PC 510 The Servant as Pastoral Care Giver

Stephen P. Stratton
Course: PC510 X1 (SP 2009)
Title: Servant As Pastoral Care-Giver
Hours: 3.00
Published: Yes, on 12/19/2008
Prerequisites: None

Department: Pastoral Care
Faculty: Dr. Stephen Stratton

Email: steve.stratton@asburyseminary.edu
Office: SH
SPO: 934

Meetings:
During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 Online via ExL.

Maximum Registration: 22

Catalog Description: Undertakes the task of forming pastoral care givers who focus on the value of persons and their relationships, who know the history of pastoral care, the major therapeutic models, and the application of biblical principles to pastoral care and counseling, with the result that they can identify basic human problems and respond appropriately through pastoral care and counseling.

Objectives:

ONLINE (VIRTUAL CLASSROOM) COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

PC 510 XL SERVANT AS PASTORAL CAREGIVER
(3 HOURS)
ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY ~ SPRING 2009

Professor: Stephen P. Stratton, Ph.D.
Email: steve.stratton@asburyseminary.edu
Phone: 859-858-2289
Fax: 859-858-2618

Important Note: This syllabus has been prepared for members of this course and others by permission. It is not intended for general distribution on the Internet. Permission to copy or distribution in whole or part must be obtained from the professor.

This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

There are no prerequisites for PC 510 XL.

WELCOME

Thanks for this opportunity to consider pastoral care together. As far as I’m concerned, pastoral care is the heart of ministry. One local pastor reported in a half-joking manner, “Pastors will seldom be asked to leave a church for mediocre preaching, but we won’t last long if we are poor in pastoral care.”

My name is Steve Stratton. I grew up in a home where I saw my father and mother participate in ministry together. My father was a UM pastor, and my mother served alongside him. They were effective care givers at home as well as in the pastorate. They knew how to
practice self-care and family care in the midst of effective parish care. That legacy set the stage for the leadership and care-giving that I have done in churches and para-church organizations. My formal training is in counseling psychology, and my research is in the integration of theology, psychology, and spiritual formation.

At the same time, I know you bring a great deal to the table. Doubtless, you have experiences involving the care of persons. Some of those have been positive, while others have been negative. Those experiences may be from within the life of the church, or they may be from your own private world. Wherever you have encountered, it has the potential for growth and formation. I hope that you will feel free to draw upon those experiences as we journey together.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will emphasize two related aspects of pastoral care. First, the ability of pastors to care for their own lives is foundational. Second, the ability to provide spiritual and whole-person care for other persons is no less essential and linked to the first. Traditionally, pastoral care is understood in the latter sense. In fact, many churches or para-church organizations do not recognize the former at all. That incomplete understanding is unfortunate, since the ability to care for others is partly based on competence in self-care. Therefore, this course begins with an emphasis on personal care. This theme shall be revisited throughout the semester in various forms. The bulk of the course will be devoted to developing in students the ability to think like a pastoral care-giver. The aim is to grow a person who communicates a pastoral presence, no matter what context. You will also learn about the unique role of a pastor and the basic kinds of personal and collective concerns that pastors typically encounter.

The following are the general goals of the class.

1. Develop and incorporate an understanding of pastoral care as a valid component of ministry, foundational to caring for others.
2. Identify personal issues that may potentially strengthen or harm your ministry.
3. Establish healthy personal boundaries and ethical behaviors.
4. Learn how to think and act as a pastor.
5. Integrate learning from other theological studies through reflection upon specific acts of ministry.
6. Understand some of the basic principles of listening, empathic responding and conversing as a pastor.
7. Consider a variety of topics from the perspective of pastoral care.
8. Learn how to function effectively as part of a ministry team with lay caregivers.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

**ExL Contact Information:**

For general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program, contact Dale Hale:

ExL Office@asburyseminary.edu  
Phone: (859) 858-2393

For technical support, library research support, library loans, and ExL media, contact Information Commons:

Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu  
Phone: (859) 858-2233  
Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

**Accessing Information Commons Materials**

1. General Questions:
   a. The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: [http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/hours.shtml](http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/hours.shtml)

2. Materials Requests:
   a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: [http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml](http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml)

   b. ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

   c. ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:
   a. ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:
   a. To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to [http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml](http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml) and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID#
is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0’s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

Copyright Policies
The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

ExL Media Copyright Information
No further reproduction and distribution of [media for this course] is permitted by transmission or any other means.

