

# Menonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

## PM-607: Pastoral Care and Counseling

Fall, 2007  
Tuesday, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

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### I. Course Description

This course is a study of the church as a caring community and how it can respond in caring ways to experiences throughout the human life cycle. The course will examine care giving and counseling options for crisis events and life passages such as birth, marriage, death, illness, career transitions, grief, etc., which are endemic to pastoral ministry. It will also focus on prevention strategies and counseling theory, and encourage theological reflection on caring practice.

### II. Course Objectives

The course is designed to equip men and women to effectively and faithfully extend care to people in need. Specific objectives include:

1. Assisting students in formulating a biblical, theological and theoretical understanding for care giving in the church.
2. Equipping students with basic skills in pastoral care and counseling.
3. Enabling students to respond effectively to pastoral care emergencies.
4. Helping students develop methods and structures for implementing the practice of pastoral care in their ministry context.
5. Guiding students to engage in theological reflection on experiences of giving and receiving pastoral care.
6. Assisting students in developing self care skills as care givers.

### Related Degree Outcomes:

Students completing PM607 will be able to:

- 1 Describe the biblical, theological and theoretical foundations of caregiving in the church with a congregational plan for providing care to members, especially during times of crisis and transition
- 2 Interpret ministry experiences of giving and/or receiving pastoral care from a biblical, historical, and theological perspective
- 3 Provide basic pastoral care and counsel in times of grief, illness, death, marital crisis, and family stress
- 4 Organize the congregation as caregiver, empowering appointed persons and/or groups as caregivers, and referring persons or families in need of care to qualified therapists and/or counselors when necessary

### III. Required Readings

Benner, David G. Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structure Model. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, Second Edition, 2003 (149 pages).

Martens, Larry, "Anabaptist Theology and Congregational Care," Direction (Spring, 1992): Vol. 21, No. 1, (pp. 1-51). (You may find the article at [www.directionjournal.org](http://www.directionjournal.org) where back issues of Direction are found).

Patton, John. Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005.

Switzer, David K. Pastoral Care Emergencies: Ministering to People in Crisis.. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000 (191 pages).

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. Lament for a Son. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987. (105 pages).

Yancey, Philip. Where is God When it Hurts? Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. (320 pages)

**Note: All required readings are on Reserve in Hiebert Library.**

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Benner, David G., Hill, Peter C. Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling. Second Edition. Baker, 1999.

\*Burck, Russell. "Pastoral Care and the People of God." Pastoral Psychology, Vol. 30 (Summer 1982): 139-52.

\*Clinebell, Howard. Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth. Revised Edition. Nashville: Abingdon, 1984.

Crabb, Larry. The Safest Place on Earth: Where People Connect and Are Forever Changed. W. Publishing Group, 1999.

Hunter, Rodney J., Editor. Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling. Abingdon, 1990.

Gerkin, Charles V. An Introduction to Pastoral Care. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

Lewis, C. S.. The Problem of Pain. New York: Macmillan.

\_\_\_\_\_. A Grief Observed. New York: Bantam Books, 1961.

Kopp, Herb. Soul Care: Caregiving in the Church. Kindred Press, 2001.

\*John Patton. Pastoral Care in Context: An Introduction to Pastoral Care. Louisville, Ken.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

- \*Schmitt, Abraham & Dorothy. When a Congregation Cares. Herald Press, 1984.
- \*Taylor, Charles W. *The Skilled Pastor: Counseling as the Practice of Theology*. Fortress Press, 1991.
- \*Vaughan, Richard P. Basic Skills for Christian Counselors. New York: Paulist Press, 1987
- \*Wilson, Earl & Sandy, et al. Restoring the Fallen: A Team Approach to Caring, Confronting & Reconciling. Intervarsity, 1997.
- Willimon, William H. Sighing for Eden: Sin, Evil and the Christian Faith. Nashville: Abingdon, 1985.
- \*Zonnebelt-Smeenge, Susan J., & De Vries, Robert C. Getting to the Other Side of Grief. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

**Note: All Recommended Readings marked with “\*” are on reserve in Hiebert Library.**

#### **IV. Course Content**

The course focuses on three levels of care giving: Level I, the congregation; Level II, lay leaders; Level III, the pastor. A fourth level, the professional counselor, will be referred to only as it forms a resource for special needs which require a professional therapist/counselor. The semester's study will be divided into three units. Readings for the units come from both the required and recommended readings.

