PC 430 PRE-AND MARITAL COUNSELING
JANUARY 5-9, 2015
MONDAY-THURSDAY, 9:00 – 4:00
FRIDAY, 9:00-NOON
Dr. Gary Sattler
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This introductory course is intended to help the student think theologically about the meaning and practice of counseling, develop her or his own understanding of the meaning and place of such counseling in her or his ministry, and develop an understanding of salient and typical issues in pre-marital and marital counseling.

The student will be expected to engage in intellectual, psychological and emotional self-reflection regarding his or her theological and pastoral understandings and practices (e.g., what constitutes marriage? Is the pastor essentially a passive listener or an active teacher? Is the pastor to “save” a marriage or help a couple come to a new understanding?). To this end the student will respond to various theoretical and practical lectures and readings, and participate in experiential learning opportunities in and outside the classroom. The class will be process-oriented; discussion and reflection will be expected.

COURSE GOALS

- To learn the importance of personal and professional boundaries for the caregiver
- To foster the integration of various theological and secular disciplines (both theoretical and practical) in her or his counseling ministry.
- To develop skills in counseling.
- To consider the possibilities and limits of pre-marital and marital counseling in the congregational setting.
- To explore the ways in which the self of the caregiver is a critical element of pastoral counseling.
- To grow in self-understanding.
- To foster Christian love for the people we are called to serve.

REQUIRED READING: (NOTE: check Amazon.com, etc. for used copies)

- Selected documents (handouts)
**Recommended/Supplemental Reading:**


**Student Requirements:**

- Regular class attendance and participation (20% of grade)
  Students are expected to discuss their reactions to the readings and other assignments as well as participate in self-reflection.

  **NOTE:** This is an intensive, meaning lots of lecture and discussion, so students should have read the material ahead of time and/or plan on spending their evenings reading and preparing for the next day’s class.

- **PRIOR TO THE CLASS:** Students will interview a couple who have been married for at least 5 years and who appear to have a good marital relationship. (10% of grade) They will interview this couple concerning issues about how they met, what the source of their attraction to each other was, a brief description of their families of origin, what role faith plays in their relationship, and a description of their understanding of the responsibilities of marriage. Students will then reflect on what they think has made this marriage what it is, concerns they might have, lessons they have learned (that might be helpful personally and/or in counseling/teaching in their ministry settings). This paper should be approximately 4 pages and will be discussed in class.

- Required reading (Note: readings listed in class schedule will be augmented by handouts)

- Response/Reaction papers (not a summary) to required reading (20% of grade)
  These papers are responses to the readings. The student is expected to write a 2-page paper in which he or she interacts self-reflectively, intellectually and emotionally on a professional and theological level with whatever stirred him or her positively or negatively. The student is expected to demonstrate a serious engagement with the issues he or she chooses and will use the reflection paper as a basis.

- A final paper is due **Friday, 13. March 2015**. (50% of grade) The paper should explore an area related to pre-marital or marital care that you anticipate engaging in your ministry, and should address theology, theory, and practice of ministry – *i.e.*, what are the practical implications of your study. It could, for example, be a Marriage Enrichment or Preparation Program (retreat, seminar, ongoing class, etc.) that will serve as a foundation
for growth in Christian marriage or a programmatic counseling approach. This paper will begin with a rationale for selecting the topic, a description of the target group population, and a description of the setting of the program. A very detailed description of the program, including materials to be utilized, must be included. This paper is to be 10 pages, exclusive of appendices. The paper may be snail-mailed or e-mailed as an attachment (doc or docx, not a pdf file).

**Grading Scale**

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**Extremely Tentative Class Schedule (Actually, I just made it up to meet requirements):**

Day 1  Introduction to the Course  
Introduction of participants  
Consensus on ground rules: confidentiality, group expectations, etc.  
What is marriage?  
Personal and Professional Ethics/Boundaries  
Boundaries  
Reading report due on Cloud & Townsend, Parts 1&2

Day 2  What is marriage (and family)?  
What is marriage (and family)? (cont.)  
Reading report due on Mathews and Hubbard, chs. 1-5

Day 3  People are different  
Yes, Christians divorce (and remarry)  
Reading report due on Wimberly  
Conflict, Infidelity – yes it happens in Christian homes

Day 4  Discussion of Interviews//Pre-marital resources  
Getting ready for marriage  
Reading report due on Keller and Keller

Day 5  Final Questions, concerns
POLICIES FOR ALL MASTERS CLASSES

NOTE: All communications from the seminary will go to your seminary email account. Contact ithelpdesk@seminary.edu if you need help forwarding your seminary email address to your personal email address.

As a seminary community we hold integrity/hospitality as core values. Individuals are able to do their best work and thinking when their peers are fully present and engaged. We expect each person to both participate in class and carefully listen to others with the belief that everyone’s contribution is equally important. Therefore, the following policies have been established in order to provide clarity in regard to attendance expectations and relationships in the classroom.

Diploma/Certificate Student Course Requirements
The amount of work required of Diploma/Certificate students will be at the discretion of the professor. Students will be responsible for contacting the professor about what assignments are required.

Class Attendance Policy
It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. A professor may set other attendance expectations. Students are always expected to communicate with a professor in advance if they will be absent. Attendance expectations are higher for online and intensive courses (see syllabus for specific requirements).

Class Tardiness Policy
The third time a student is late to the start of class, it will be counted as a class absence. It is also expected that students will return from a break by the time specified by the professor.

Late Work Policy
If a student cannot complete the work for a course by the due date listed on the syllabus, they must submit a “Request for a Grade of Incomplete” form to the Registrar by 4:30 of the last day of the term. The form must be signed by the instructor and Dean of Students. The professor may set stipulations and grade reductions. In the absence of a formal request form, the student will receive a grade based upon work completed by the last day of the term.

Turabian Format
All papers, including footnotes and bibliography, must be submitted in the correct format according to Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th ed., 2013.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one’s own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgement or documentation. See the “Academic Honesty Policy” in the Seminary Catalog for more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Technology Use in the Classroom
Unless it is directly tied to note-taking or research for the class, students are expected to refrain from using cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class.

Course Evaluation in Moodle
Students must complete an online course evaluation using the seminary Moodle system at http://moodle.seminary.edu in order to receive a final grade for the course. The evaluation will be open for one week starting the last day of the term. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to moodlehelp@seminary.edu.