MC/CO-642: Ministering to Women in Pain
Instructor: Karen Mason, Ph.D.
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Office hours: Monday 9 am-12 pm; 1-2pm
Friday 12:30pm-2:30pm
Spring 2009 Class is from 6-9:30 pm on 2/6, 3/6, 4/3
Class is from 8:30am-4pm on 2/7, 3/7, 4/4

"For I, the LORD, love justice. (Isaiah 61:8)

Course Description:
A given in this life is that we all experience pain—physical and psychical. How do people accept and manage every sort of pain? In this course you will explore the particular sources of pain experienced by women in contemporary society. We will seek together, first, an adequate theodicy for dealing with pain, and second, a deeper understanding of the complex presenting problems many women experience. Then we will search out effective ways to help women deal with pain-inducing events or circumstances in their lives, within the context of a truthful Christian theodicy.

Course Objectives:
If you faithfully interact with the readings and class discussions, and produce an adequate paper and oral presentation, at the end of this course you should be able to—

• Discuss sensitively the problem areas women deal with in contemporary society;
• Minister effectively as a counselor or pastor to women dealing with these problems;
• Help others develop sensitivity to these complex areas which are often without simple solutions; and
• Articulate a theodicy and an approach to ministering to women in pain.

Course Structure:
The class format is interactive, promoting peer learning through various group activities as well as formal lectures.

Textbooks:
The required texts for this course are:


In addition, once you've determined the topic of your research for this course, you will read at least 300 pages on that subject for your major paper and your class presentation.

Requirements:
Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate actively. Students will discuss all absences with the instructor. Absences of more than 2 hours may result in additional assignments or a grade penalty depending on the number of absences. Students will complete all reading and other assignments. Discuss all late assignments with the instructor. One point will be deducted from all late assignments per day late (including the weekend) and will not be accepted more than 1 week late.

Assignments:
10 points each for 3 critical essays (= 30 points total)
30 points for a major research paper
30 points for the oral presentation
10 points for active intelligent participation in class:

**Assigned Papers and Presentation:**

You will write three short (1-3 pages) critical essays and one long research paper (12-15 pages plus annotated bibliography). All papers must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. All papers will receive numeric grades derived from three sub-grades for the cumulative grade. Because graduate students need to be able to communicate clearly on paper, each paper will be graded on the following criteria:

- 10% of the paper grade is based on your grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style
- 50% of the paper grade is based on inclusion of all the required elements
- 20% of the paper grade is based on the logical progression of thought in the paper
- 20% of the grade is based on the integration of your own thinking with the assigned readings and research.

These sub-grades will be averaged for a cumulative grade on each paper.

*The short critical essays:* You will turn in three short (1-3 pages) critical essays assessing the value of the assigned readings. In these essays you will discuss how the readings fit into your growing body of knowledge and understanding of the course subject matter. In these critical essays evaluate each author's argument or contribution. Do not merely tell me what each author wrote (I have already read the books!). Explore the significance of the readings as they affect your own thinking and ministry to women in pain.

*A note on writing critical essays:* An essay is NOT a research paper objectively laying out data with footnotes, etc. Instead, these are short (1-3 pages) critical essays exploring the assigned readings and critiquing them as you discuss their integration into your growing awareness of the issues for women dealing with pain. The term *critical* does not mean that you are obligated to criticize the book negatively; it means that you must judge the merit of each book both pro and con. These essays are to be personal, thoughtful reflections on the subject at hand. Webster defines an essay as "an attempt, an effort, a test," coming from the Latin word meaning "weighing." An essay isn't "the last word" on a subject. Often it's the "first word," your first effort to weigh and consider the data and make some tentative conclusions. While I expect your essays to interact thoughtfully with the assigned reading, I do not expect you to have come to fully formed opinions in every case. Furthermore, in your essays, do NOT merely reiterate for me what the authors have written; I want your evaluation of what they have written.

*The major research paper:* At the end of the first class session, choose one area in which you want to become very well informed and write your research paper on that topic. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only. It should be no less than 12 pages and no more than 15 pages in length, NOT including the required annotated bibliography and any appendices you

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1 M. Gay Hubbard is a clinical psychologist specializing in women's and children's therapeutic needs; her book helps you understand the psychological issues women deal with and how best to work clinically or pastorally with them. C. S. Lewis explores the issue of Christian theodicy, a way of making sense out of pain in this fallen world: how is it that we experience so much pain if God is both sovereign and good? Philip Yancey dares to express and explore the questions many Christians have but are afraid to ask. He gives us handles for counseling people who are "disappointed with God."
add. You may use any standard thesis format (APA, Chicago Manual of Style, Turabian, etc.), but be consistent in your application of a standard format. MACO students must use APA style.

Because this is a research paper, you will need to include a range of resources which you will reference in the paper. Also include a complete annotated bibliography of works cited and works consulted but not cited. A bibliographic annotation is a short paragraph telling the reader what was valuable (or not valuable) in that work. Research papers are NOT essays. A research paper reports on the range of data available in the literature and attempts to lay out the relevant issues in a logical manner to inform the reader. (An essay, on the other hand, does not rely on citations of outside sources, but is more personal and reflective.) The language of a research paper is formal, avoiding colloquialisms, contractions, etc. Your research paper must include a clear definition of the problem, the extent (or incidence) of the problem, why the problem is painful, experience you have had with the problem with an evaluation of how you might approach the problem the same or differently, and a well conceptualized model of how you would minister to a woman with this problem. (The experience you have had can be personal but you do not need to discuss this unless you choose.) This paper is due at the time of your presentation.

The 45-minute class presentation: From the research for your major paper, you will present a 45-minute teaching session to the class. You will be the only member of the class sharing knowledge of your chosen subject with classmates in this presentation. You are the class expert in your chosen subject and are expected to bring to the class information and insight that go well beyond any assigned readings the rest of the class will do. Your presentation should be presented in a concise but complete manner, combining factual and anecdotal materials. It must be well prepared, well organized, and must be presented with a handout for the class which will include a resource list and annotated bibliography. The grade on this presentation will be derived from your content and organization; you will not be graded down for nervousness! Your presentation must include a devotional related to the material, a clear definition of the problem, the extent (or incidence) of the problem, why the problem is painful, suggested interventions, and handouts.

Friday February 6
Sources of women's pain, syllabus, ism’s

Saturday February 7
Theodicy

Friday March 6
Women’s experience of pain

Saturday March 7
Interventions, women and suicide

Assignment for March 7:

Friday April 3:
- Student presentations
### Assignment for April 3:
- Turn in your research paper at the time of your presentation

### Saturday April 4:
- Student presentations—turn in your research paper at the time of your presentation
- Revisiting theodicy, case studies

### Assignment for April 4:
- Turn in your research paper at the time of your presentation

### Assignment for May 4:
- Last day to submit written assignments or apply to Registrar (not to instructor) for extension if needed. Let the instructor know if you are applying for an extension.
- Turn in critical essay on C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*
- Turn in critical essay on Yancey, *Disappointed with God*