##### **Unit 1: The Nature and Context of Pastoral Care Giving**

The Biblical/Theological Basis for Care Giving

Readings: Martens, Direction (Spring, 1992), pp. 3-14; Switzer, pp. 6-35; Benner, pp. 7-29); Burk, “Pastoral Care and the People of God.”  
Patton, Pastoral Care in Context, pp. 1-64.

Suffering and Care Giving; Intervening in Crisis Situations

Readings: Wolterstorff; Yancey; Lewis, *A Grief Observed.*; Switzer (Chap. 3); Clinebell (Chap. 8); Patton, Pastoral Care in Context, pp. 113-135.

##### **Unit 2: The Pastor as Care Giver**

The Pastor as Care Giver and Counselor

Readings: Benner, pp. 13-45; Clinebell, pp. 13-72; Patton, Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide, pp. 1-33, 103-116; Patton, Pastoral Care in Context, pp. 65-109, 213-235; Switzer, pp. 17-35.

#### Developing a Caring Conversation

Readings: Benner, pp. 47-104; Patton, Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide, pp. 35-48; Taylor, pp. 15-57.

#### Pastoral Visitation

Readings: Patton, Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide, pp. 61-74; Switzer (Chap. 4-5).

#### Ministering to the Dying and Bereaved

Readings: Patton, Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide, pp. 49-60. Switzer (Chap. 6-7); Clinebell (Chap. 9); Zonnebelt-Smeenge & De Vries, *Getting to the Other Side of Grief*.

#### Marriage and Family Interventions

Readings: Patton, Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide, pp. 89-102; Switzer (Chap. 9-10); Clinebell (Chap. 10-11)

#### Religious Resources and Care Giving

Readings: Benner, pp. 37-39, 62-70; Clinebell (Chap. 5).

#### Pastoral Ethics and Care Giving

Readings: (Materials will be distributed in class)

#### When and How to Refer

Readings: Switzer (Chap. 11); Clinebell (Chap. 12)

### **Unit 3: The Congregation as Care Giver**

#### Dynamics of Congregational Care Giving

Readings: Direction, pp. 15-51; Clinebell (Chap. 16)

#### Structuring the Church for Care Giving

Readings: Wilson, et al, *Restoring the Fallen*; Schmidt, et al, *When a Congregation Cares*.

## **V. Course Arrangements and Assignments:**

1. **Readings.** Reading assignments provide opportunity for the student to become acquainted with specialists in the field of pastoral ministries and to explore the broad scope of resources available for care givers. The students shall read the assigned readings as indicated in the course outline (approximately 750 pages).

*Required readings.* Write a two page, double spaced response to each of the required readings: Patton; Yancy & Wolterstorff; Benner. Your response should consider each of the author's theological contribution to the ministry of care and counseling, how the book challenged you concerning the church's activity in the care giving ministry, how the reading has shaped or

challenged your thinking and your practice as a care giver. Each of these texts will be discussed in your cohort group. Questions to guide the discussion on each author will be distributed in class. ***Due: Ongoing, as noted under the schedule of the class which will be distributed on the first day of class.***

*Additional readings.* Each student shall also read an additional 750 pages of books and periodical literature that reflects the subject matter of the course and the individual interests of the student. One third of the additional reading should come from periodical literature. Please keep track of books and articles read, indicating date and number of pages read. ***Due: (Due date will be set on first day of class).***

**All required and recommended readings marked with an “\*” are on reserve in Hiebert Library.**

2. **Cohort Groups.** Students will be assigned to a cohort group of three persons. The group will be used for class discussions and counseling role play. The cohort groups provide an opportunity to test your ideas about pastoral care with others, grow in your understanding of a caring relationship, and shape your caring skills.
3. **Reflective essay.** In a four page reflective essay, develop your own answer to the question, “What is pastoral care?” Support your answer biblically and theologically. Feel free to utilize a variety of resources from the required and recommended reading list (four definitions will be distributed in class). Your essay should also reflect on how your thinking has been challenged, and how your understanding of pastoral care might shape you as a care giver.  
***Due: Due date will be set on first day of class.***
4. **Research Project.** Choose a topic related to the theology of pastoral care, a specific area of your personal interest that calls for a caring response, or how the church can become a caring community. The paper shall be 10 pages (double spaced/12 pt) in length. The paper shall address the biblical, theological and social science issues and perspectives which are relevant to the topic and include practical reflections on the church as a caring community. Your paper shall include a minimum of fifteen sources from both books **and** journal articles (your writing should include an equal number of references of each). There are three deadlines to this project:
  - (1) You are to submit a one-page proposal for your paper to the prof. no later than October 31 (E-mail is OK). The proposal should include a thesis, rationale for the paper, and at least five bibliographic references related to the topic.
  - (2) The completed paper is due: **(Due date will be set on first day of class).**
  - (3) A one page summary of your paper is to be given each person in the class. Each student will share with the class what you wrote about and what you learned from the project. ***Due: (Due date will be set on first day of class).***
5. **Caring Ministry Assignment:** Each student is encouraged to grow as a care giver. Caring ministry assignments are designed to explore areas of ministry the student **has not yet** experienced and develop ministry skills in those areas. Visit **two** agencies such as a hospital, hospice, nursing home, marriage enrichment workshop/retreat, divorce mediation session, an AA meeting, residential care facility for the developmentally disabled, a parenting class, etc.

