Pastoral Counseling - PC 511  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary – Charlotte  
Sidney L. Bradley, Ph.D., Professor

February 21-22, March 21-22, and April 25-26, 2014  
Fridays 6:30pm-9:30pm, Saturdays 8:30am-4:30pm

Course Description:

Pastoral Counseling is designed specifically for persons in the M. Div. program who want to be prepared for basic care and counseling in the local church or related Christian ministry. The course will consider counseling concepts and counseling situations, which are common to a pastor. There will be a focus on thinking like a pastor and becoming a person who communicates a pastoral presence. Attention will be given to: the role of a pastor-counselor, kinds of personal and collective concerns encountered by pastors, primary modes of care, the care of persons by the pastor and others in the community of faith, the ability of the pastor to care for self, and the ability to provide spiritual support and care for the whole person.

Course Relationship to the Curriculum

The course is now a requirement in the Master of Divinity degree (enrolled after SP2010) and can be an elective for other degrees as may be determined by the Registrar.

Course Objectives and Ministerial Competencies:

During the course, students will have the opportunity to:

1. Develop an understanding of care and counseling as valid components of pastoral ministry, including biblical, historical, theological, and theoretical foundations of ministry.

2. Develop a comprehensive theoretical knowledge of pastoral counseling.

3. Integrate biblical, theological, and psychological theories that relate to spiritual wholeness.

4. Develop skills in analysis and diagnosis of issues related to pastoral counseling.

5. Learn how to identify professional and community resources that support pastoral counseling.

6. Identify personal issues that may strengthen or harm the ministry of care and counseling.

7. Cultivate the habit of thinking like a caring pastor.

8. Develop healthy personal boundaries and ethical behavior.
9. Develop skills in listening, attending, empathic responding, and conversing as a pastor.

10. Develop means of assessment and diagnosis consistent with effective counseling techniques.

11. Integrate theoretical, clinical, and practical knowledge in the formulation of cases, recommended treatments, and selection of a proper counseling plan and process.

12. Discover models for utilizing lay caregivers.

**RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION STATEMENT:**

**Article 3: To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry.** The church is committed to a holistic approach to ministry that addresses the full range of human needs: spiritual, relational, emotional, mental, and physical. The contemporary pastor is confronted with serious needs and problems in all of these areas and needs to be able to cogently address his or her parishioners’ needs with poise, perspective, and effective skills to fulfill the challenging call of Christ.

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE CURRICULUM:** This course builds upon the foundational courses in biblical studies, Christian thought, and ministry to provide a truly pastoral perspective on the ministry of counseling. Girded with the tools for theological reflection and armed with an authentic Christian worldview, the pastoral counselor can then be provided with effective helping skills to assist parishioners with crisis, grief, guilt, suffering, relational stress, and all of the decision-making challenges life may bring their way.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and out of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. Descriptions of the assignments are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment (hrs)</th>
<th>Student’s actual time on task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading &amp; Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters to Benner and Kollar</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Letter to the Professor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Total Time</td>
<td>135</td>
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Class Dates and Times

The class will meet February 21-22, March 21-22, and April 25-26, Fridays from 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm and Saturdays 8:30 am - 4:30 pm at the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary campus at 14542 Choate Circle. Both students and auditors are expected to attend all sessions of the class and participate in all phases of the class.

Course Requirements:

Course Textbooks

It is expected that students will read the following textbooks for the course.


The textbooks are available in the Gordon-Conwell – Charlotte Bookstore.

Reading

It is expected that students will invest a minimum of sixty hours reading for this course, including the textbooks, and will spend a minimum of 135 total hours on the course. An annotated bibliography, including an indication of the time spent reading, will be submitted at the end of the course. A bibliographic record of your reading should be submitted with your final written work. Annotation is not necessary, but you should carefully report how much was read in each source and include a summary sheet that computes and totalizes the number of pages read from all sources. Please follow these instructions precisely. Submitted to Sakai.

Sequence of textbook reading by weekend to coordinate with class lecture material:

1. Read the Benner text thoroughly prior to weekend one, come prepared to discuss
2. Read the Kollar text thoroughly prior to weekend two, come prepared to discuss
3. Become totally familiar with both the Hands & Fehr and the Johnson & Johnson texts before the third weekend, come prepared to discuss
Annotated Bibliography Due Date for Sakai Posting:
Due Date: No later than Monday, May 26, 2014
Graduates Due Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2014

Letters

1. Students will write a letter to the author of two of the textbooks regarding issues and concepts identified in the book – appreciation/non-appreciation, strengths/weaknesses, questions/concerns, among other communication. These letters will not be sent to the authors, but will be submitted to the professor.
   Letter to Benner: 5-9 pages, double-spaced, typed
   Letter to Kollar: 5-9 pages, double-spaced, typed

2. Students will write a letter to the professor detailing the student’s learning throughout the course and should address all aspects including all textbooks, and should cover any post-course reflections: 5-9 pages, double-spaced, typed.

