

ST5350 Theological Foundations for Counseling

Reformed Theological Seminary

Fall 2019

2 Credit Hours

Instructor

Prof. Eric L. Johnson, Ph. D., DAPA

Contact Information

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Class meeting time

Dec. 10-13, 2019, 8:30am-4:00pm

Office Hours

By request

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 ability to:

1. Contrast the major approaches evangelical Christians take to psychology and counseling
2. Identify some of the challenges of 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 and public health settings consistent with the Reformed faith

Methods of Instruction

Reading, lecture, classroom discussions, group work, and essay papers.

Main Text:

Johnson, E. (2007) Foundations for Soul Care. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
978-0838-4054-0

Recommended Reading Materials to help with assignments:

Two Psychologies Summary:

Johnson, E. L. (2010). Introduction. In E. L. Johnson (Ed.), *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Kanpol, B., & Poplin, M. (2017). *Christianity and the secular border patrol: The loss of Judeo-Christian knowledge*. New York: Peter Lang.

Poplin, M. (2014). *Is reality secular? Testing the assumptions of four global worldviews*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Sire, J. (2009). *The universe next door* (5th ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Slife, B., O'Grady, K. A., & Kosits, R. (Eds.). *The Hidden Worldviews of Psychology's Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York: Routledge.

Smith, C. (2003). Introduction: Rethinking the secularization of American public life. In C. Smith (Ed.). *The secular revolution: Power, interests, and conflict in the secularization of American public life* (pp. 1-96). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Comparing Evangelical Counseling Positions:

ACBC, Annual Covenant of ACBC (Association of Certified Biblical Counselors)
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/certification/covenant/>

Arms, D., (2008) Book Review: Foundations for Soul Care - Institute for Nouthetic Studies. <http://www.nouthetic.org/blog/?p=162>. Retrieved online 10/25/18

Johnson, E. L. (2010). *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Johnson, E. L. (2011). The three faces of integration. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 30 (4), 339-355.

Course Process and Schedule

Sessions	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignment Due
1A	12/10/19 AM	Biblical and Theological Foundations for Psychology and Counseling	<i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 1, 6	Two Psychologies Summary
1B	12/10/19 PM	The Secular Revolution and Modern Psychology	Smith, The secular revolution <i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 2,4, 7	
2A	12/11/19 AM	Approaches to Psychology and Counseling	ACBC, Annual Covenant <i>Foundations</i> Ch. 3, 5	
2B	12/11/19 PM	The Meaningfulness of Human Beings	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 8-11	
3A	12/12/19 AM	The Divine Call to Inwardness	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 13	
3B	12/12/19 PM	Inwardness: Self-Examination and Barriers	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 14-15	
4A	12/13/19 AM	Inwardness: Internalization; and Outwardness	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 16-17	
4B	12/13/19 PM	Counseling Modalities	<i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 18	
	12/17/19			Case Study
	12/17/19			Reading Report
	1/20/20			Inwardness/Outwardness Paper

Assignments

1. Readings:

Students are expected to read *Foundations for Soul Care*, half before class and half after class.

2. Classroom Participation: (10%)

Attendance and silence will earn a B grade. Disrespectful behavior will result in less than a B. Contributions to classroom discussion will earn greater than a B.

3. Two Psychologies Summary: (15%) Individual assignment (Due first day of class)

Worldviews have consequences. Two psychologies can be found in the history of the West. The Christian version begins in the texts of the Bible and continues to the present. Modern psychology began in the late 1800's and now dominates the Western intellectual world. Each is based on a distinct worldview. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of both of these two psychologies using one page for each.

4. Comparing evangelical counseling positions (15%) In class small group assignment

Compare and contrast the three most viable positions evangelicals have taken regarding psychology and counseling (biblical counseling, Christian psychology, and integration) regarding such matters as the role of the Bible and creation grace in the human sciences; the use of the Bible and theology in counseling; the influence of secularism in contemporary psychology and counseling; participation in contemporary psychology, counseling, and public mental health; and the counseling in the church. (Should be in outline form. 3 pages; one page for each)

5. Case Study Analyzed according to Levels of Discourse and Modalities (20%)

Dyadic assignment, due after class (Dec 17, 2019)

At the end of the final class, students will be given a case study and asked to analyze the case according to the four levels of discourse (discussed in Chapters 8, 9, 16 of *Foundations*: Biological, Psychosocial, Ethical, and Spiritual) and recommend 4 counseling modalities (discussed in Chapter 18 of *Foundations*) they think would be most helpful and explain why, including a few appropriate strategies within each of those modalities to address the problems mentioned in the case study. For each modality give consideration to distinctive Christian uses with this Christian client. (Single-spaced, 3 pages)

6. Paper on One's Personal Journey of Inwardness/Outwardness (40%) Individual

assignment, due after class (Jan 20, 2020)

In light of readings and classroom discussion on inwardness, students will describe their own journey of inwardness/outwardness, addressing such topics as growth in self-awareness, awareness of obstacles and barriers, internalization, important aspects of one's story and relational history, and changes that have occurred during adulthood related to one's faith and personal experiences of counseling, making reference to concepts from the text and class. (Double-spaced, from 5 to 8 pages)

Policies and Important Information

APA-Style. All written work must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style, 6th edition. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides MAC students with access to the PsycARTICLES Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following instructions emailed to you (including a username and password).

Submission of work. All assignments should be submitted via Canvas. Items are due by midnight of the due date. Late work will be accepted up to two weeks late, but will be docked one letter grade.

Attendance/Participation Grade. The Attendance/Participation grade will be a B for those who attend and are silent. Those who contribute verbally to the class are more likely to get an A, and those who are absent, sleeping or ungracious in class can expect less than a B.

Attendance/Participation	10pts
Two Psychologies	15 pts
Comparing Positions	15 pts
Case Study Analysis	20 pts
Inwardness Journey	40 pts

RTS Grading Scale

A (97-100) A- (94-96) B+ (91-93) B (88-90) B- (86-87) C+ (83-85)
C (80-82) C- (78-79) D+ (75-77) D (72-74) D- (70-71) F (Below 70)



Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST5350 Theological Foundations for Counseling

Professor: Eric L. Johnson, Ph.D.

Campus: Orlando

Date: Fall 2019

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes		Rubric	Mini-Justification
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>			
<p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>			
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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	The presentation and papers help students build a biblical & theological foundation for counseling.
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	Class discussions help students apply a biblical & theological framework to counseling scenarios.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Lectures and readings help students reflect on theological methodology from a specifically Reformed framework.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The inwardness assignment requires students to reflect on their relationship with God, self, and others.
Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	All assignments strengthen the student's ability to conceptualize counseling from a biblical & theological framework.
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	All assignments strengthen the student's ability to engage scriptural and secular resources from a Christian and Reformed worldview.

Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both churched and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Minimal	Assignments help prompt clarity about the task of counseling.
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