

Providence Theological Seminary

CP5214 Congregational care and Counselling: Calgary
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Jan. 10-14, 2011
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Course Description

The course examines the nature and function of the church as it relates to the ministry of congregational care and counselling from the perspective of systems theory. (3 credits) In this course we will explore together how congregational care and counselling can work cooperatively to advance the work of spiritual formation in the individual and in the community of faith. We will collaborate on a working definition of congregational care, which will be grounded in historical practice, be cognizant of psychotherapeutic influence and practical for contemporary congregations.

We will also take a look at how systems theory impacts overall congregational health and how this affects the congregation's ability to deliver care. Finally, we will examine the practical structures for delivery of congregational care that can integrate this function with Christian counselling.

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 system might work best in their own ministry environment.
5. Students will learn best practices for congregational care and counselling to work cooperatively.

Required Text

- Benner, David G.(2003) 2nd ed. *Strategic Pastoral Counselling: A Short Term Structural Model*. MI: Baker.
- Richardson, Ronald W.(1996). *Creating a Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership, and Congregational Life*. MN. Augsburg Fortress.
- Steinke, Peter L. (2006). *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach*. Hendon Virginia. The Alban Institute.

Texts will be available in the Providence Bookstore, Check there often in order to get your texts early.

Requirements

1. **Group Discussion:** Students are required to participate in classroom and small group discussions and assigned classroom exercises with adequate preparation from **as much** pre course reading of the textbooks as one can accomplish. **Due daily. Points value 20.**

- 2. Required Reading and Discussion Questions:** Read all three required texts and submit questions from each text that you would like to see included as part of the in class discussion, come to the course prepared to lead a discussion using at least one of these questions. **Due January 10-14, points value 20.** Here are some **non rigid** guidelines follow:

1. **Benner**, take your questions out of Preface and Chapters 1 and 2.
2. **Steinke**, take your questions out of any chapter's reflection and discussion segments found at the end of every chapter.
3. **Richardson**, make up your own from any section of the text.

- 3. Write your own parish/congregation story (7-10 pages). Due April 4, 2011, Points value 30**

Considerations while writing this essay:

1. Describe briefly your home church or the one you are currently attending (whichever is most familiar to you) include history, denominational affiliation, population distribution, location and other demographic characteristics of the church.
2. Describe the "emotional system" embedded and operative in the church. If you are a member of the leadership (as aboard member, deacon or elder, pastoral staff, etc.) it will be beneficial for you to explore the emotional dynamics of the group. Richardson's *Creating a healthier Church* is a good resource for this project.
3. Include a theological critique of your parish story. This means drawing from various sources, resources or texts, which describe a particular theology of the church. Some examples might include the church as the household of faith (family metaphor), the church as a priesthood of believers (gifted community metaphor), the church as fellow citizens (reconciling and uniting metaphor), etc. No one metaphor completely captures or summarizes the theology of your church but your parish story may display one or more of these metaphors. If so, this will help you in you describing your parish's story.

- 4. Mental and Spiritual Health Workshop.** This is a two stage process: **Due April 4, 2011, Points Value 30.**

1. Stage one. 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 resource material for your church and community. This workshop should include but is not restricted to the following components:

1. Rationale: what is the relevance of this workshop.
2. Description of the target audience: who will attend and how might they benefit from this.

3. Objectives: what do you hope to accomplish in this workshop.

2. Stage two. Write a sentence outline of all points that could be presented using PowerPoint presentation that will be covered in each session. Also include all handouts, titles of videos and other printed or AV material that you plan to use. A workshop that is creative will sustain an audience's attention, and a workshop that is simple enough will allow all range of participants to understand and be actively engaged in it. So we want this to be **creatively simple** or if you prefer, it can be **simply creative**.

Points to note:

1. Counselling students are to adhere to APA guidelines and all other's are to follow Turabian
2. Papers and assignments are due on the due dates, if you are experiencing difficulty with this please keep me advised. This works best for all of us
3. All assignments are to be submitted electronically as an attachment please use a word or compatible format. I will reply to your e-mail to advise you that I have received it and this reply will mean that I was able to save it. I will grade it and return it electronically as well. I will in the paper use a yellow highlighter to indicate where I am either intrigued with or just want to make note of something you have said; or I will make comments where I might want to suggest something in regard to what you have concluded or continue the thought that you are making.
4. This is a week long intensive module, therefore we cannot afford to miss classes, a missed half day will result in a 2 point reduction in the participation grade. Missing out on more than 2 half days could result in a grade reduction.