PC 510 The Servant as Pastoral Care Giver

Stuart L. Palmer
Welcome to this class on Pastoral Care Giving

I would like to welcome you to this course. I look forward to getting to know you and working with you in the process of being more like Christ in the way we care for others. It is a high honor and awesome responsibility to care for those who are hurting, angry, spiritually confused, lonely and tired. But, it also is a challenge that will stretch us and sometimes radically change us. As we begin this course together, my hope and prayer is that you will grow as a person, and you will be further empowered and strengthened in sharing life with others.

Office Hours

I will be online Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1-3pm (EST) to respond to your issues, comments, etc. I will inform you of any changes to this arrangement. The first day for class is February 10, 2003. If you need to contact me with a personal matter please use my office e-mail (listed above).

Course Procedures

While I am sure that each of you are aware of the intended use of each of the items which appear in the PC 510XL folder, let me summarize the manner in which I intend to use them this semester:

The Course Center will contain a copy of the syllabus as well as all class modules and course materials.
The PC 510X Office is for private correspondence between you and me. All written class assignments are sent to The Office.

The Teams Icon is for team listings and for engaging in team discussions. You will work with team members under this icon to complete team assignments before sending them to The Office.

The Archives Center will be used for storing conversations that have already taken place during the semester. This keeps the Discussion Center from becoming too unmanageable.

The Chat Center is intended primarily for real-time interaction among students. You can get together with other members to study, ask questions, or to explore topics. None of the conversations carried on in this location are ever saved.

The Resource Center provides access to a number of specific tools available to all ExL students. These include access to the B. L. Fisher Library, the Services in Estes Chapel, ExL Updates, Guidelines for Success, Helpful Hints, and Interesting Links. I encourage you to take advantage of all these resources, and particularly to utilize the chapel access in order to connect with the seminary’s on-campus opportunities for spiritual growth.

If you need help from the Asbury staff:

Address emails concerning specific questions about using ExL to ExL Coach (type ExL Coach or exl_coach@asburyseminary.edu in the "To" address line of a new email message). This will send the message to Amy Jo Adams in the ExL office. Call her at 859-858-2276.

Address emails concerning the whole program to ExL Director (type ExL Director or exl_director@asburyseminary.edu in the address line). This will send the message to Kevin Osborn. Call him at 859-858-2191.

Address emails concerning computer related questions to ExL Support (type ExL Support or exl_support@asburyseminary.edu in the address line). This will send the message to Andy Adams. Call him at 859-858-2035.

Library Materials and Reference Assistance

All ExL students are encouraged to make use of a local library; however, if such services are unavailable or inadequate, ExL students may also obtain library books and journal articles through the mail from Asbury Theological Seminary’s B.L. Fisher Library.

All requests for books and journal articles should be e-mailed to the ExL Reference Librarian, Hannah Kirsch (hannah_kirsch@asburyseminary.edu).
Hannah is available to assist ExL students with reference requests such as how to find citations for books and article, how to use the various online databases available to ExL students, or how to begin looking for information on a specific topic. Hannah may be reached by phone at 859-858-2189.

Interlibrary Loan information is also available from Dot James. You may email Dot at dorothy_james@asburyseminary.edu.

**Course Description**

"Besides seeing other persons for who they really are, I must see myself as I am. I need to see what I am doing and whether what I am doing helps or hinders the growth of others." Mayeroff

We will be investigating ministry and specifically pastoral care ministry. We will explore this aspect of ministry from three different perspectives:

**Perspective One:** Pastoral self-care as foundational for ministry success.

**Perspective Two:** Pastoral care and counseling involves being, thinking, and relating as a Christian person in caring for others.

**Perspective Three:** Pastoral care ministry involves developing and implementing a vision for lay participation in care.

Each of these perspectives will be woven together throughout the class. A great deal of our time will focus on our personhood as a pastoral care giver and conveying a pastoral presence. Also, we will explore various situations that typically a pastoral care giver encounters.

**Course Objectives**

**Framing Objective:** To help you cultivate the habit of being, thinking and relating like a pastoral person in interactions with people during times of caring as an integral part and extension of the ministry of the community of faith.

**Specific Objectives:** Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Express an understanding of the historical, biblical, theological and theoretical foundations for pastoral care and counseling.

2. Articulate a sound rationale for seeing self-care as foundational to providing pastoral care.
3. Learn and practice some basic communication skills necessary for engaging in a pastoral dialogue.

4. Communicate a vision for enabling laity involvement in congregational care ministries.

5. Critically reflect on pastoral care and counseling issues.

6. Develop plans for care and counseling from specific case examples.

7. Participate in a team research project and present theological reflection and recommendations for actions to a pastoral care concern.

8. Use multiple resources for discovering information about caring ministry, especially the World Wide Web.

9. Give critical, yet caring, comments on the ideas of class colleagues.

Prerequisites for PC 510XL

Upon admission to the seminary no prerequisites for PC 510XL are required. This course is foundational for further classes in pastoral care and counseling.

