

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY

Principles of Pastoral Care

CHM532 – 3 credit hours

Fall Semester, 2010 – Professor: Daniel S. Schipani

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Course Description

This course is designed to address key theoretical and practical issues of pastoral care within the framework of the church as an ecology of healing and wholeness. It includes a biblical and historical survey of the practice of pastoral care, and encourages students to develop their own theological understandings of this field and work towards a model of pastoral care ministry. The overall emphasis is on theoretical and theological grounding, i.e. *principles* of Christian pastoral care; nevertheless the class also orients students to develop skills and resources for a variety of pastoral care situations.

Goals and Objectives

Students who fulfill all the course requirements will meet the following **goals**:

- To nurture their identity and vocation as Christian pastoral caregivers (*being*)
 - To identify core values, virtues, and attitudes as pastoral caregivers
 - To develop the disposition of pastoral “presence”
- To enhance their understanding of, and theological reflection on pastoral care as a ministry of the church (*knowing*)
 - Explore Biblical, historical, and theological themes of Christian pastoral care
 - Grow familiar with important issues and dilemmas in this field, and learn how to research pastoral care issues
- To be equipped with practical knowledge, skills and tools to further their care practice (*doing*)
 - Be introduced to selected resources on pastoral care and, in turn, generate practical resources for competent practice
 - Begin to develop one’s own theological approach to pastoral care, or pastoral theology

Methodology

Class sessions will consist primarily of lecture and discussion (including two guest presenters), and small group work; there will also be role-playing exercises. In addition to the reading, students will be involved in an ongoing pastoral theological reflection by focusing on key questions and exercises. Each student will choose a topic for class presentation and as the subject for a class project (see specifications below).

Required Texts¹

Kathleen D. Billman and Daniel L. Migliore, *Rachel's Cry: Prayer of Lament and Rebirth of Hope*. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1999. 0-8298-1353-5

Leah Dawn Bueckert & Daniel S. Schipani, *Spiritual Caregiving in the Hospital*. Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2006. 1-894710-65-7

Nancy J. Gorsuch, *Pastoral Visitation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999. 0-8006-3190-0

Cari Jackson, *The Gift to Listen, the Courage to Hear*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2003. 0-8066-4552-0.

John Patton, *Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006. 0-687-05322-6.

Daniel S. Schipani, ed., *Mennonite Perspectives on Pastoral Counseling*. Elkhart: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2007. 0-936273-59-9.

Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, *A Primer in Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005. 0-8006-3760-6.

Items on the library reserve shelf are shared by all members of the class. Please follow the policies that are posted on the reserve shelf in the library. Class members need to share the reserve materials.

Requirements and Evaluation percentages

Before the first weekend of class students will (a) read the books by Patton and Stevenson-Moessner and write one evaluative response to the reading of the two texts (900-1,000 words); and (b) a two-three page reflection, double spaced on two occasions when you experienced, observed, or provided pastoral care (spend at least a third of the paper describing differences [contrasts] and similarities between those two occasions, including your response to Stevenson-Moessner's questions (pp. 35, 43). These two assignments must be presented on the first session, Friday 24, 6:30 pm.

1. Class participation (30% of grade): Each student is expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, do assignments regularly and on time, and participate in class discussions. Non-participation, absences and tardiness negatively affect grades. (Cell phones disrupt class involvement in several ways. Please be sure your phone is turned off well before each class begins.)
2. Readings (30%): All students are expected to read the required texts and be familiar with their content. They will write a 500-600 word reading "response" for each week of assigned readings.
3. Pastoral care project (40%): Students will become experts on a particular aspect of pastoral care. This requires becoming thoroughly familiar with the area of choice: theological and biblical reflections, Christian historical understandings of this issue, social implications, and practical concerns. Each student will make a presentation – complete with handouts – regarding her/his subject. The presentation includes: a brief Biblical/historical/theological introduction, social aspects of this issue, practical counsel for this aspect of ministry, naming of potential problems or dilemma areas, and recommended bibliography. (Without all these elements the presentation cannot receive full marks.) Handouts should include a detailed outline of the presentation and the bibliography. (These need to be submitted to the professor one week in advance of the class. Students are responsible for getting these materials copied for distribution.) These presentations serve two

¹ Texts should be read in the order suggested by the schedule. Readings serve as background for class agenda.

purposes: one, students will learn how to research resources in the face of pastoral care challenges; and, two, this will form the beginning of a pastoral care workbook for the entire class.

Papers

Assignments should be printed double-sided or on scrap paper. The final assignment should be printed double-sided on fresh paper. All the papers should be written according to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th Edition.

Contacting the Professor

Regular office hours during the fall will be Wednesdays 9:00-11:30 a.m.; other times by arrangement (574-296-6237 dschipani@ambs.edu). Students are welcome to knock at my door when it is open.

Plagiarism Policy

“Plagiarism results from the unacknowledged use of material found in print sources, oral presentations, or visual, electronic or other media sources. Plagiarism does not require an intention to deceive. It can result when a student submits as his or her own work ideas, language, data or other material contained in a source not acknowledged by the student, if the student knew or should have known that such acknowledgement was required.” (<http://law.slu.edu/policies/plagiarism.html>) Occurrences of plagiarism will result in a range consequences determined by the professor. All occurrences of plagiarism are reported to the dean and the student’s adviser. (See Policy on Plagiarism in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual)

Library Reminder

Items on the library reserve shelf are shared by all members of the class. Please follow the policies that are posted on the reserve shelf in the library.

Extension Policy

The dean and faculty have agreed to implement the course **extension policy** and to work hard as a faculty to meet institutional grading deadlines after the end of the term. Deadlines for assignments are listed above. If there is a reason why you need an extension beyond the end of the semester, you must secure a Request for Extension form, available through the AMBS website. This form must be submitted with signatures from the professor and dean before the end of the business day on the last day of class for the term (see calendar for fall term). An extension is not normally longer than six weeks. See the AMBS online catalog for further information.

