

COS 323 Congregational Care
Mississippi Course of Study
September 19 through October 29, 2022
The Reverend Dr. Walter L. Frazier, Instructor

Purpose: This course introduces students to practices of congregational care and the pastor's responsibility in care giving.

Objectives: Students will be able to:

1. Implement and oversee appropriate types of care in varieties of settings, including prisons, hospitals, nursing facilities, and homes.
2. Organize caring ministries within the congregation.
3. Discern and implement appropriate boundaries, knowing when and to whom to refer people, and when and when not to share information.
4. Reflect on and practice skills of sensitive caregiving for persons within families and cultures, using role play and analysis case studies.

Bibliography *All students are **required** to read the **first two** books listed.*

- **Crisis Counseling in the Congregation** by Larry Webb,
- **African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: Oppression and Empowerment** by Ed Wimberly.

Supplementary texts for COS 323:

- **Practicing Care in Rural Congregations and Communities** by Jeanne Hoeft, Shannon Jung and Joretta Marshall and
- **Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling** by Howard Clinebell.

Precourse Assignments:

To prepare for the assignments, read the assigned texts (**Crisis Counseling in the Congregation** by Larry Webb and **African American Pastoral Care and Counseling** by Ed Wimberly).

For Assignments #1 and #2, use the following guidelines for completing your assignments:

1. Use Times New Roman, 12-point font.
2. Set line spacing to double-space.
3. Maintain a one-inch margin.
4. The specified page length is a minimum including the body of the paper only. You may exceed the identified page length by no more than two pages.

Assignments #1 and #2 due to the instructor by Friday, September 30, prior to the start of Worship.

1. Including references to the two texts (and any other resources), create a life reflection paper (three-pages minimum) in which you:
 - Describe yourself. Please include a description of where you are from, your educational and occupational history, and your current and past ministerial appointments. Include information about your family and how they relate to you in your professional roles. (Keep this to one or two paragraphs.)
 - Identify at least three critical events in your life that have impacted you and your call to ministry. Describe how each has shaped your journey to where you are today. (1 page.)
 - Define congregational/pastoral care as you understand it in your setting. What strengths are present and what weaknesses do you see? What have you learned over the past 18 months associated with the pandemic? How have other crisis events impacted your learning about your role as a pastor? (1 page.)
 - Describe at least two areas you consider to be your strengths as a pastoral caregiver. Describe at least two areas you consider to be your areas for growth as a pastoral caregiver. Provide an explanation of how you see these areas impacting your current and future ministry. (1 page.)
2. *Definition of Critical Incident: a single event or multiple related events or circumstances that threaten or substantively change in an unwanted way the psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual, and/or relational state of an individual or group of persons. Synonyms: disaster, crisis, traumatic event(s), personal violation. Note: What constitutes a critical incident may vary depending upon the perspective of the person experiencing the event/circumstance.*

Identify a critical incident that has occurred in your professional or personal experience to you or another person or other persons. Describe a Biblical event in which you see a parallel to the critical incident. Write a brief reflection on the pastoral issue(s) in the critical incident (four-page minimum). What are the theological and/or relational issues raised? What are the issues of oppression, privilege, and empowerment? What did the “helper” or character do to demonstrate good pastoral skill or how was the issue poorly handled? Provide a description of how this critical incident and the Biblical event might be beneficial to your perspective of your role in pastoral relationships.

Assignment #3 verbatim reflection papers are due by Friday, October 14, 6:00 p.m.

3. Reflect on a situation in which you provided pastoral care—perhaps in the context of a church, hospital, funeral, jail, home visit, mission trip, job site, etc.... Use the **Important Elements in a Verbatim Report** guidelines provided below to write a verbatim reflection paper. Demonstrate your understanding of the textbooks throughout the report. Feel free to refer to your authors’ input. If there is an important page number or reference, include it in your paper. For instance, consider how the concept of narrative pastoral care presented in *African American Pastoral Care* is demonstrated, or not demonstrated, in the situation. Your entire verbatim assignment will total approximately 13 pages.

Important Elements in a Verbatim Report

(Source: “Appendix D: Case Study and Theological Guidelines.