Prepare a 4 page double spaced report for each visit. The report shall include a) a review of the visit with a client in the agency (Include a verbatim of the visit if appropriate. Examples of verbatims can be found in Switzer, pp. 23, 26-27, 31-32); b) an interview with a care giver (nurse, administrator, chaplain, etc. in the agency); c) reflections on your experience; d) observations about the personal skills needed to offer care in such a setting.

***Due Dates: (Due dates will be set on first day of class).***

## **6. Counseling Skill Development.**

**Part 1.** Each student shall develop skill in pastoral counseling. Read Benner and Taylor (from the recommended reading list) as background for counseling skill development. Students will be assigned a small group for role playing in counseling to practice counseling skills and to receive feedback on counseling techniques. The groups will meet once during class and twice outside of class to gain skill as a counselor.

In addition the student shall engage in one counseling session with a person (other than a member of your cohort), so you can apply your understanding of counseling to an actual situation.

Prepare a 4 page double spaced review of your counseling experiences: a) describe the group experience; b) describe the individual counseling situation and include a brief verbatim of the session; c) Reflect on Taylor (from the recommended reading list) and what specifically you learned from him that helped you develop skill as a counselor.; d) reflect on the areas of your strength as a counselor, areas for growth, fears, what you have learned about yourself as a counselor, and what steps you feel you should take to strengthen your counseling skills;

***Due Date: (Due date will be set on first day of class).***

**Part 2.** The student shall carefully read the case study (chapter 5 of Benner) and respond to Benner's three stages and how these are reflected in the case study. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each of the stages? What new insights did you gain? How might these stages be applied to your ministry as a care giver? (3 pages)

***Due Date: (Due date will be set on first day of class).***

## **VI. Course Expectations and Management.**

1. **MBBS Academic Policies.** MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar or Academic Dean. MBBS is committed to the use of non-discriminatory language in both class and assignments. Please refer to the resource guides available on the Seminary website.

2. **Class meetings.** Attendance at all class sessions is required. Students will be expected to participate in class lectures and exercises, read assigned readings, and prepare written material related to the research and ministry assignments. Any student missing more than

25% of class meetings will receive a failing grade. Exceptions to this policy may be considered because of medical or family emergencies, but all exceptions must be approved by the instructor. For the sake of other students and the integrity of the learning environment, cellular phones will be turned off during class.

3. All assignments are to reflect appropriate quality for graduate level work. Grading will take into consideration the student's ability to comprehend and apply the theoretical material appropriate to the assignments, to theologially and critically evaluate and reflect on the subject matter, to apply the material to one's own life experience, and to develop pastoral ministry skills. Evaluation will be based on readings, written assignments, oral presentations, an examination, and class attendance. Your research project shall be written according to the format of the American Psychological Association publication manual, 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

All late assignments will result in a grade reduction, i.e., one letter grade for each week late. If you wish to maximize confidentiality on your graded assignments, please submit the assignment in an envelope. Your graded assignment will be returned in the same envelope. Assignments may be submitted electronically in **Microsoft Word** format.

### **Grade Distribution**

Readings/Class participation:	10%
Reflective Essay	15%
Research Project	35%
Caring Ministry Assignments:	20%
Counseling Assignments:	20%

### **The grading scale.**

A = 90-100% (Excellent)
B = 80-89% (Expected)
C = 70-79% (Below Expectations)
F = <69% (Unacceptable)

The instructor assumes a "B" as a baseline grade. Grading will be based on how effective the student responds to the intent of the assignment, thoroughness of work, and evidence of good research, writing and organizational skills. An "A" represents superior or exceptional quality of work. A "C" has not achieved the baseline level, does not meet the spirit of the assignment, is too short or evidences limited research, writing, and organizational skills.

4. Students may contact the professor by the following means:

1. E-mail: [lkmartens@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lkmartens@sbcglobal.net)
2. Phone: 559.251.5834
3. Personal appointment on campus.