ONLINE DESCRIPTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES
The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into http://virtual.asburyseminary.edu you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course. The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The Course Information Center, in the center of your screen, contains many features to be used throughout the semester, including:
   a. Course News and Announcements, where I will post items important for the entire class;
   b. Syllabus, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;
   c. To Professor, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;
   d. Course Questions, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;
   e. Prayer Forum, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;
   f. Open Forum, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.
2. Modules, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.
3. Resources, a section located on the left side, provides links to items you will want to use often in the semester.

COURSE TEXTS


Steinborn, M. J. (1997). *The Lay Driven Church: How to Empower the People in Your Church to Share in the Task of Ministry.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock. (This book provides the secret to balancing care for others and care for self – growing caregivers from within the congregation.)

Townsend, L. (2006). *Suicide: Pastoral Responses.* Nashville: Abingdon Press. (This book provides a practical but essential discussion of care for those who are contemplating harm to themselves.)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Self-Reflection Exercise (40 points)**
   Each person is to construct a report (three pages, 1” margins, double space, 12 font) on his/her “stimulus value” based on the testing information from the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation – Behavior (FIRO-B) test. “Stimulus value” refers to your effect on other people.

   Your paper should reflect how you impact those around you. Remember to include your FIRO-B scores so the professor will know how to interpret your discussion. Your paper should be constructed so that you can show that you have reflected on the following questions: How do others perceive me? What are my most prominent interpersonal qualities? What are the areas in which others often misinterpret my interpersonal behavior? What might be my strengths and weaknesses as I work in pastoral care? You will be awarded up to 10 points for each question.

   These questions are best considered when you evaluate the interpretive sheets yourself and then check them out with a person or persons who know you. Let them be an objective opinion, especially when you believe the information does not fit. Of course, no psychological test is fool-proof or 100% perfect. Tests are tools and only tools. They are designed to help you discover a new perspective or reaffirm what you already know. If you have a concern, please email or call the professor.

   A laboratory fee ($10.00) will be charged for the test materials and the scoring of this measure. Please send this amount by the end of the first week of class to Amanda Sturdevant, Staff Assistant for the Department of Counseling and Pastoral Care, in Stanger 411. Her address is 204 N. Lexington Avenue, Wilmore KY 40390.

   Due Date: February 20 by 11:59 PM EST

2. **Carkhuff Quizzes (40 points; 20 points each):**
   Two quizzes will be given during the semester on the Carkhuff system. They will be posted during Module Four on Helping Skills (Carkhuff). The quiz will consist of rating pastoral counselor responses on the basis of the Carkhuff five-point scale. The first quiz you will take with your group. You will need to communicate with your group by email. The second quiz you will take on your own.

3. **Module Reflection Papers (80 points; 20 points each)**
   Four (4) personal reflections are required. The topic for the reflection may be drawn from your readings or experiences pertinent to pastoral care. Please send them directly to me at steve.stratton@asburyseminary.edu.

   a. Personal reflections are opportunities for you to expand your knowledge by putting into written form the thoughts, experiences, and questions regarding a particular subject. This is your opportunity to integrate the theory with personal experiences and or practice of ministry. It is an interactive engagement between the person writing the reflection and the professor. You should limit your reflections to topics directly related to ministry – particularly those areas covered in each module. Topics for your reflections can be derived from sources such as class material, reading, research, and personal experiences. Personal journaling, diary writing, or blowing off steam do not meet this requirement.

   b. Personalize your reflections by using first person personal pronouns (“I,” “me,” or “my”), and by being specific. Refrain from using “you” unless it is a direct quote, or it is addressing the professor. Focusing on the 5WH (who, what, when, where, why, and how) should help you to be specific rather than general. The reflections are for your own learning and should reflect your thoughts, feelings, actions etc. in relation to your ministry experiences. If you have questions, by all means, raise them, but also try to provide initial answers to your questions. Rather than asking too many of the professor, ask yourself growth oriented questions and try to answer them.

   c. No more than one personal reflection will be accepted in any given module.

   d. **Reflections on a module must be completed within two weeks of the completion of that module.**

   e. **The last day for receipt of reflection papers is the final class day of the semester. No reflection papers will be accepted during finals week.**

   f. **Length of the personal reflections: Two 12-font, double-spaced, 8 ½ x 11 pages of about 550-600 words will be written per reflection. The quality is more important than the number of words.**