Assignments

A. Reading:

1. You are required to read a minimum of 1500 pages from the Required Book Readings (listed below) and the Required Reserved Articles and Handout Readings (listed below). There are more than 1500 pages in the required readings section of this syllabus. You may decide which required readings to do, but 1500 pages is the minimal requirement. Note: Readings associated with doing the Team Research Paper are NOT included in required reading totals.

2. You will be asked to document the titles of books and articles read and the number of pages. It is not necessary to keep clock time of reading.

1. Required Books:


Steinbron, Melvin J. (1997) The Lay-Driven Church: How to Empower the People in Your Church to Share the Task of Ministry. Regal: Ventura, CA


2. **Required Articles and Handouts:**

**NOTE:** These required articles and handouts are on Electronic Reserve. To Access Electronic Reserve:

1) Open First Class ATS Email  
2) Double Click on "Intranet"  
3) Double Click on "Resources"  
4) Double Click on "Online Reserves"  
5) Double Click on "Professor" wanted [Palmer]  
6) Double Click on "Course #" [PC 510 ExL]  
7) Double Click on "Article" wanted

Benner & Palmer, “Psychotherapy and Christian Faith”

Green, “Monism and the Nature of Humans in Scripture”

Benner, “The Boundaries of the Soul”


Rhode, “Dealing with Conflict and Confrontation”


Dinkins & Losoncy, “Grief” “Seasons of Our Grief”

Palmer, “Theological Response to the Problem of Suffering and Pain”
Switzer, The Minister as Crisis Counselor (Chaps 1-3)

Steinbron, “Take This Path: It Leads To A Lay Pastoral Care Ministry”

Zwart, Palmer, Strawn, Milliron & Brown, “The Impact of Lay Pastoral Telecare on the Spiritual Well-Being of Church Attenders”

“Mentors, Marriage”

“Samaria Premarital Covenant Materials”

“Boundaries” booklet

“Boundaries for Women Clergy”

“Sex in the Parish”

“Confidentiality Letter”

“A Psychiatrist’s View of Transference and Counter-transference in the Pastoral Relationship”

Due Date: Reading report is due on May 22nd by 5:00pm (EST). Reading report is to be sent to the Office Icon. Reading reports more than 1 day past due date will be graded lower for each day overdue.

B. Letters to the Professor:

1. Definition: Letters to the Professor are opportunities for you to expand your knowledge by putting into written form the thoughts, experiences and questions regarding a particular subject. There is an interactive engagement between the person writing the reflection and the professor.

2. Subjects: The letters are to be limited to the subjects directly related to pastoral care and counseling. These subjects include: class presentations; readings in textbooks and research; personal experiences in providing or receiving care and counseling; personal thoughts and feelings about the pastoral ministry; questions to oneself or to the instructor. The subjects do not include personal journaling, diary writing or blowing off steam.

Methodology:
   a. Use personal pronouns: Referring to yourself as the writer use I, me or my, in all cases and avoid using 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.

b. 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 these words for emergencies.

c. 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 questions.

d. Write as specifically as possible. Use the journalistic format of who, what, when, where, and how.

e. 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 rather than asking the professor too many questions. Concerns about your own care and counseling skills are especially important in these letters.

f. Write regularly. The letters to the professor are investments in your education. Give them time, thought and energy throughout the semester.

g. Length of the reflection letters should be approximately 500-600 words.

Grading: Each of the four letters will be graded by the standards established in the methodology given above. Letters will be assigned a numerical grade of 1-5 for each of the four papers with a maximum total of 20 points.

**Due Dates:** Letters are due on February 28, March 28, April 18, and May 9 by 5:00pm (EST). No letters will be accepted after May 9, 2003 at 5:00pm (EST). **Letters are to be sent to the Office Icon.** Letters over 1 day past due date will be graded lower for each day overdue.

**C. Team Research Paper:**

1. Definition: A team is a small group of three to four 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 the church. This may 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 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.

Methodology: Each team will choose a pastoral care issue not covered in class, but of mutual interest to all members of the team, from the suggested list provided in class for you. 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 summary of findings from the research and recommendations for action to meet the needs of the initial pastoral care concern. Teams are required to do an internet search on the topic chosen for research. Each paper will be graded according to the following criteria:

The Opening Vignette -
Is relevant to research topic
Presents a feasible pastoral problem.

The Body of Research -
Flows naturally out of the opening vignette
Is well integrated by the team, as if written by one person.
Must use the Internet as a resource (explicitly stated in paper).
Is thoroughly addressed by the team with significant theological reflection.
Is written in a well-constructed writing style with minimal errors throughout.

The Closing Vignette -
Makes practical use of the research in responding to the initial problem.
Brings closure to the team’s paper.

Note: Normally all team members will receive the same grade-- however grades may vary according to confidential team evaluation reports.

Due Date: Team Research Paper is due on April 25th at 5:00pm (EST).
Team Research Papers are to be sent to the Office Icon. Team research papers over 1 day past the due date will be graded lower for each day overdue.

D. Team Case Study Responses:

Definition: Case studies are opportunities for your team to assess the situation presented and to formulate a pastoral response or a pastoral approach to address the concern.

