

# Chaplaincy in a Pluralistic Age

CL 625

*Fall Semester, 2010*

United Theological Seminary

New Brighton, MN

Tuesday: 6:00 – 9:15 p.m.

## **Course Description**

Chaplaincy ministry is a specialized ministry of care giving that focuses on a particular venue of service. This course is designed to give consideration to the history, development and expansion of chaplaincy as a form of ministry under the wider aegis of ecclesiastical service given to people in varying venues and contexts. The theology of this specialized ministry will be considered along with particular skills required to work within a pluralistic framework of service with the challenges, opportunities and possibilities inherent in this unique setting.

## **Course Learning Goals**

- A. Students will become familiar with nomenclature and the conceptual framework of chaplaincy as a ministry.
- B. Students in this course will develop an understanding of the history of chaplaincy as a specialized ministry of the faith community, including its intent and purpose.
- C. Students will consider elements of a ‘theology of chaplaincy’ and will be challenged to develop and articulate their own theological perspectives on chaplaincy.
- D. Students will grow in their awareness of the specialized skills necessary for carrying out an effective ministry in varying contexts.
- E. Students will learn from current chaplains in disparate institutional settings the nature of specialized ministry and the professional standards expected by employers.
- F. Students will experience the impact of pluralism as an indigenous issue in most chaplaincy settings through reading, presentations, interaction with guests and case studies.
- G. Students will grow in their understanding of the relationship of this specialized ministry to the ministry carried out by local congregations and their care givers.

## **Course Texts**

Paget, Naomi K. and Janet R. McCormack. *The Work of the Chaplain*.  
Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2006

Holst, Lawrence E., ed. *Hospital Ministry: The Role of the Chaplain Today*.  
Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006.

Readings specific to each class session listed below will be posted on Moodle.

## Course Requirements

A. Attendance at class and participation in small group discussions. *(More than two unexcused absences constitutes failure for the course.*

B. Reading of assigned material outlined in the syllabus for each class session.

**ALL PAPERS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO BOTH INSTRUCTORS!!!**

C. Reflection Paper: Write a paper that reflects your current context and interest in chaplaincy ministry. The paper should include the following:

1. What motivated you to consider chaplaincy as your desire form of ministry at this point in time as opposed to other possibilities?
  2. What prompted you to focus in what currently is the area of chaplaincy that interests you most?
  3. Articulate your own theological convictions at this point in time as foundational for your current understanding of chaplaincy.
  4. What particular challenges do you anticipate encountering as you give consideration to this form of chaplaincy?
  5. What are your anticipated areas of satisfaction and fulfillment in doing this work?
- (This paper should be 5-8 pages, double spaced)

DUE: September 28

D. Interview a chaplain in an area of ministry that currently would be your preferred choice for chaplaincy work. The paper should include the following considerations:

1. Why did s/he choose this form of ministry?
2. What is a typical day like for this her/him?
3. What does it mean for a chaplain to be grounded in his/her own particular faith tradition while serving a diverse population?
4. How does a chaplain balance the 'core beliefs' of one's own tradition with the practice of ministering to people?
5. How does the chaplain deal with people who are NOT of their own tradition?
6. What particular challenges/opportunities does the chaplain experience in his/her ministry?

(This paper should be 5-8 pages doubled spaced)

Due: October 19

E. Research Paper

Select a topic that you believe is particularly challenging in the area of chaplaincy service that you wish to pursue. Read pertinent literature that you can find about the topic and share your findings and learning from your research

EXAMPLES:

1. Nursing home chaplaincy: when to remove life supports
2. Military chaplaincy: someone suffering from PTSD

3. Corrections chaplaincy: discerning your role for an inmate being considered for parole.

**PLEASE NOTE:** These are only examples of ‘possible’ topics you might research. It is important that the question emanate from you, so that your research helps to satisfy your concerns, whatever the topic!

(This paper should be 5-8 pages double spaced)

DUE: November 16

F. Final Paper: My Theology of Chaplaincy

The final paper should include the following component parts:

1. Your personal statement of faith, basic tenets of your theology
2. Reflection on the integration of your theology and your care giving practice
3. How do you embrace your own theology when it is in tension with the expectations of chaplaincy in a pluralistic setting
4. Identify how your theology and practice of chaplaincy interfaces with your faith community’s understanding and expression of faith.
5. Your anticipated challenges and satisfaction in chaplaincy as you currently view it now.

(This paper should be 8-10 pages double spaced)

DUE: December 14

**Course Grading**

**REMEMER THAT ALL PAPERS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO BOTH INSTRUCTORS!!**

- A. Regular Class Attendance (More than TWO unexcused absences constitutes failure for the course.)
- B. Reading all Assignments for each session and participation in plenary sessions.
- C. Quality of the “Reflection” paper written – Submitted on time!
- D. Quality of the “Interview paper written – Submitted on time!
- E. Quality of the “Research” paper written – Submitted on time!!
- F. Quality of the “Final” paper written – Submitted on time!

## Course outline

### **September 14**

Introduction to course, review of syllabus

Reading assignment for 9/21:

McCormack and Paget, pp 1 - 94 re History of chaplaincy.

Articles:

Plummer: Chaplaincy: The Greatest Story Never Told, Journal of Pastoral Care, Vol. 50, No. 1, Spring 1996.

