PC 511: Introduction to Pastoral Counseling

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

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Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue (issues pertaining to Sakai), please email helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu. All requests related to the course should be sent to the professor and/or the Semlink program staff.

Audio Explanation of Syllabus and Assignments by Dr. Karen Mason:
Transcript of Audio (also found in Resources)

Table of Contents
Course Description
Gordon-Conwell Mission
Course Learning Objectives
Lesson Topics
Required Materials
Course Requirements
  Lectures
  Integration Paper
  Final Presentation
  Counseling Practicum
  Weekly Posts
  Meetings
  Responses to/Critiques of Fellow Student Papers and Presentations
Grading Policy
Grading Scale
Other Course Policies
  Instructor Feedback
  VeriCite Plagiarism Checker
  Late Work

Course Description
Basic preparation for the complex task of pastoral care and counseling. The focus is upon the pastor in the congregational setting.

Gordon-Conwell Mission
This course satisfies part of the following institutional learning objective: to

  Article 3: To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry.
  Article 5: To provide leadership and educational resources for shaping an effective evangelical presence in Church and society.
  Article 6: To develop in students a vision for God’s redemptive work throughout the world and to formulate the strategies that will lead to effective missions, evangelism and discipleship.

Course Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course:

  1. Students will formulate a biblical and theological foundation for the practice of pastoral counseling.
  2. Students will integrate the biblical, theological, and psychological structures operative in a whole person model of development.
  3. Students will develop frameworks for understanding typical pastoral counseling issues.
  4. Students will develop fundamental counseling skills for effective pastoral counseling including evaluation of individuals, couples, and families to determine the severity of the problems being faced, pastoral diagnosis of personal and relational problems, effective listening skills for pastoral care and counseling, relational skills for a variety of ministry settings.
  5. Students will demonstrate a clear understanding of spiritual nurture and the process of follow-up as well as self-care and boundary setting.
  6. Students will evaluate and construct a network of professional and community resources for comprehensive care of counselees.
Lesson Topics
Lectures entail the following topics:

Lesson 1: Introduction
Lesson 2: Listening & Basic Counseling Skills
Lesson 3: Integration and Crisis Counseling
Lesson 4: Grief and Loss
Lesson 5: Anxiety, Stress and Depression
Lesson 6: Suicide Prevention
Lesson 7: Anger and Aggression
Lesson 8: Lifestyle
Lesson 9: Addiction
Lesson 10: Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage
Lesson 11: Abuse and Violence and Spiritual Warfare
Lesson 12: Guidelines for Confidentiality and Referral
Lesson 13: Pastoral Self-Care

Required Materials

1000 pages in pastoral counseling
REQUIRED:

CHOOSE THE REST OF THE PAGES FROM:

364 pages in integration
REQUIRED:

IF INTERESTED, YOU MAY WANT TO ALSO READ:

Course Requirements - Learning Activities
Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below.

Lectures
Listen to 14 lectures (which includes watching 2 pastoral counseling demonstrations and listening to 3 clergy self-care interviews) and complete all the reading (1,364 pages required). For this assignment, state the percent of pages read and lectures listened to and turn in the form "Lecture and Reading Statement" through the Assignments tool.

Integration Paper
A 2-page research paper on your preferred model for the integration of biblical, theological and psychology material. You will need to begin with a clear biblical anthropology and describe how you will utilize all of the data about the human experience in the counseling process. You will continue by adding your view of how you integrate the bible and theology with the science of psychology.

Your paper should be double spaced with 1" margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Pick a writing style (Turabian, MLA, APA) and use it consistently. Any work submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work. All words and ideas written by other individuals must be referenced. Please see the section "VeriCite" below.

Submit a PDF version of your paper using the Assignments tool. Also, post the text of your paper in the Forums Tool, under the topic "Integration Paper": You will need to read each others submissions and post one 150-word response/critique to 1 other integration paper. You must respond to a paper that has not received a response/critique so that each paper receives a response. You can provide responses/critiques to more than one integration paper but only one response/critique is required. See below "Responses to/Critiques of
Final Presentation
Presentation on a pastoral care topic.

First, you will need to sign up for a topic in pastoral counseling using the tool in the left "Pastoral Care Topics"; only one student per topic. You will be the only member of the class sharing knowledge of your chosen subject with classmates in this presentation.

