Claremont School of Theology

Course of Study (COS): 323 Congregational Care

Instructor: Rev. David Richardson, Rel.D., M.A.F.T

July , 2020

CLASS PURPOSE:

This course focuses upon the pastor’s understanding of human nature with attention to methods and skills in congregational care and counseling. Students participate in an assessment and development of their personal interactive styles.

PRE-CLASS READINGS:

The demands of pastoral care exceed the experience and education of all of us. Three texts are required for the class but they cannot provide all that one needs for proficiency in pastoral care. Webb’s new book will set the format for lecture and discussion in the class. Lartey’s book will also outline the history of pastoral care and introduce cultural differences and sensitivities to the discussion

Two other books are quite helpful for those seeking to improve their pastoral skills. They are not required, but will be referenced often in class. Bob Horn’s book is a personal story of dealing with incapacitating and terminal illness and how a local church can mobilize the community of care. Howard Clinebell’s book, updated and revised by McKeever, has been the standard go-to book in Pastoral Care since the 1960s . It covers basic approaches to pastoral care in nearly every context.

PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

Write a 3-4 page paper describing a personal experience where you have been called upon to offer congregational care. If you have read the assigned texts you will realize there is a wide latitude on what we mean by congregational care. This may have been a crisis intervention, a supporting role for someone who was ill or institutionalized, the development of a support group for church members in need, grief counseling, etc. Describe the situation, what role you played, the outcome, and what insights and learning you experienced.

PAPERS TO BE WRITTEN FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

Based on your reading of the texts and on your own experience you will be asked to write an essay on the following themes. These essays should be 2-3 pages but not longer. You may want to sketch out a rough draft of each essay prior to the actual classroom experience. It will help you think through how you might finalize your perspective for the final draft that is to be submitted as scheduled below.

Essay one: Describe your theology for Congregational Care.

Essay two: What skills are most necessary for Pastoral Care?

Essay three: Outline the various boundaries and limitations of Pastoral Care.

Essay fou:. How can the church community be involved with Congregational Care?

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Examination of basic styles and types of congregational care and pastoral counseling.
2. Analysis of pastoral-care experiences through such methods as case studies, verbatim, and incidental reports.
3. Practice in the skills of pastoral care and counseling
4. Focus on congregational care from initial contact to programs which may include group or personal counseling or referral as appropriate.
5. Formation of pastoral theology through reflection on the uniqueness of the pastoral dimensions of care and counseling.
6. Sensitivity to the life situations and relationships of the individual receiving care and counseling.
7. Reflect on the opportunities for caring ministries in the local church.

TEXTBOOKS REQUIRED

Webb, Larry E., *Crisis Counseling In The Congregation*, Nashville: Abington Press, 2011.

Lartey, Emmanuel Y, *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care,*

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*Suggested reading*

Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counsling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth,* (Updated and Revised by Bridget Clare McKeever, third edition), Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011

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Robert C. Horn, III, *How Will They Know If I’m Dead?: Transcending Disability and Terminal Illness*, Delray Beach: GR/St. Lucie Press, 1997. (This book is out of print but can be purchased on line through Amazon in limited numbers)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Pre-class assignment 2. Class attendance and participation. 3. Completion of required reading assignments 4. Four papers on the material from readings. 5. Final exam on the last day

GRADING SYSTEM

1. Pre-class assignment (15%) 2. Class attendance & participation (20%) , Four essays, 2-3 pages each (10% each), Final Exam on the reading assignments (25%).
2. Class participation will require the ability to reflect on the readings and a willingness to participate in role playing and active listening exercises.
3. The WILL BE a final exam, which will focus on the two assigned texts. It will be an essay assigned in class to test your knowledge of texts. For those who have writing limitations, difficulties with English etc., you may speak to Dr. Richardson to arrange an alternative.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The daily class experience will combine lecture, discussion, reality practice, and role playing centered on readings for the day and the papers assigned.

Monday, June 29: Pre-Class Assignment is due.

Lecture and Discussion: “What is Pastoral Care? Pastoral Expectations and Performance”

Reality Practice

Tuesday, June 30 : First Essay is due

Lecture and Discussion: “What Skills are Required?

Reality Practice

Wednesday, July 1: Second Essay is due

Lecture and Discussion: “Crisis Counseling”

Reality Practice

Thursday, July 2: Third Essay is due

Lecture and Discussion: “Spiritual Brokenness and Episodic or Life Cycle Issues in Counseling”

Reality Practice

Friday, July 3: Fourth Essay is due

Lecture and Discussion: “Short Term Pastoral Care”

Reality Practice

Saturday, July 4:

Lecture and Discussion: The Theology of Pastoral Care from pulpit & classroom

Final Exam

Students may feel free to contact David Richardson with any questions about the class, [Wohlheter2@aol.com](mailto:Wohlheter2@aol.com).