Posted online at <http://www.spirit-filled.org/>

Scroll down left column, click on "A Survey of Chaplaincy." (This website also has other chaplaincy information that is worth browsing)

Myers, Hospital Chaplain

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Cusick, Toward a Metaphor for Chaplaincy

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News story posted online

“Roselynn's Story: family upset with Riley Hospital over child's baptism”

<http://www.fox59.com/news/wxin-roselynns-story-unwanted-baptism-030310.0,1946787.story>

### **September 21**

Professional boundaries

Ministry in a pluralistic setting

Reading assignment for 9/28:

Web site of the Minnesota Emergency Service Chaplain Association

<http://mercury.unitedseminary.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=3975>

### **September 28**

Emergency services, disaster response

Guest: Rev. Dr. Jeff Stewart

Minneapolis Police and Minnesota Emergency Service Chaplain Association

Reading assignment for 10/5:

Holst, Part I, chapters 1- 4, Part II, chapters 5, 6 8

Furniss, George. Social Context of Pastoral Care  
(also published as Sociology for Pastoral Care: An Introduction for Students and Pastors)  
Read chapter 6, “The Institutional Context of Pastoral Care”

Recommended:

Hastings Center report: 5 essays on the emerging profession of chaplaincy  
Vol. 38, No. 6, November-December 2008  
<http://www.thehastingscenter.org/Publications/HCR/Default.aspx?id=2824>

"Charting a New Course for an At-Risk Profession"  
This article is online in the journal *Health Progress*,  
Vol. 90, No. 3, May-June 2009 [http://www.chausa.org/2009\\_annual\\_index.aspx](http://www.chausa.org/2009_annual_index.aspx)

Resource book for Pediatric Chaplaincy:  
Grossoehme, Daniel. The Pastoral Care of Children

Websites: Pediatric Chaplains Network <http://www.pediatricchaplains.org/>  
Association of Professional Chaplains <http://www.professionalchaplains.org/>

### **October 5**

Hospital chaplaincy, adult and pediatrics  
Guests: Rev. Brian Brooks, Children's Hospital  
Rev. Helen O'Brien, Gillette Children's Hospital

Reading assignment for October 12:

Review websites: Corporate Chaplains of America <http://www.chaplain.org/>  
Union Gospel Mission website <http://www.ugmtc.org/>

Read: Wall Street Journal article: “Praying with the office chaplain”  
[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704853404575322742500015642.html?mod=WSJ\\_PersonalFinance\\_CareerJournal](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704853404575322742500015642.html?mod=WSJ_PersonalFinance_CareerJournal)

### **October 12**

Workplace and Community-based chaplains  
Guests: Rev. Karla McGray, North Memorial Hospital  
Rev. Dr. Charles McElveen, Union Gospel Mission

Reading assignment for October 19:

Review military chaplain and VA websites:

Army <http://www.goarmy.com/chaplain/>  
 Navy <http://www.navy.com/navy/careers/arts-education/religion/?campaign=Reprise/Google/Chaplain+Christian+Navy/navy+church>  
 Air Force <http://www.usafhc.af.mil/whatwedo/index.asp>  
 Marines <http://www2.marines.mil/unit/mcblejeune/chaplain/Pages/default.aspx>  
 Coast Guard <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/chaplain/>  
 Civil Air Patrol [http://www.capmembers.com/cap\\_national\\_hq/chaplain\\_corps/](http://www.capmembers.com/cap_national_hq/chaplain_corps/)  
 VA <http://www1.va.gov/chaplain/>

Suggested books: Kittleson, Lance. Meditations from Iraq.  
 Cash, Carey H. A Table in the Presence.

### October 19

Military and VA chaplaincy

Guests: Rev. Susan Thornton, Minneapolis VA Hospital  
 Rev. John Morris, Minnesota National Guard

### October 26

Reading Week, no class

Reading assignment for November 2:

Articles from the American Correctional Chaplains Association  
<http://www.correctionalchaplains.org/> Look for “Articles” on the left side of the screen. The authors of the three-part series are Rogers, Friedman and Coleman.

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### November 2

Corrections chaplaincy

Guest: Rev. Marchelle Hallman, Minnesota Dept. of Corrections, Lino Lakes

Reading assignment for November 9:

“May a Jewish Chaplain Perform a Baptism?”  
<http://data.ccarnet.org/cgi-bin/respdisp.pl?file=9&year=5755>

Resources:

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Schipani, Daniel S. and Bueckert, Leah Dawn.  
Interfaith Spiritual Care: Understandings and Practices

**November 9**

Diversity: Chaplaincy and the Challenge of Inter-Faith Ministry

Guest: Rev. Denise Dunbar-Perkins, Abbott Northwestern Hospital

Followed by panel discussion, guests to be determined.

**November 16**

Long-term care

Guest: Rev. Shawn Mai, Walker Methodist Care Center

Reading assignment for November 23:

Zucker/Bradley/Taylor, Chaplain as Authentic Ethical Presence

*Healing Spirit*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, Spring 2009.

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**November 23**

Chaplaincy and Ethical Issues

Guest: Dr. Sharon Tan, Professor of Ethics

**November 30**

Campus Ministry

Guest: Rev. Lisa Simonsen

**December 7**

student projects

**December 14**

student projects

Course Instructors

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