   Due Date: Determined by Student (see d. and e. above)
4. Team Research Paper (80 points)

A team is a small group of four to six course colleagues mutually committed to researching a pastoral care topic and writing a composite report with specific recommendations for action. Working together with colleagues to achieve a common goal is an important skill in the life of a church. This will demand more of you than doing the job alone. Most academic work is individually produced; on the other hand, most work in the church is accomplished through cooperation with others. This course is also designed to help you learn how to work with others in cooperative program development through conceptualization, planning, research, writing, and execution of a specific pastoral care concern.

a. The paper should address some topic relevant to pastoral care. Use MLA or APA style for the paper. The completed team research paper should read as a seamless document as if written by one person, though contributed to by all team members. Please limit your paper to 15 double-pages of text.

b. Each team will choose a pastoral care issue not covered in class (or one not covered in any detail), but of team interest. Please confirm the topic and scope of the paper with the professor before starting your research process. The paper will begin with a focal problem or scenario. The first page will give a brief Vignette (short story) that situates the research project in the context of ministry. The last page will give a conclusion to the opening vignette. It should summarize practical steps based on findings from the research to meet the needs of the initial pastoral care concern. Each paper will be graded according to the following criteria:

- **The Opening Vignette** - Is relevant to research topic
- **Flows naturally out of the opening vignette**
- **Is well integrated by the team, as if written by one person.**
- **Must use at least three (3) Internet sources.**
- **Presents research findings from eight (8) scholarly sources.**
- **Is written in a well-constructed writing style with minimal errors in grammar and spelling.**
- **Represents contributions of all team members.**

- **The Body of Research** -
  - Is relevant to research topic
  - Presents a feasible pastoral problem.
  - Flows naturally out of the opening vignette
  - Is well integrated by the team, as if written by one person.
  - Must use at least three (3) Internet sources.
  - Presents research findings from eight (8) scholarly sources.
  - Is written in a well-constructed writing style with minimal errors in grammar and spelling.
  - Represents contributions of all team members.

- **The Closing Vignette** -
  - Makes practical use of the research in responding to the initial problem.
  - Concludes with practical steps or recommendations.
  - Brings closure to the team’s paper.

- **Bibliography** -
  - Works cited: proper citation for books, journals, internet

- **c. As much as this is a research paper, your paper should also be practical. Pastoral care is where both theory and practice meet. You should research the general causes for your problem (not so for natural disasters), statistics (if available), and research on what has been done in the past or at present to address the problem from a pastoral perspective. What works and what does not work? What areas of this type of ministry are missing in most churches? What could your local church do if faced with this problem? In other words, do not write about the theories only. Invest in how your local congregation could implement the theories and literally start a program to address the problem. To the best of your combined abilities, this paper should be applicable for all the members of the class. At the end of the semester you will make available all these projects to each member of the class.**

d. **When you complete your final draft, please post an individual email To the Professor describing the way your team worked together. Were you satisfied with the way this group functioned as a team working toward a mutual goal? Please describe the load/responsibilities that each carried. In your opinion, did each person contribute as he or she could? Were you satisfied with your own contributions?**

First Draft Due: April 10 by 11:59 PM EST (60 points)
Final Draft Due: May 8 by 11:59 PM EST (20 additional points)

5. Team Assignments (52 points)

Besides the team research paper, class members will complete various team assignments/discussions in each module. There are two major discussions to which you are required to post per module. The only exception being Module Five where there is only one discussion, but your Team Research Paper is due at the end of this module.

A listing of the teams and team members will be posted (See Team Assignments under Course Related section). Teams will be made up of a minimum of four and a maximum of six class members.

Please refer to the Module descriptions below and on the class web site. You will see the actual discussion “lines” to which you will post on the web site in each module. There is a potential for four points per discussion line that can be earned, totaling 52 points for the semester. Except for Module 5, there are two discussion lines per module. To earn four points, each class member will make at least two substantive posts for each discussion per module. (Of course, the hope is that you will enjoy the on-line conversations enough to participate more often.) Most discussions will be on the readings for each module but there are a few other related exercises or topics as well.
The grading for each discussion will use the following formula.

