

ST535: Theological Foundations for Counseling (v. 051319)

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Class Meeting Day and Time: Tuesdays, 10am-12pm

Room: BS2

Course Description

This is the first of five courses exploring the relation of psychology and counseling to biblical and theological studies. This course focuses on the relation of Scripture to psychological studies and counseling, on Scripture as the central text of the Christian counselor, and on scriptural texts of central importance to Christian counselors.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

After successful completion of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Contrast the major approaches evangelical Christians take to psychology and counseling
2. Identify some of the challenges to a Christian approach to counseling in the contemporary world due to worldview differences
3. Articulate a biblical framework for understanding the Christian life and counseling process
4. Understand key scriptural themes and passages relevant to Christian counseling
5. Develop a holistic framework for counseling in Christian public health settings consistent with the Reformed faith

Methods of Instruction

Reading, lecture, classroom discussions, and essay papers.

Main Texts

Holy Bible (any version)

Westminster Standards (post-1788 American revisions): WCF = Westminster Confession of Faith, WLC = Westminster Larger Catechism, WSC = Westminster Shorter Catechism

Eric Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2007): 978-0838-4054-0

Eric Johnson, ed. *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2010): 978-0-8308-2848-7

Course Assignments

Reading (30%): completion of all assigned reading. Please only report your reading if you *do not* complete all 100 percent.

Participation (20%): attend and actively participate in lectures and class discussions. Note the following grading rubric:

A (100)	B (89)	C (79)	D (69)	F (59 – 0)
Provided many good ideas for class consideration; inspired others; clearly communicated desires, ideas, questions, and comments. Was respectful of others.	Participated in discussions; shared questions and comments. Was respectful of others.	Listened mainly; occasionally asked a question or offered a comment. Was respectful of others.	Seemed bored with discussions; rarely spoke up, and questions or comments were off topic. Was disrespectful of others. Or, dominated class time by not permitting others to ask their questions.	Failed to attend class—missed more than three lecture periods total.

Paper (25%): Your paper consists of a case study; you must analyze the case according to the four levels of discourse (discussed in chapters 8, 9, 16, of *Soul Care*: biological, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual) and recommend four counseling modalities (discussed in chapter 18 of *Soul Care*) you think will be most helpful and explain why, including a few appropriate strategies within each modality to address the problems mentioned in the case studies. For each modality consider distinctive Christian uses with this Christian client (single-spaced, 3-5 pages).

Final Exam (25%): The final exam covers theological concepts covered in the course lectures and assigned readings.

Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
Aug 27	Biblical and Theological Foundations for Psychology and Counseling I	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 1, 6; WCF 1; WSC qq. 2-3; qq. WLC 3-5
Sep 03	Biblical and Theological Foundations for Psychology and Counseling II	WCF 7; WSC qq. 12, 20; WLC qq. 20, 30-35
Sep 10	The Secular Revolution and Modern Psychology I	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 2, 4, 7
Sep 17	The Secular Revolution and Modern Psychology II	
Sep 24	The Meaningfulness of Human Beings I	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 8-11
Oct 01	The Meaningfulness of Human Beings II	
Oct 08	READING WEEK	
Oct 15	The Divine Call to Inwardness I	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chp. 13; WCF 2, 8, 25, 26; WSC 4-6; 21-28, 36-38; WLC qq. 6-11, 36-57, 61-64, 65-66, 82-83, 86, 90
Oct 22	The Divine Call to Inwardness II	
Oct 29	Inwardness: Self-examination and Barriers I	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 14-15; WLC q. 69
Nov 05	Inwardness: Self-examination and Barriers II	WCF 13; WSC 35-36; WLC qq. 75, 77-78.
Nov 12	Inwardness: Internalization and Outwardness	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 16-17; WCF 27; WSC qq. 91-93; WLC qq. 161-64
Nov 19	READING WEEK	
Nov 26	Approaches to Psychology and Counseling	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chps. 3, 5; Johnson, <i>Five Views</i> , all
Dec 03	Counseling Modalities	Johnson, <i>Soul Care</i> , chp. 18