Methodology:
Three case study scenarios will be given to each research team. These are designed to present common challenges faced by those in ministry.
Each team should meet to discuss the case study and then formulate a written team response. Explore your varying perspectives and approaches then attempt to develop an agreed upon way of thinking and responding. The discussion and formulated response for each case should take no more than 1 ½ hours per case. All team member names should appear on the case study response.

THIS IS NOT A RESEARCH PAPER! These responses are based on your team reflections and formulations. The focus needs to be a pastoral response to the situation presented.

Length of case study responses should be approximately 500-600 words. The quality of reflection and formulated response is more important than the number of words.

Grading: Each team case study response will be assigned a numerical grade of 1-5 based on standards established in methodology given above.

Due Dates: Case Study Responses are linked to certain Modules throughout the semester. Students will be informed of the due dates at the beginning of the appropriate Module. Case Study Responses are to be sent to the Office Icon. Case Study Responses over 1 day past the due date will be graded lower for each day overdue

E. Class Participation:

Students in PC 510XL are expected to actively engage in class discussion and skill training exercises. Students will be evaluated on the basis of both degree and the quality of participation.

Evaluation

Numerical grades will be assigned to each item involved 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. No grades will be posted or distributed by the instructor. The following percentages are used for determining the letter grade.

- Reading: 10%
- Letters to the Professor: 20% (four letters)
- Team Research Paper: 35%
Case Study Responses: 15% (three responses)

Class Participation: 20%

Grade ranges.

A = 93+  C+ = 77  D- = 60
A- = 90  C = 74  F = below 60
B+ = 87  C- = 70
B = 84  D+ = 67
B- = 80  D = 64

Incomplete grades. An incomplete will be given only in the case of severe illness or other extreme circumstances. Please be aware that the final decision on receiving permission for an incomplete grade belongs to the Dean of the School of Theology.

Course Evaluations: I welcome your observations on how well this course is proceeding. When necessary, we will make mid-course corrections to get as much benefit from the class as possible. If you do not understand something please ask. There will be a formal opportunity for you to confidentially evaluate the course and me at the end of the semester. I value your participation in the improvements to my teaching and the subject matter taught. Please take this request seriously and approach the opportunity prayerfully and honestly.

Course Schedule*

The course will unfold by the use of various modules. This course is composed of 12 modules that contain a variety of activities, readings, discussions and lectures. It is strongly encouraged that you read ahead so you can fully participate in class process and benefit from each module.

Introductions/Orientation: (Feb 10-Feb 16)
Read:
Headley, Achieving Balance in Ministry
Frederic, The Damnation of Theron Ware

Module 1: (Feb 17- Feb 23)
Pastoral Self-Care
Read: (Continue Reading...)
Headley, *Achieving Balance in Ministry*
Frederic, *The Damnation of Theron Ware*

**Module 2: (Feb 24- Mar 2)**
*Being and Thinking As A Pastoral Person*

**Module 3: (Mar 3- Mar 9)**
*Bible From a Pastoral Care Perspective*
Case Study # 1
Read:
Benner & Palmer, "Psychotherapy and Christian Faith"

**Module 4: (Mar 10- Mar 16)**
*Personhood and Doctrine of Trinity*
Read:
Green, "Monism and the Nature of Humans in Scripture"
Benner, "The Boundaries of the Soul"

**Module 5: (Mar 17- Mar 23)**
*Defining Pastoral Care and Counseling*
Read:
Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Chaps. 1-3)

**Module 6: (Mar 24- Mar 30)**
*Healing and Helping Dialogue*
Read:
Nichols, *The Lost Art of Listening*
Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Chaps. 4-5)

**Skill Practice: (March 31- April 6)**
*Attending and Listening*

**READING WEEK -- (April 7-April 13)**
*NO CLASS*

**Module 7: (April 14 - April 20)**
*Relating As Pastor in Church Family*
Read:
Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works*
Rhode, "Dealing with Conflict and Confrontation"

**Module 8: (April 21- April 27)**
**Relating As Pastor to Dying, Death and Grief**
Case Study # 2
Read:
Dinkins & Losoncy, "Grief"
Kuenning, *Helping People Through Grief*
"Seasons of Our Grief"

**Module 9: (April 28- May 4)**
**Relating As Pastor with Those Struggling with Depression and/or Crises**
Skill Practice: Grief and Suicidal Threat

**Module 10: (May 5-May 11)**
**Lay Care Ministry**
Case Study # 3
Read:
Steinbron, *The Lay-Driven Church*
Zwart, Palmer, Strawn, Milliron & Brown, "The Impact of Lay Pastoral Telecare on the Spiritual Well-Being of Church Attenders"

**Module 11: (May 12- May 18)**
**Relating As Pastor in Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling**

**Module 12: (May 19- May 22)**
**Relating As Pastor with Appropriate Boundaries**
Read:
"Boundaries" booklet
"Boundaries for Women Clergy"
"Sex in the Parish"
"Confidentiality Letter"
"A Psychiatrist's View of Transference and Counter-transference in the Pastoral Relationship"

* The instructor reserves the right to change this schedule of class topics and assignments any time during the semester.