CO 660 Crisis Counseling: Theory and Application

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Asbury Theological Seminary
A Syllabus and general Guide for
Crisis Counseling: Theories and Application
CS660
Spring 2002

Instructor: Burrell Dinkins, Th.D.

I Course Description
This course is based on the premise that the concept of crisis is an essential aspect of any structured understanding of human growth and development. Students will direct their attention to episodes on people’s lives where the stakes are very high. Theoretical orientation to crisis and clinical intervention techniques for various types of crises will be taught and practiced. Faith issues during crisis events will be examined.

II General Goals: The instructor plans to:
1. acquaint students with the history, techniques and dynamics of crisis counseling;
2. assist students in the development of a theory of crisis;
3. enable students in the discovery of contemporary crisis issues;
4. prepare students to become effective crisis interveners;
5. help students identify crisis issues that have the potential for personal growth.

III Objectives of the Course
Framing Objectives: to cultivate the practice of thinking like a pastor/counselor during times of assisting persons and communities experiencing crisis.

Specific Objectives: after completing the course students should be able to:

A. Explain in writing:
   1. An understanding of four major crisis theories;
   2. an intervention plan for a specific kind of crisis;
   3. a theological reflection on a crisis case.

B. Express orally via team role play an integration of theory and practice of crisis intervention.

C. Present in class theoretical information about the nature if a crisis portrayed through the role-play, and respond to questions from the class.

IV Prerequisites for the Course
Before entering this course students must have successfully completed PM 608 The Servant As Pastoral Care Giver.
V  Time: The class will meet Tuesdays from 2:00pm – 4:45pm

VI  Course Requirements:

A. Participants will develop a reading list related to the theme or topic of the day. Two hours of reading and writing per one hour in class required of students. Most of the reading must be completed before classes start. A collateral reading card will be distributed the first day of class for students to record the pages read. A minimum of 1500 pages is required of students.

B. Letters to the Professor:

Definition:
Letters to the professor are opportunities for students to expand their knowledge by putting into written form the thoughts, experiences and questions related to crises. They are an interactive engagement between the person writing the reflection and the subject, or the topic that the writer wants to share with the professor. A total of five letters are required.

Subject:
The reflections are to be limited to the subjects directly related to crisis counseling. These subjects include: class presentations, reading in textbooks, and research; TV; films; newspapers; personal experiences in providing or receiving crisis care and counseling; personal thoughts and feelings about the pastoral ministry; questions to oneself or to the instructor. Faith issues related to crises should be included where appropriate. The subject does not include personal journalizing, dairy writing or blowing off steam.

Methodology:
1. Use personal pronouns: When referring to yourself use, I, me, my, in all cases and never use you unless it is a direct quote, or it is addressed to the instructor. Claim your own experience instead of legitimizing it through projection onto another person.

2. Avoid words like: must, should, need to, ought to, have to or other moral imperatives that sound “preachy.” This is parental language that demands compliance. Save those words for emergencies.

3. Avoid generalizations or analyzing words and phrases such as: “the truth is,” “in reality,” “all people,” “everyone,” “people say,” “research says,” and “you know.” Just tell the story, or ask the question.

4. Be as specific as possible. Use the journalistic format of who, what, when, where, and how.
5. Write for your own learning. Avoid trying to impress the professor as the primary goal of writing. Be yourself by writing boldly. Demonstrate the struggle that comes from discovering new information, ideas and concepts. Ask yourself good growth oriented questions.

Length of the reflection: Two no. 12 font size 10x12 pages will be written per reflection. The quality of the reflection is more important than the number of words.

Grading: Each reflection will be graded by the standards established in the methodology given above. Each reflection is worth four points of the total grade for the course.

Due Dates: Tuesdays; February 19; March 12, 26; April 9, May 2,3. Late papers will be reduced one grade point for each past due day.

C. Team Research and Class Crisis Counseling Session: Students will be divided into teams of two-three persons to research specific kinds of crisis. Each team will have an opportunity to demonstrate both theory and practice through the use of role-play, or actual counseling. Learnings from research and the application of techniques of crisis intervention will be demonstrated and explained in a class dialogue with the instructor. A 6-8 page paper will be required by each individual team member on the subject researched and presented in class. This paper is due no later than one week after classes are over.

Grading System:
Numerical grades will be assigned to each item in the evaluation process. A letter grade, based upon the accumulation of numerical points will be sent to the registrar at the end of the semester. The following percentages will be used in determining the numerical and the letter grade.

20% Letters to the Professor (5 – two page papers)
30% Final Exam
20% Counseling role-play and class dialogical discussion
20% Individual 6-8 page term paper on subject selected for role-play
10% Reading Report due at final exam

VII Units of Study
A. A Framework for Crisis Theory: (Read: ch. 1, Crisis Intervention Strategies)
   1. developmental crisis
   2. Situational crisis
   3. Existential crisis

B. Six Step Intervention Strategies: (Read: ch. 2, Crisis Intervention Strategies)
   1. Defining the Problem
   2. Ensuring Client Safety
   3. Providing Support
   4. Examining Alternatives
5. Making Plans
6. Obtaining Commitment

C. Crisis Case Handling: (Read: ch. 3, Crisis Intervention Strategies)

D. Crisis cases through role-play, class discussions and case studies

E. Helping traumatized families

F. Developing a theology of crisis

G. Ethical issues in crisis intervention

VIII Office Hours and Contact Information
My “drop in” office hours will be given the first day of class.

IX. Texts
A. Required Reading:
   (Read one chapter at a time to page 182, then skip to page 553 and read to the end of
   the book. The chapters on specific kinds of crises are important, but read only the
   ones of most interest to you.)

   Herman, Judith Lewis. Trauma and Recovery.
   (This is an especially important book for working with women in crisis.)

   Janoff-Bulman, Ronnie. Shattered Assumptions.
   (Read this book first. You will need it to discuss the film shown during the first days
   of class. It will indirectly help you with your theological reflections and your
   preaching/teaching.)

   Switzer, David S. The Minister As Crisis Counselor.
   (get ready to do some theological reflection before your exam and before you are
   required to do it in class.)

B. Recommended Reading:
   Everstein and Everstein. The Trauma Response.
Crisis Counseling

A preliminary Bibliography:
(Books in **Bold Italic** are at ATS Florida, books in regular type are at ATS Wimore)


_Bane, Donald J. Death and Ministry..., Seabury, 1975._


_Beuoy, Herbert. The Heart of a Healthy Body, Upper Room, 1988._


_Clemons, J. What Does the Bible Say About Suicide, Fortress, 1989._

_Davidson, G. Living With Dying, Augsburg, 1984._


Janoff-Bulman, Ronnie. *Shattered Assumptions*.


Keller, J. *Alcohol, A Family Affair*.


*Kennedy, E.* *Crisis Counseling*, Continuum, 1981.


*Mitchell, K.* *All Our Losses, All Our Griefs*, Westminster, 1983.


*Oates, W.* *Pastoral Care and Counseling in Grief and Separation*, Fortress, 1976.