- If you fail to post in a discussion forum: -4 points.
- If you post but not the number of posts or substantive posts requested: +2 (for posting), but -2 (for not fulfilling assignment).
- If you post the minimum: +2 points.
- If you post and become engaged in the discussion with more than the required posts and add to the discussion: +3 or 4 points depending on quality of the postings.

Grading of a three (+3) or four (+4) posts will be graded subjectively. However, a four point post will show evidence of all of the following:

- integration with other readings from previous modules and/or other books from outside the course. (The best integration goes beyond a quote to support your line of thought. More points are given for evidence that you have reflected well and integrated ideas, insights, or concepts from previous learning with current discussion.)
- connection with previous personal experiences that will be of benefit to others. (Please remember that on-line venues cannot be kept completely confidential, so you will want to share authentically but appropriately.)

The professor will play a more active role in the discussions when they are posted for the whole class (Open Forum). There, he will actively read all posts, responding to stimulate or further the discussion as he sees fit for the whole class. In the team discussions, the professor will take less initiative to participate in the discussions. Do ask him into your group discussions as needed. If there are questions or if your group seems stuck in a rut, please do not hesitate to ask him to participate in your engagement of the material. As you can see, this approach to learning puts responsibility upon you as a graduate student. Each student is expected to take the initiative to further her or his own learning and to assist in the learning of classmates, all for the benefit of God’s people.

Regardless of where the discussion currently is taking place, the professor will check in discussions on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and attend to “nuts and bolts” issues more often. Remember that a telephone call will always get a quicker response than an email (859-858-2289).

Due Date: Each week – See Modules (52 total points)

MODULES

Module One (Week 1 & 2) “Self-Care” (Personal Foundation for Pastoral Care)
Readings:

Module Two (Weeks 3 & 4) “Other-Care” (Interpersonal Foundations for Pastoral Care)
Readings:
Stratton, S. P. (pre-publication draft). Living by Design: Uncovering the Love You Were Made For. (Two PDF chapter files)

Module Three (Week 5) “Strategic Pastoral Counseling and Caregiving”
Readings:

Module Four (Weeks 6, 7, & 8) “Helping Skills” (Pastoral Counseling Skills and Ratings)
Readings:

Module Five (Week 9 & 10) “Crisis Care and Counseling”
Readings:

Module Six (Week 11 & 12) “Pastoral Care with Clinical and Subclinical Mental Disorders”
Readings:

Module Seven (Week 13) “Inviting the Congregation into Pastoral Care giving”
Readings:
COURSE EXPECTATIONS

What you can expect of me
1. Prompt replies to questions and postings (i.e., usually generated within two days of the posting).
2. Interaction, participation, and direction in the ongoing discussions that will occur over the course of the semester.
3. Prompt feedback and assessment on assignments.
4. Occasional bloopers as we together navigate this mode of teaching & interacting.
5. My energy and excitement as we engage in studying and learning the material at hand.

What I expect of you
1. Participation in online discussion in your Team.
2. On time completion of assignments.
3. Your honest questions when you don’t understand the material or the instructions.
4. Your patience as we work together in this medium.
5. Your willingness to engage in issues you may find stretching and challenging.

GRADING
Your final grade will be computed from the point totals associated with the above class requirements. There are 292 total points possible. On the basis of this cumulative total, your final letter grade will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-95%</td>
<td>292-277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>94-92%</td>
<td>276-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>91-89%</td>
<td>268-260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88-85%</td>
<td>259-248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>84-82%</td>
<td>247-239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>81-80%</td>
<td>238-234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79-75%</td>
<td>233-219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>74-70%</td>
<td>218-204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>69-60%</td>
<td>245-211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
<td>210 points and less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Grading Criteria:
Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (see ATS 2005-06 Catalog):
- A= Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives
- B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
- C= Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
- D= Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
- F= Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

A plus (+) or minus (–) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C– = slightly below acceptable, etc.).

Late Work:
Every 24 hours late period will result in the loss of an entire letter grade for the assignment. For example, a project turned in on Tuesday morning after a Monday noon due date will be dropped 1 letter grade (A to B) for that assignment whereas a project turned in on Tuesday afternoon will be dropped 2 letter grades for that assignment. The professor also reserves the right to return late work without comments or feedback.

Incomplete Work:
“A grade of ‘I’ denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of the course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as ‘F.’” (See ATS 2006-08 Catalog)