

CL 670

Introduction to

Pastoral Care

United Theological Seminary  
Spring 2011

Tuesday 1:30 – 4:45  
Classroom “E”

## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Pastoral care is one of the central ministries of the whole church involving both lay and clergy. In this course we will explore what it means to create communities of care. Through readings, lectures, discussions, case presentations, and verbatim reports we will focus on the actual practices of caring and on the theologies and theories of the field. Students will become familiar with the shape of contemporary care giving as they develop important skills, attitudes and knowledge to empower ministries of caring.

## II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. Students will learn what it means to be attentive to the theological interpretation of human experience, making use of ecclesiastical resources for ministry. (Scripture, theology, shared story, prayer and ritual)
- B. Students will understand why the whole faith community is responsible for care and ministry and the pastoral role as equipping the people to form the community for mutual care giving and the promotion of healing and health.
- C. Students will seek to develop a regimen of self care that is intrinsic to the process of care giving, and to encourage attentiveness to appropriate professional boundaries and knowledge of one’s own limits.
- D. Students will learn how to integrate the contribution of the social sciences in understanding human health and brokenness, on both the individual and systemic level; and learn how to network with mental health, medical and social care professionals.

## III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Attendance at class and completion of readings for each class meeting as well as participation in class discussions and dialogues. (**More than two unexcused absences will constitute failure for the course.**)
- B. Completion of all written assignments on time following stipulated directions with respect to form and content. Written assignments include:
  1. A *verbatim of a ministry event* preferably one you are currently involved in or something fairly recent. (**A special sheet noting the**

**shape, form, intent and analysis will be a separate handout.)**

2. A ***book review*** of a recommended book from a pastoral care reading list or a book of your choice! (**That list will be noted after the “required” books for the course.**)

**(\*\*) Book review should be NO LONGER than five pages double spaced.**

3. An analysis of Gary Gunderson’s book, *Deeply Woven Roots*. The analysis should include response to the following questions.
- What do you believe is the primary concern in Gunderson’s book as it relates to ministry?
  - Provide a ‘brief’ description of the eight “strengths” that Gunderson believes are markers of a faith community.
  - Which of the eight strengths do feel you might be best at assisting a faith community in its growth and why? Which of the eight strengths noted would give you the most problems and why.
  - What is your overall evaluation of his work with regard to your own understanding of community? Did his book change or challenge your views and in what way?

**Report no longer than 5 pages double spaced**

4. A final paper that features your own developing understanding of care giving within the context of your particular faith community. The paper might address the following questions by way of guiding your thoughts for this paper.
- provide your own emerging understanding of pastoral theology and it’s implications for care giving.
  - What specific resources from your particular faith tradition are most important in providing care?
  - What aspects of care giving appeal to you most and why?
  - What aspects of care giving are of concern to you and why?
  - How will provide ‘self care’ in the midst of your ministry?

**Final Paper no longer than 10 pages double spaced.**

#### **IV. COURSE TEXTS**

Gerkin, Charles. *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Gunderson, Gary. *Deeply Woven Roots*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Doehring, Carrie. *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach*.

Westminister/John Knox Press.

Kujawa-Holbrook and Montagno (eds) *Injustice and the Care of Souls: Taking Oppression Seriously in Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press

**Recommended Books: Select ONE for review.**

- Ramshaw, Elaine. *Ritual and Pastoral Care*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Poling, James. *Deliver Us From Evil: Resisting Racial and Gender Oppression*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Patton, John. *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?* Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Lester, Andrew. *Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox.
- Culbertson, Philip. *Caring for God's People*. Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress.
- Albers, Robert. *Shame: A Faith Perspective*. New York: Haworth Press.

## V. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY (Separate Handout)

## VI. COURSE SCHEDULE

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|-------------|--|
| February 8  | Introduction to the course syllabus, expectations, questions and concerns. Setting the climate for the class and the context for providing care in the faith community. Discussion and format of the verbatim as a learning tool in ministry.  |
| February 15 | Foundations and maxims of pastoral theology and care giving. The historical foundations for care giving and their applicability for care in the contemporary context.<br><b>Required Reading:</b><br>Gerkin, Preface and chapters 1 - 4<br>Doehring, Introduction  |
| February 22 | The identity of the care-giver with regard to the 'image' of one who provides care in a faith community.<br><b>Required Reading:</b><br>Gerkin, chapter 5<br>Doehring, chapters 1 and 2  |
| March 1     | The ministry of Jesus and the 'art' of care giving to those who are in need.<br><b>Required Reading:</b><br>Doehring, chapters 3 and 4<br>Biblical texts:<br>Mark 10:17-31<br>Matthew 12:1-14<br>Luke 7: 36-50<br>John 9:1-12<br>(Texts will be discussed in small groups and plenary reports from Each group will be given to the class as a whole) |
| March 8     | The problem of 'care giving' in the midst of human suffering. The  |

intersection of systematic and pastoral theology in the crisis events and experiences of people within the faith community.

**Required reading:** Doehring, chapter 7

**DUE:** **Review of the book of your choice.**

March 15

The shape of ministry in non-dominant cultures.

**Required Reading:**

Doehring, chapter 6

Kujawa/Monagno, chapters 1-9

Gerkin, chap. 6

(Small groups will discuss the concerns that are articulated in the readings assigned for the evening)

March 22

**NO CLASS – HAPPY READING WEEK!!**

March 29

Ministry to the ‘households’ within the faith community. The instructor will give attention to “developmental crises” through the life cycle with a special concern for ‘family violence..’

**Required Reading:**

Doehring, chap, 9

Gerkin, chaps. 7 – 9

April 5

The role of community in care giving with attention to the larger systemic issues that arise and the role of the care giver as advocate.

**Required reading: Gunderson**

Doehring, chap. 8

Kujawa/Monagno, chap. 13, 16, 20 and 22

**DUE:** **Paper on Gunderson’s book.**

April 12

The many faces of ‘grief’ in the lives of people.

**Required Reading:**

Doehring, chap. 5

Kujawa/Montagno, chaps 14 and 21

April 19

The experience of “unsanctioned illnesses” in the context of the faith community. Particular attention will be given to addiction and mental illness.

**Required reading:**

Kujawa/Monagno, chap. 12

**DUE** **Verbatim of ministry experience**

April 26

***Happy Easter! – Easter Recess***

- May 3            The shape of care for the ‘aging’ in the faith community. The role of caring giving amid the pervasive “ageism” of our culture.  
**Required reading:**  
 Gerkin, chap. 10  
 Kajawa/Mongano, chap 18  
 Doerhring, Conclusion
- May 10            The care of GLBT members within the context of the faith Community  
**Required reading:**  
 Kujawa/Montago, chapters 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, and 19  
  
 FILM: “For the Bible Tells Me So”
- May 17            The concern for self care as well as the particular concern relative to issues of boundaries.  
**Required Reading:**  
 Gerkin, chap. 11  
  
 Film: “Not In My Church” will be viewed and reviewed.
- DUE:            FINAL PAPER**

## VII. COURSE GRADING

- A. Preparation and participation in course reading, discussion and small group work.
- B. The quality of the papers done on the book of your choice and that of the work done on the book by Gunderson.
- C. Completion of the ‘verbatim’ of ministry experience.
- D. Quality of the final paper in integrating your theology and praxis of care giving.

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Office Hours:            Monday      12:30 – 4:30  
    Wednesday    9:30 – 10:30

**OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT**