

MS 2K03 Pastoral Care in the Church

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Pastoral care involves shaping human values, cultivating authentic spiritual community and alleviating human suffering. Pastoral theologian C.W. Brister suggests that such work requires “theological wisdom, moral clarity and personal courage.” The search for such wisdom, clarity and courage will guide the aims of this course. At the core of this course is an effort to provide a theological framework for the practice of pastoral care in the context of the church. The core theological themes of hope, compassion and communion will construct the foundation for our understanding of pastoral care in the church. Contemporary issues of pastoral care and participation in suffering will be explored carefully in an effort to understand the complexity and the roots of human anguish. A guiding premise for the course is that theological insight ought to stimulate authentic moral vision which results in compassionate participation in the *missio Dei* (mission of God). The practices of pastoral care in a variety of ministry contexts will be explored in depth. Participants will be invited to explore their own framework for moral vision, to articulate a vision of pastoral care for their own ministry context, and to prepare themselves for a deeper participation in the suffering of others as agents of hope in a broken world.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

KNOWING

1. To explore the foundational theological themes of compassion, hope and communion as a theological framework for pastoral care.
2. To acquire a heightened understanding of the contours of personal and communal pastoral care in a variety of ministry contexts.
3. To widen the horizons of pastoral concern to include the social dimensions of pastoral care.

BEING

4. To grow in compassion and engagement in the alleviation of human anguish.
5. To gain confidence for one’s own capacity for pastoral intervention in crisis situations.

DOING

6. To formulate a paradigm for sustained pastoral engagement in the suffering of others.
7. To practice intervention strategies in situations of pastoral care in the church.
8. To organize a framework for pastoral care ministry in a church or community-based ministry.

COURSE TEXTS:

Required Texts:

Capps, Donald

Agents of Hope: A Pastoral Psychology. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Doehring, Carrie

The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

Nouwen, Henri J.M.; McNeill, Donald P.; Morrison, Douglas A.
Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

Wolterstorff, Nicolas
Lament for a Son. Grand Rapids, Michigan; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987.

Nouwen, Henri J.M.
Can You Drink the Cup? Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1996.

Recommended Texts:

Grenz, Stanley J.
Created for Community. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

Lester, Andrew D.
Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

McBride, J. LeBron
Spiritual Crisis: Surviving Trauma to the Soul. New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, 1998.

PROFESSOR:

Availability: Dr. Mutter will be available for one-on-one consultation after class and during breaks on each of the days when class is scheduled. Otherwise, students may contact him at kfmutter @ gmail.com.

Biography: Dr. Kelvin Mutter is a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist (OAMFT/AAMFT), a Pastoral Counselling Specialist (CAPPE) and an Adjunct Professor at McMaster Divinity College. Dr. Mutter's ministry experience includes four years as a church planter, pastoral leadership of a large village church, several interim ministries and as a lay leader in the church he currently attends. Dr. Mutter is married and has three adult children.

COURSE OUTLINE:

"What do you say to someone who is suffering? Some people are gifted with words of wisdom. For such, one is profoundly grateful. There were many such for us. But not all are gifted in that way. Some blurted out strange, inept things. That's OK too. Your words don't have to be wise. The heart that speaks is heard more than the words spoken. And if you can't think of anything at all to say, just say, 'I can't think of anything to say. But I want you to know that we are with you in your grief.'" - Nicolas Wolterstorff, *Lament for a Son*, p. 34

Date	Class Topic / Discussion	Assigned Readings
Sept 8, 2011	Course Introduction Themes and Metaphors of Pastoral Care	
Sept 15, 2011	Foundational Skills of Pastoral Care	Doehring - Intro, Ch. 1
Sept 22, 2011	Theology and Psychology of Hope Reading Groups - Capps	Capps - Chs. 1,2,3
Sept 29, 2011	Theology and Ministry of Compassion The Ministry of Availability	Nouwen et al. – Chs. 1,2 Book Review # 1 is due

