

Claremont School of Theology
Course of Study (COS): 323 Congregational Care
Instructor: Rev. David Richardson, Rel.D., M.A.F.T

CLASS PURPOSE:

This course focuses upon the pastor's understanding of human nature with attention to methods and skills in congregational care and counseling. Students participate in an assessment and development of their personal interactive styles.

PRE-CLASS READINGS:

The demands of pastoral care exceed the experience and education of all of us. Three texts are required for the class but they cannot provide all that one needs for proficiency in pastoral care. Clinebell's book has been the classic in the field for decades and is quite detailed. It should be read in the months preceding the Course of Study to set the foundation for our discussions. Webb's new book will set the format for lecture and discussion in the class. It and Bob Horn's book are more manageable for reading during our week together but you may find it helpful to have read them all prior to class.

PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENT

Write a 4-5 page paper describing a personal experience where you have been called upon to offer congregational care. If you have read the assigned texts you will realize there is a wide latitude on what we mean by congregational care. This may have been a crisis intervention, a supporting role for someone who was ill or institutionalized, the development of a support group for church members in need, grief counseling, etc. Describe the situation, what role you played, the outcome, and what insights and learning you experienced.

PAPERS TO BE WRITTEN FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

Based on your reading of the texts and on your own experience you will be asked to write an essay on the following four themes. These essays should be 2-3 pages long. You may want to sketch out a rough draft of each essay prior to the week of our actual classroom experience. It will help you think through how you might finalize your perspective for the final draft that is to be submitted as scheduled below.

Essay one: How can the church community be involved with Congregational Care?

Essay two: What skills are most necessary for Pastoral Care?

Essay three: Outline the various boundaries and limitations of Pastoral Care.

Essay four: Describe your theology for Congregational Care

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Examination of basic styles and types of congregational care and pastoral counseling.
2. Analysis of pastoral-care experiences through such methods as case studies, verbatim, and incidental reports.

3. Practice in the skills of pastoral care and counseling
4. Focus on congregational care from initial contact to programs which may include group or personal counseling or referral as appropriate.
5. Formation of pastoral theology through reflection on the uniqueness of the pastoral dimensions of care and counseling.
6. Sensitivity to the life situations and relationships of the individual receiving care and counseling.
7. Reflect on the opportunities for caring ministries in the local church.

TEXTBOOKS REQUIRED

Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth*, (Updated and Revised by Bridget Clare McKeever, third edition), Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011.

Robert C. Horn, III, *How Will They Know If I'm Dead?: Transcending Disability and Terminal Illness*, Delray Beach: GR/St. Lucie Press, 1997. (This book is out of print but can be purchased on line through Amazon in limited numbers)

Webb, Larry E., *Crisis Counseling In The Congregation*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Pre-class assignment
2. Class attendance and participation.
3. Completion of all reading assignments
4. Four papers on the material from readings.
5. Final exam on the last day

GRADING SYSTEM

1. Pre-class assignment (15%)
2. Class attendance & participation (15%) , Four essays, 2-3 pages each (10% each), Final Exam (30%).
2. Class participation will require the ability to reflect on the readings and a willingness to participate in role playing and active listening exercises.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The daily class experience will combine lecture, discussion, reality practice, and role playing centered on readings for the day and the papers assigned.

June 27: Pre-Class Assignment is due.

Lecture and Discussion: "Pastoral Expectations and Performance"
Reality Practice

June 28: First Essay is due

Lecture and Discussion: "What is Pastoral Care? What Skills are Required?"

Reality Practice

June 29: Lecture and Discussion: "Crisis Counseling"
Reality Practice

June 30: Second Essay is due
Lecture and Discussion: "Episodic and Life Cycle Issues in Counseling"

July 1: Third essay is due Reading discussed,
Lecture and Discussion: "Building a Care Support Team. Discussion of
Bob Horn's book, *How Will They Know If I'm Dead?*"

July 4: Fourth essay is due
Lecture and Discussion: The Theology of Pastoral Care from the Pulpit,
small group and community.

July 5: Summary of the week's learning and final exam.