Course Evaluation

As part of AMBS’s commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning, we take seriously the feedback we receive from students in course evaluations. By seminary policy, students are required to complete an online course evaluation outside of class time

in order to get credit for a class. Evaluations are optional for auditors. The online course evaluation will become available to students the last week of class at <http://evals.ambs.edu> where further instructions are available. Username and password are required. Students must complete the evaluation within one week of the last day of class to be in compliance. Students who wish to convert an NC (due to noncompliance) to a passing grade must pay a \$25 fee to complete the evaluation and to have the grade converted. Students who have technical difficulties with completing the evaluations should contact Brent Graber at 296-6221 or bgraber@ambs.edu.

Class Schedule

(May be subject to some modification)

SEPTEMBER

Friday, September 24

Personal introductions and introduction to the course. Expectations, requirements, and projections. The church as an ecology of care, healing and wholeness: a practical ecclesiology of vision and reality.

Saturday, September 25 am

Congregationally based pastoral care: Guest presenter.

Introducing “pastoral wisdom”: presence (being), understanding (knowing), and guidance (doing).

On caring and being cared for: sharing from assignment.

Saturday, September 25 pm

Continuation of the topic

Biblical and theological foundations of pastoral care.

The communal and contextual dimensions of pastoral care: sharing from the assignments.

Exercise: reflect on an experience in which you became aware of something about your context and another context different from your own.

Assignments for the October weekend:

Read Billman-Migliore, *Rachel's Cry*, and Jackson, *The Gift to Listen, the Courage to Hear*, and write a reflective and evaluative response to each.

Write a brief story describing an experience of limit, loss and grief that you had to face; how did your faith affected or failed to affect that experience of limit and loss?

OCTOBER

Friday, October 15 -- 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Students join the Pastoral Care Series workshop on Congregational conflict and mediation.
Pastoral care as mediation ministry.

Saturday, October 16 am

Limit and loss. Lament and grief. .Sharing from the assignments
Pastoral Care in the Twentieth Century.
Changing Patterns: Pastoral Care and Recent Theologies.

Assignments for November weekend:

Write a brief story describing a personal or somebody else's experience of hospitalization and apply insights gained so far in the course.

Visit a member of your congregation and reflect on the experience

Read Bueckert-Schipani, *Spiritual Caregiving in the Hospital*, Introduction and Part I (Chapters 1-8) and Gorsuch, *Pastoral Visitation*. Write a reflective and evaluative response to the two readings.

NOVEMBER

November 12

Clinical Pastoral Education as a model for pastoral care and pastoral theology (video presentation).
Caring for the sick: sharing from the assignments.

November 13 am

Pastoral ministers as caregivers: sharing from the assignments.

November 13 pm

Theology and guidelines for pastoral visitation: sharing from the assignments.
Guidelines for student presentations.

Assignments for December weekend:

Interview a pastor regarding the practice of visiting people in health care institutions.

Read Bueckert-Schipani, *Spiritual Caregiving in the Hospital*, Part II and III (chapters 9-19)

And Schipani, *Mennonite Perspectives on Pastoral Counseling*,

Prepare special study presentation.

DECEMBER

December 10

The pastoral caregiver as reflective practitioner and pastoral theologian.

Understanding and doing practical and pastoral theology.

Introduction to pastoral counseling as a ministry of the church. Pastoral care and pastoral counseling.

Pastors as Counselors. Listening as an act of love.

Student presentation

December 11 am

Principles of pastoral counseling: settings, process and goals.

Case studies: role playing and reflective discussion.

Student presentation.

December 11

Student presentations.

Conclusion

Evaluation of the course

December 17 * Final Paper due

Possible Pastoral Care Issues for Exploration

Pregnancies and births
Crisis pregnancies and infertility, miscarriages, et cetera
Hospital visitation
Chronic illness
Dealing with disabilities
Ministry to the dying
Working with the bereaved
Depression
Mental or emotional illness
Physical or sexual abuse
Addictions and substance abuse
Wedding and pre-marital preparation
Marital crises
Eldercare
Declining rural communities
Working with immigrants
Relationship crises or breakdowns (e.g. marital or other significant relationships)
Beyond the nuclear family (blended, adoption, foster, reunion after foster placement)
Idiosyncratic Life Cycle Transition (e.g. birth of handicapped child, pregnancy loss, separation through hospitalization, reunion after forced separation, migration, dealing with homosexuality, leaving home of mentally or physically challenged young adult, withdrawal of life support)
Dealing with long-term, chronic, incapacitation or terminal illness
Dealing with victimization (e.g. burglary, abuse, terror)
Sudden loss through unexpected or violent death (e.g. accident, murder, suicide)
Difficult decisions (e.g. withdrawal of life support)
Recommitments (e.g. marriage renewal, reconciliation after painful revelations in family or other relationships)
Jail and prison ministry
Other ...

Selected Bibliography

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- Capps, Donald. *Living Stories: Pastoral Counseling in Congregational Context*. Fortress, 1998.
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- Hedahl, Susan K. *Listening Ministry: Rethinking Pastoral Leadership*. Fortress Press, 2001.
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- Lartey, Emmanuel Y. *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 2nd ed. Jessica Kingsley, 2003.

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- Schipani, Daniel S., ed. *Mennonite Perspectives on Pastoral Counseling*. Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2007.
- Schipani, Daniel S. & Leah Dawn Bueckert. *Interfaith Spiritual Care: Understandings and Practices*. Pandora, 2009.
- Stevenson-Moessner, Jeanne. *A Primer in Pastoral Care*. Fortress, 2005.
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