and contributions to class discussion
- 25% written reflections on three co-curricular events and two life labs
- 25% written Letter to My Senior-Year Self reflection

You are permitted one class absence or one omitted reflection (about the reading or about a co-curricular event or life lab) without grade penalty. Every subsequent omission will lower your course grade by one-third of a letter (e.g., from A to A-).

policies

- You are expected to arrive on time and attend every class session. You are permitted one unexcused absence during the semester in which no grade penalty will be assessed. Tardiness that significantly impedes your participation in class may also be deemed an absence. Your absence will be excused, according to university policy, when you provide documentation to your instructor.
- All writing submitted—except the quotes from readings, reflections, and co-curricular events—must be your own. Submitting writing that is composed by another—whether written by a person or by an artificial intelligence platform—constitutes a violation of the [Academic Honor Code](#).
- Contact the [Center for Student Support and Care](#) to request accommodations that will best promote your learning. Instructors are eager to support your success.