

## Providence Theological Seminary

### CP 5214 Congregational Care & Counseling

Instructors: Drs. Al and Melanie Thiessen

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May 3-7, 2010 (Mon.-Fri.)

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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## SYLLABUS

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### Course Description:

The course explores how congregational care and counselling can work cooperatively to advance the work of spiritual formation in the individual and in the community of faith. A working definition of congregational care will be developed which is grounded in historical practice, cognizant of psychotherapeutic influence and practical for contemporary congregations.

In addition to developing a working definition of congregational care, the course will also explore how systems theory impacts overall congregational health and how this affects the congregation's ability to deliver care. Practical structures for the delivery of congregational care will be considered as well as ways in which better synergy can be created between the congregational care function and the Christian counselling vocation. Students will also have a one day intensive communications course called CORE Communication.

### Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain the nature and scope of congregational care.
2. Students will understand the nature of soul care and spiritual formation as the outcome of congregational care.
3. Students will explore systems theory as the context for congregational care and be able to analyze their own congregational setting.
4. Students will assess which care delivery systems might work best in their own ministry environment.
5. Students will learn best practices for congregational care and counselling to work cooperatively.

### Required Texts:

Benner, David G. (2003) 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *Strategic pastoral counseling: A short-term structural model*. MI: Baker.

Kornfeld, Margaret (2000). *Cultivating wholeness: A guide to care and counseling in faith communities*. NY: Continuum.

Miller, Sharrod and Phyllis Miller. *CORE Pac*. Evergreen, Col.: Interpersonal Communications, Inc.

Richardson, Ronald W. (1996). *Creating a healthier church: Family systems theory, leadership, and congregational life*. MN: Augsburg Fortress.

**Requirements:**

**1. Pre Course Requirements: Required Reading and Discussion Questions:  
Due May 3, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.**

**A. Read the four required texts in entirety before first class. Submit a Reading Log stating the amount of each text read.**

**B. Submit questions for group discussion from the required texts (*except for CORE Communication*) based on the following outline.**

Note: Students should be prepared to lead a group discussion and interact on any of the questions they have submitted. (Please bring **two** copies to class, one for the professors and one for student use during the week).

**Question Outline**

- Section 1  
*One Question:* Benner: Preface and Chapter 1 &  
Kornfeld: Chapter 1
- Section 2:  
*One Question:* Benner Chapter 2
- Section 3:  
*Two Questions:* Richardson: Whole Book
- Section 4:  
*One Question:* Kornfeld: Chapters 6 & 7
- Section 5:  
*One Question:* Kornfeld: Chapters 8 & 9

**2. Write your own parish/congregation story (7-10 pages maximum). DUE: May 28th 4:00 p.m. (Hard copy only)**

**Consider the following in writing this essay:**

- Describe briefly your home church or the one you currently attend (whichever is more familiar to you)—history, denominational affiliation, population distribution, location and other demographic characteristics of the church.
- Describe the “emotional system” embedded and operative in the church. If you are a member of the leadership (as a board member, deacon or elder, pastoral staff, etc.) it will be worthwhile to explore the emotional dynamics of the group. Richardson’s *Creating a Healthier Church* is a good resource for this project.
- Include a theological critique of your parish story. This means drawing from various resources or texts which describe a particular theology of the church.

Examples might include the church as the household of faith (family metaphor), the church as priesthood of believers (gifted community metaphor), the church as fellow citizens (reconciling and uniting metaphor), etc. No one metaphor completely summarizes the theology of the church but your parish story may display one metaphor more than another. If so, use the metaphors which best describe it.

#### 4. Final Project: DUE: June 18<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 p.m. (Hardcopy only)

**Mental and Spiritual Health Workshop.** This is a two-step process.

1. Design a **5-session workshop** (10-15 pages) on a specific and relevant issue (e.g., grief or bereavement, addiction, depression, anxiety, sexual abuse, domestic violence, caring for the mentally ill, marriage seminar, communication skill development, strengthening families; or “age and stage” group specific programs such as children and adolescents of divorced parents, single parents, that can be used as a resource material for your church and community. This workshop should include the following components.

- Rationale: what is the relevance of this workshop
- Description of the Target Audience: who will attend and how might they benefit from this
- Objectives: what do you hope to accomplish in this workshop

2. Write a “sentence outline” of all points (which can be presented using power point presentation) that will be covered in each session. Also, include all handouts, titles of videos, and other printed or AV materials you plan to use. Make sure that the workshop is *creative enough* that it will sustain audience’s attention, *simple enough* that it will be easily understood, and *practical enough* that it can be translated into concrete action.

#### Grading

Discussion questions and Participation	25%
Readings from assigned texts	10%
Parish Story	30%
Workshop or Essay	<u>35%</u>
	100%

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- ❑ All counseling students must use the APA format for citing resources. Other students should follow the guidelines of Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Terms Papers, Theses, and Dissertation, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, or those set forth by the seminary.
- ❑ **Papers/Assignments are due on the DATE they are DUE.**

- Required readings and Discussion Questions **must be turned** in on the first day of class, no late submissions will be received.
- Any paper/Assignment submitted after the due date will incur a **2 % deduction** for every single day it is turned in late.
- Absences per half day of class are 2% of participation mark. Students missing more than two half days may lose credit for the course. Students will turn in an attendance record at the end of the week.