Date	Class Topic / Discussion	Assigned Readings
Oct 6, 2011	"The Root of Pastoral Care" Spirituality for Pastoral Care	Nouwen et al. – Chs. 3,4 Doehring – Ch 3 Poem # 1 is due
Oct 13, 2011	Chapel and Presentations	
Oct 20, 2011	Communion and Pastoral Care Creating a Community of Care	Doehring – Ch. 6
Oct 27, 2011	Crisis of Expectation and Experience Reading Groups – Nouwen et.al.	Nouwen et al. – Chs. 5,6
Nov 3, 2011	The Ministry of Healing Suffering and Hope	Doehring – Chs. 4,5 Book Review # 2 is due
Nov 10, 2011	Pastoral Care in Tragedy, Grief and Loss Reading Groups - Doehring	Doehring – Ch. 7
Nov 17, 2011	Leadership and Pastoral Care Chapel: Can You Drink the Cup?	Nouwen – Drink the Cup
Nov 24, 2011	Spiritual Crisis and Soul Trauma Pastoral Care in Illness	Capps – Chs. 4,5 Poem # 2 is due
Dec 1, 2011	Chapel and Presentations	FINAL ESSAY is due

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course design is collegial and interactive. Participants are expected to engage in meaningful discussions in group sessions, to interact in the various opportunities of the course, and to complete all reading, written and participatory assignments.

1. READING AND FACILITATION SUMMARY SHEETS (20 marks) – The course will be divided into reading groups. The assigned readings for the week are structured to support the theme of the course lectures. Students will be evaluated on the level of their participation in the reading groups (10 marks) and will take turns facilitating the group discussions (10 marks). Sign up sheet for facilitation will be circulated in the first class.

Facilitation Summary Sheets – On the days that students facilitate discussion a facilitation discussion sheet is required. One of these must be submitted by each student during the term. The discussion facilitation sheet (two pages) should include the following elements:

- a. Summary of at least five key concepts in the assigned readings for the week – terms, definitions, support for core themes of the course, etc.
- b. Three or four key discussion questions drawn from the reading.

10 marks- quality of reading and group participation

10 marks - facilitation

2. TEXTBOOK REVIEWS: (15 marks each) 30 marks

The book reviews are intended to draw out the questions of the participants as they engage the theme of this course. Some general guidelines for the book reviews are:

- a. Summarize the way this book helps you to frame an understanding of the ministry of pastoral care.
- b. Explore the questions that this book raises for you; what are the points of engagement for you?

- c. What words and ideas resonate with you? Why?
- d. Theological reflection – how does this work mature your own theological framework for pastoral care?

Book Review # 1

Due: Sept 29, 2011

Write a response of five pages to *Agents of Hope* by Donald Capps.

Book Review # 2

Due: Nov 3, 2011

Write a response of five pages to *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life* by Nouwen, McNeill and Morrison.

3. POEMS: (5 marks each) 10 marks

**Due Dates: Oct 6, 2011
& Nov 24, 2011**

Two chapel times are scheduled during the course. Participants will be invited to present a theo-poetic poem in each of these integrative sessions. Criteria used to mark these assignments are:

- a. personal integration
- b. biblical/theological congruity
- c. creativity
- d. engagement of core themes in the course
- e. moral vision

4. FINAL ESSAY: 15 pages 40 marks

Due: Dec 1, 2011

Participants are invited to write a 15-page essay, which summarizes your own reflections on the ministry of pastoral care. It is expected that you will extensively use the course textbooks and at least five other sources for this essay.

Choose one of these main themes for your essay:

1. Cultivating a Caring Community
2. Crisis Intervention in Pastoral Care
3. Spirituality for Pastoral Care
4. Postmodern Issues in Pastoral Care
5. Strategies for Pastoral Care in the Church
6. Pastoral Care and the Life Cycle
7. Other topics – by permission

The essays will be graded with the following criteria in mind:

- *interaction with primary textbooks
- *theological reflection
- *creativity and writing style
- *intellectual and spiritual honesty
- *ministry integration
- *use of other resource

COURSE ADMINISTRATION:

Late Papers: Late papers will be docked 1% each late day. (Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances such as extended illness, etc.)

Spacing: All assignments are to be double-spaced.

Method of Submission: All assignments are to be submitted electronically (MSWord or RTF format) by the end of office hours on the assigned due date (5 p.m.).

College Style for Submission of Written Work: All written work—unless informed otherwise by the professor—is to be submitted in accordance with the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses*, available on the McMaster Divinity College web-site.

Statement On Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the McMaster University Academic Integrity Policy - <http://www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php>.

Gender Inclusive Language: McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Textbook Availability: READ ON Bookstore: Textbooks are available from READ ON Bookstore, Room 218 at MacDiv. Books may also be ordered from other sources such as READ ON Bookstore, 100 – 304 The East Mall, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2; Phone: 416-622-2934; Fax: 416-622-2308; Email: books@readon.ca