Second, research your pastoral care topic and develop a 12 to 15-minute teaching session. (Recommended: 15 slides, maximum 20 slides). The grade on this presentation will be derived from your content and organization. The presentation must include biblical, theological material related to the topic, a clear definition of the problem with symptoms typical of this issue, the extent (or prevalence) of the problem (e.g., how many people have this problem?), why the problem is painful, and suggested interventions with goals of the pastoral counseling and the pastoral care plan.

You will need to prepare your slides in PowerPoint. Make sure your first slide is a title slide. (Please do not add any animations or audio at this point.) Go to the VoiceThread tool upload your presentation. Using the VoiceThread commenting system, please add your presentation audio to your PowerPoint slides. You can use either just the audio, or if you are adventurous, use your webcam.

Choose one topic from this list:
- Grief
- Depression
- Suicide
- Anxiety
- Stress
- PTSD/trauma
- Addiction
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Rape
- Premarital counseling
- Marital conflict
- Domestic violence
- Adultery
- Divorce
- Remarriage
- Anger
- Sexual issues
- Homosexuality
- Parenting
- Child abuse/neglect
- Personality disorders
- Psychosis
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity disorder
- Mental retardation/intellectual disability

Using the VoiceThread commenting system, on the first Title slide of a presentation, students will post a 150-word response/critique to another presentation. You must respond to a presentation that has not received a response/critique so that each presentation receives a response. You can provide responses/critiques to more than one presentation but only one response/critique is required. See below "Responses to/Critiques of Fellow Student Papers and Presentations" for guidance.

Please click here to choose your presentation topic. You may need to click on the accordioned portion and scroll horizontally to reveal all the topics.

Counseling Practicum
Counseling practicum is the portion of this course in which you demonstrate your ability to put into practice what you are learning from your reading and listening.

You will participate in a counseling triad where you will role-play as a pastoral counselor/care giver twice; you will be the counselee/care receiver twice and the observer twice. In order for 3 students to be the counselor twice, your triad will need to meet 6 times.

The counselee/care receiver may role-play a personal life situation or a specific situation about which s/he has extensive knowledge. The counselor/care giver will transcribe 1 of the sessions. The actual transcription will be on the left side of the paper and on the right side, include a running commentary, which should include statements pertaining to YOUR countertransference/reactions to the care receiver, YOUR conceptual frameworks, naming your interventions, questions or therapeutic dilemmas, and self-corrections of more appropriate interventions, and YOUR descriptions of care receiver's psychosocial and/or spiritual functioning, etc. The care receiver does not complete any paperwork. The observer will complete an Observer Report.

Each student will turn in 1 transcript and 2 observer reports.

Option a - participate in a triad with other students enrolled in PC 511 (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)
Option b - identify your own triad ONLY IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A TRIAD WITH OTHER PC 511 STUDENTS. If you form your own triad, make sure to select two triad participants who are mature and mentally healthy.

Weekly Posts
Most weeks you will post a response to a case study. For the case study, pick one pastoral counseling event in the case and provide your diagnosis of the person's problem, your goals, and your pastoral care plan. Use cases from Swetland, K.L, Facing Messy Stuff in the Church: Case Studies for Pastors and Congregations.

Three of the required posts will be something other than a case study response. These include the five self-care strategies forums, the revisit of five self-care strategies and identifying local resources.

For the introductory video, Using the VoiceThread tool, add a 1 minute comment to the Introduction Presentation to introduce yourself including a description of who you are as a person, as a pastoral caregiver, and as a person embedded in social relationships.

For the Self-Care Forum, list your top 5 strategies for how to manage the stress of caring for others in order to prevent your own
burn-out. An example of a self-care strategy is exercise. At the end of the semester, you will revisit your post in the Self-Care Forum and make a reply to reflect on any changes you might make to your original list.

For the local resources, you will collaborate as a class to prepare local resources to which a pastor might refer. You will post at least 5 local resources in either the Boston or your home area, which are different from those already posted. You will be using your email account to edit a Word document in Office 365. Click Here to access the document. Once you click on the link, a document in Word Online will open. You can sign in by clicking in the upper right corner. Click the edit Document drop down and choose to Edit Online is the preferable option.

Types of resources will be selected from this list:
- Pregnancy crisis center
- Rape crisis center
- Parenting hotline (to prevent child abuse)
- Suicide hotline
- Suicide survivor support group
- Veteran center or VA hospital
- Domestic violence shelter
- Christian counselor with sliding fee scale
- Substance abuse treatment
- Hospice/grief support group
- Food pantry
- Homeless shelter
- Senior services

Meetings
You will be required to attend two meetings with Nate Perron using the "Sign-up" tool.

