Reformed Theological Seminary

Pastoral Counseling
2PT 516

Instructor:
James Coffield Ph.D.
jcoffield@rts.edu

Requirements

Attendance & participation (10%)
Reading (20%)
Creative Illness paper (15%)
12 step meetings (10%)
Lab day (20%)
Book reviews (15%): Allender, Eldredge, Buechner
Prepare/Enrich training (10%)

Course Purpose

The class will provide an overview of current trends in counseling theory and practice and the role of counseling in church and business settings. Basic counseling skills taught in this course include interviewing, assessment and therapeutic listening in a laboratory situation. Application is made to family, crisis, grief and substance abuse counseling, with emphasis on developing strategies and applying scriptural principles. The class will provide a basic groundwork for pastoral care. The class will provide a paradigm for listening and caring for others.

Competencies

At the completion of this class a successful student should be able to:

- Compare and contrast basic counseling approaches and develop an initial biblical model of counseling that can be explored further and utilized in ministry.
- Become familiar with some of the basic categories of problems which may be faced by counselors, pastors and managers.
- Complete an honest self-assessment concerning his/her ability to participate in a counseling ministry.
- Become familiar with the concept of “creative illness” and apply that concept to self and others.
- Be aware of theories, issues, strategies and interventions in crisis counseling, grief counseling, suicide prevention and substance abuse concerns.
- Develop interview and listening skills to facilitate the counseling process.
- Develop a professional vocabulary which will allow for effective communication between the counselor/pastor and lay persons or other professionals.
- Develop some basic “discernment” concerning the assessment of emotional problems of clients and/or parishioners.

Prior to the first class...
Read two articles found at www.leaderu.com
1) What’s wrong with Us?
   By Dan Allender
2) Less-wild Lovers
   By Eldredge & Curtis from chapter 9 of The Sacred Romance
3) The Pastor as a Minor Poet by Barnes
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This class will utilize small group, discussion and lecture format; therefore attendance and participation is expected for a successful experience. On “Lab Day” students will practice counseling skills which will require some limited self disclosure in a small group setting. Additional personnel may be utilized on the lab day. There will be an on-line discussion board that all students will be asked to participate and engage with TA led discussions. The on line discussion will begin during the first week on March. The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus as needed to meet the course goals. The participants have the right to change and negotiate changes in the class if they find the format or content to not be helpful. Dates: 3/15(6pm-9pm), 3/16(9am-5pm) 4/12 (9am-5pm), 4/13 (9am-5pm), 4/19 (6-9pm), 4/20 (9-5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>Basic Theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9pm</td>
<td>Assumptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Views on integration of psychology and theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>Basic Biblical model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Family crisis/ addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-5 pm</td>
<td>Parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Pre-marital counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*PREPARE/ENRICH training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 4</td>
<td>Lab day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>9am—5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 5</td>
<td>Grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Personality Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 6</td>
<td>Short term pastoral counseling/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-5pm</td>
<td>Questions and catch-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE NOTE...
*Students will be trained and certified to administer the Prepare/Enrich marital counseling tool. The materials cost for PREPARE/ENRICH will be approximately $95.00 and will be paid on the first day of class. Students must be present for the entire presentation on Prepare/Enrich in order to be certified. Lab Day topics include basic listening skills using the here & now for healing.

TEXTS

The following texts are required
The Elements of Counseling by Davis & Meier ISBN# 0-534-57418-1
To Be Told By Allender ISBN– 13# 978-1578569519
The Pastor as a Minor Poet by Barnes ISBN-13# 978-0802829627

The following texts are only recommended and not required for the class
The Emotionally Healthy Church by Sczazzero
Telling Secrets by Buechner ISBN# 0-06-060936-2
Understanding People by Crabb ISBN#0-310-22600-7
Friendship Counseling by Huggins ISBN# 1-57683-299-6
The Healing Path by Dan Allender ISBN-13# 978-1578563913
Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands By Tripp ISBN #0875526071
A Thousand Miles in a Thousand Years by D. Miller ISBN-13# 978-0785213062

We are not machines that need to be fixed, or simply dutiful servants with jobs to be done—we are relational beings full of passions, dreams, hopes, longings and terrors which must be faced.
This life, therefore, is not righteousness but growth in righteousness, Not health but healing, Not being but becoming, Not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it; The process is not yet finished but it is going on; This is not the end but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified.

Martin Luther on the Christian Life

---

**Grading Scale**

- **A** (100-95)  
- **A-** (94-93)  
- **B+** (92-91)  
- **B** (90-85)  
- **B-** (84-83)  
- **C+** (82-81)  
- **C** (80-77)  
- **C-** (76-75)  
- **D** (74-70)  
- **F** (Below 70)

**Prepare/Enrich Certification**

A Prepare/Enrich Certification Seminar will be included within the class time Prepare/Enrich is a singularly effective tool for pre-marital and marital counseling. Training is necessary to be certified to use the testing instrument. The training fee includes certification, a manual, sample tests and a certificate for test processing worth $29. Training normally costs $150 –$250. Class members cost at RTS is $95. RTS will make no profit on this training. If you have already been trained in use of this tool your attendance for the day will still be required. We will include lectures on couples counseling during the training.

**Participation Grade**

Your assignments for this course will include responding to questions posted on an online academic forum called Blackboard (aka, Coursesites – [www.coursites.com](http://www.coursites.com)). This forum will be monitored by Dr. Coffield’s teaching assistant Cary Smith. Please email him at [carysmith@hotmail.com](mailto:carysmith@hotmail.com) and let him know once you’ve registered for the course. You’ll receive an invite to join the Blackboard forum. You’ll be required to submit a post prior to the first day of class, so it’s your responsibility to make sure you can access the site and to submit the first post by the deadline. Contact Cary with any questions.

**Academic Policies**

- Computers are a welcome educational tool and your use of a laptop computer during our class time is encouraged. However, please do not distract yourself or others by using wireless internet to check email or surf the net during our class time. Do not play games on personal computers during class time.
- Please retain a personal copy of all of your work.
- **All work is due by Friday May 3, 2013.**
## Mdiv Student Learning Outcomes

### Articulation (oral & written)
- Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks
- **Moderate**
- Must be able to articulate a framework for counseling that is supported by a Biblical worldview

### Scripture
- Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)
- **Moderate**
- Pastoral counseling must have its foundation in Biblical principles of problems and solutions

### Reformed Theology
- Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminister Standards
- **Moderate**
- The WCF addresses counseling issues and concerns

### Sanctification
- Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification
- **Strong**
- Must see their own issues in order to be able to counsel others.

### Desire for worldview
- Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God
- **Strong**
- Counseling must be done constant with Biblical world view

### Winsomely Reformed
- Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)
- **Strong**
- Counseling and problem solving is connected to evangelism.

### Preach
- Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm
- **None**

### Worship
- Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.
- **None**

### Shepherd
- Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.
- **Strong**

### Church/World
- Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.
- **Moderate**
- We live and minister to a very “psychological sophisticated” world and this class addresses cultural issues