Letters are an opportunity to expand your knowledge by verbalizing (in writing) your reflective thoughts, your ideas, your questions, your confirmations, and your experiences. Use personal pronouns, i.e., make it personal. Include references to your readings, research, class presentations, and personal reflections. This is not a journal or diary or “blowing off steam”. Therefore, avoid words such as “should”, “must”, “ought”, “the truth is”, “in reality”, “all people”, “people say”, “you know” or other moral imperatives that sound demanding, demeaning, or “preachy”. Also, avoid generalizations. Be specific. Write primarily for your own learning.

All letters are due approximately one month following the last day of the course. All materials must be submitted to Sakai.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION: All written assignments due after classes end should be submitted in electronic form to SAKAI. You will not receive returned work that is electronically submitted, of course.

Due Date: Monday, May 26, 2014
Graduates Due Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2014

Final Exam

A take-home, open-book exam is also due approximately one month following the last day of class – ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION: All written assignments due after classes end should be submitted in electronic form to SAKAI. You will not receive returned work that is electronically submitted, of course.

Due Date: Monday, May 26, 2014
Graduates Due Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2014
Grading:

1. Readings - must read a minimum of 2100 pages to receive and “A” or a “B” for the course.

2. Take-home exam - 30%.

3. Letter to Benner - 20%

4. Letter to Kollar - 20%.

5. Letter to the Professor - 15%.

6. Annotated Bibliography/Readings - 15%

Note: All aspects of the course must be completed in full to receive an “A” or “B” for the course. This means that students will complete all assignments at the highest level, including the minimum number of pages of collateral reading. However, the Catalog indicates that an “A” means that a student goes beyond the expectations of the class.

Course Administration:

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all sessions is required. Lack of attendance will be utilized to determine final grades on the borderline between two grades. See the Academic Catalog for Seminary requirements related to attendance.

Due Dates and Late Penalties

All course work is due on or before the date listed in this syllabus and in the Academic Catalog. Normally, students have one month following the final class session to submit all materials for the class unless requested earlier by the professor in the syllabus. Any extensions beyond the stated deadlines must be granted by the Registrar. Do not address requests to the professor.

Course Assistance

Students may contact the professor by the following means:

1. E-mail - sbradley@gordonconwell.edu This is the most efficient way to get a somewhat timely response and timely feedback meaning the professor will attempt to respond to e-mail messages within three days, generally.

2. Postal letters or memoranda should be addressed to:

   Sidney L. Bradley
   11314 Sir Francis Drake Drive
   Charlotte, NC 28277
3. Phone: 704-849-7708 (home; includes an answering machine).

4. Student conferences by appointment at the Gordon-Conwell offices during the weekends of the course.

Course Topics:

Most of the following topics will be considered during the course. Readings beyond the textbooks should address these topics as well.

1. Biblical, theological, and theoretical foundations for pastoral care and counseling as contrasted with psychological theories.


3. Communication processes: non-verbal behavior, listening for themes, assessment of transitions and turning points, identifying and understanding feedback, questions and clarification, pastoral care-counseling in crisis (including grief and loss).


5. Boundaries in care-counseling.

6. Moral and Ethical behavior.

7. The pastor as person.

8. Learning to think and act like a pastor.

9. The pastor and healing.

10. The church as a community.

11. The sick and dying.

12. The minister as crisis counselor.


15. Pre-marital counseling and marriage counseling.
16. Mental illness in the church.
17. Solution-focused counseling.
18. Strategic Pastoral Counseling.
19. Making difficult ethical decisions.
20. Weddings and Funerals.
22. The priest and the prophet.
23. Transference and counter-transference.
24. Inventories and testing instruments.
25. The pastor as interventionist.
26. Community resources.
27. Assessment and diagnosis.
28. The care-counseling plan.

A Summary of Course Requirements:

1. Full reading of the four textbooks for the course.

2. Additional reading and the submission of an annotated bibliography, including an indication of time spent reading – a minimum of 1800 pages of reading and 135 hours for the course.

3. Submission of three letters - one to the authors of the Benner and Kollar textbooks and one to the professor.

4. Take-home essay exam.

5. Attendance at all classes

Bibliography

It is expected that students will develop a list of bibliographic resources which support pastoral
counseling and which may be utilized in the future as part of a “database” of materials for referral and for resourcing the counseling process. A list of these resources and a short annotated bibliography should be submitted with the final exam.

Suggestions for reading follow, but the list is far from exhaustive so feel free to choose other appropriate, relevant sources. Newer editions may be available in some cases.


Bobgan, M. & Bobgan, D.  *Competent To Minister: The Biblical Care of Souls*, 1996


Clinebell, H.  *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, Abingdon,1984.


Jeeves, M. *Psychology and Christianity: The View Both Ways*, InterVarsity, 1976.


Peterson, E. *The Contemplative Pastor*, Eerdmans, 1989


Shawchuck, N. & Heuser, R. *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People*, Abingdon, 1993.


Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancellation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Grades are posted on line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

Returned Work
Work submitted through Sakai will be returned via Sakai since no hard copies will be turned in. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with any hard copy work submitted if you wish to have it returned.