Your first meeting can be:
- Tuesday 5/26/2015 1-2pm or
- Thursday 5/28/2015 7-8pm

Your second meeting can be:
- Tuesday 8/11/2015 1-2pm or
- Thursday 8/13/2015 7-8pm

In these meetings we will discuss course material as well as answer your questions about the course or assignments. You will attend these meeting using the "Meetings" tool. You can either join the meeting with your computer (Recommended) or a phone. Phone number will be provided as date approaches.

Responses to/Critiques of Fellow Student Papers and Presentations
An online course requires a sense of responsibility to each other in a dynamic learning community. To manage the risk involved in responding to and critiquing each other's papers and presentations, remember to take a respectful compassionate stance. Ground your responses/critiques in the readings and the lecture material. Include what resonated for you, what was fresh and new, what did you agree/disagree with, what did you feel was missing. Include how this fellow student's perspectives can be applied to your practice of pastoral care. Your experience and opinions can be included but they should not be the sole content of your response/critique.

Posts will be graded for organization, style, contribution to the learning community, relevance, and whether they are submitted by the deadline.

Elbow and Belanoff (2000) suggest several ways to respond and critique a fellow student's work:
1. Pointing ("Which words or phrases or passages somehow strike you?") or Center of Gravity ("Which sections somehow seem important or resonant or generative?")
2. Summary [Summarize what you have heard. What are the main thing and the almost-main thing?] or Sayback [Say back to the writer what you hear him or her getting, but say it in a somewhat questioning or tentative way.]
3. "What is almost said? What do you want to hear more about?"
4. Reply. What are your thoughts about the topic?
5. Voice: (a) "How much voice do you hear in [your fellow student's] writing? Is the language alive and human? Or is it dead, bureaucratic, unsayable?" (b) "What kind of voice(s) do you hear in [your fellow student's] writing? Timid? Confident? Sarcasm? Pleading?"
6. Believing or doubting: "Give [your fellow student] more evidence to help [her or him] make [his or her] case better. Or, find all the arguments that can be made against [your fellow student's point]." (p. 8)

They also emphasize that both the writer and the person who responds have their own perspectives:
"The reader is always right; yet the writer is always right. That is, readers get to decide what's true about their reactions... Nevertheless, you as the writer get to decide what to do about any of this feedback from readers, what changes to make, if any."


Grading Policy
Your final grade for the course will be computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Possible Points</th>
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https://sakai.gcts.edu/portal/tool/974dabe6-755b-432a-8382-8f5b91963ebf/printFriendly
Required Reading and Listening/Viewing Report | 15
---|---
Integration Paper and 1 response/critique | 15
Final Presentation and 1 response/critique | 30
Counseling Practicum Role-Plays
  - 1 Transcript - 20 points | 30
  - 2 Observer reports/student - 5 points each
Weekly Posts - 1 point/weekly post | 10

| | 100 |
---|---|

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>91-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>81-88</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>79</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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</tbody>
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All assignments will be graded for organization and style. Organization means how you structure your paper or presentation or posts, the logical progression of your thoughts and arguments. Style refers to your use of complete sentences, your word choice, and grammar. Be concise and precise. Avoid awkward sentences that may obscure your point. Adopt a formality in your writing appropriate to graduate level writing.

Other Course Policies

Instructor Feedback
The instructor will attempt to answer questions or messages within 24-48 hours, excluding Sundays. I will attempt to provide feedback on assignments and post grades in the gradebook within two weeks of submission.

VeriCite
A tool called VeriCite has been added to Sakai to check for plagiarism. If you find that a part of your assignment has scored highly in VeriCite's review (these sections will be highlighted in red), that means your content is very similar to content in another source and is probably a quote or paraphrase that should be cited. Please use this as a tool to make sure you have cited everything you need in your assignment. Not everything this service highlights will be a violation, so use your best judgment.

Late Work
No late assignments will be accepted and will be assigned a 0/F. Ensure that you have access to the internet on the day that assignments are due.

Netiquette
Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: [http://www.albion.com/netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette).

Additional Seminary Policies
For additional seminary policies that may pertain to this course, please refer to the Syllabus Addendum.