A) Introduction: (one page)

- Time
- Place
- Brief description of the person (please maintain confidentiality)
- Your relationship to the person (how you came to talk to the person; how long you've known him/her; in what capacity, etc)
- The context of the conversation (what you thought and felt about this person and his/her situation before this conversation).
- Other relevant details or circumstances

B) Verbatim Record of Conversation: (three to five pages)

Write an exact (as possible – make notes soon after meeting) record of a portion of the conversation including pauses, non-verbal communications, facial expressions, etc., insofar as they help to catch the “tone” of the experience. If the conversation is longer than can be conveniently reported, give highlights and be sure to indicate where breaks occur, and summarizing missing parts. The effort in this part is to be purely descriptive – omitting explanation of why you did what you did. This effort call for candor that will be, at times, difficult to achieve. Don't try to “doctor” or edit your report to make it look better. Indicate changes you would make later in your analysis.

C) Analysis and Evaluation: (three to five pages)

- What took place (where do you and the person stand now in your relationship)?
- Intention at the beginning (discrepancy between intention and performance; shift in expectations, etc.)
- An evaluation of your responses, trying to identify your dominant feelings during the conversation; not to probe the depths of your unconscious, but a simple effort to catch the feelings on or near the surface (i.e. is this a person who makes you angry, happy, frustrated, etc.?). What did you see as this person's needs and did your responses get at these needs? Are there any points that strike you as particularly significant now: any responses you would certainly want to omit or do differently?
- What does this interview reveal about the person and about you? What kind of pastor are you in this interview?
- What effect did this experience have on the person? How did he or she feel when it was over? Why?

D) Goals, Learning, and Future Involvement: (three pages)

- What goals and plans will you have for your next meeting with this person?
- What did you learn by studying this relationship and reporting on it (other person; yourself; own attitude to the other person/s, etc.)?
- How does this situation remind you of your readings in Webb, Wimberly and Taylor?

E) Theological Analysis and Evaluation (three to five pages)

- What theological doctrine, problem, question, principle, issue, etc., is demonstrated, suggested, or illuminated in this case?
- How does your understanding of the doctrine, etc., shed any light on the situation and future possibilities?
- What are the theological dynamics of the actual situation (grace, redemption, forgiveness, salvation, hope, etc.)?
- How has this report helped you integrate your experiences and theological understanding?
- What opportunities for congregational care within your appointment might be helpful for this situation? What ministry ideas does it inspire for you?

F) Mentor Reflection (one page) Share this paper with your **clergy mentor** (not your lay committee), asking for comments and feedback. Attach a separate, additional page after the paper's bibliography which contains your clergy mentor's comments and feedback.

Course Outline

September 19-22 – Discussion

September 26-29 - Discussion

September 30 – 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. CT - Class Meeting - Biblical Perspective on Pastoral/Congregational Care – The Woman at the Well

October 1 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CT - Class Meeting - Distinguishing Pastoral Roles and Ethical Issues

October 3-6 – Discussion

October 10-13 Discussion

October 15 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CT - Class Meeting - Facilitating Conditions for All Helping Relationships

October 15 – 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. CT - Class Meeting - Role Play and Practice of Listening/Discipling Skills

October 17-20 Discussion

October 24-27 Discussion

Course Requirements

Written Assignments Please note the due dates for the written assignments. This is a firm date. In fairness to all students, late assignments will be penalized. Submit assignments by email. Plagiarism is not acceptable. Please review COS guidelines and submit only your own work, and reference ideas appropriately. Cultural and gender sensitivity is also expected both in written assignments and in class participation. If there are disabilities or accommodations of which I should be aware, please contact me.

Class Participation and Attendance Because of the nature of this course, regular attendance and participation is crucial. All students will be expected to contribute to discussions and exercises. Absences will be excused only in pastoral or personal emergencies, according to COS policy.

Discussion Forum During the weeks between class meetings, we will hold discussion forums in the Course Connect environment. You will be asked to provide an initial post in response to the discussion forum instructions provided for that week. You will also respond to your peers in the course. This activity will be graded as part of your participation grade.

Readings All students are expected to complete and comprehend the required readings. Written assignments, class discussion and exercises will give you opportunities to demonstrate your comprehension of the assigned books.

Grading Passing grades will be based on comprehension and engagement with the materials presented as well as effort and class participation. Students who are interested in a higher grading standard of A or B must perform at the college/graduate level. The goal of the course is that you grow in your understanding of and skills for pastoral care in your local church and your passion for ministry.

Class Participation 35% Written Assignments 65%

Contact Information:

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Please try to use the e-mail option, if possible.

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ,

I am honored to have this opportunity to serve as the instructor for this course. I am an Ordained Deacon in the Mississippi Annual Conference. I serve as the Executive Director of the Grace Christian Counseling Center in Vicksburg. I also serve as the Director of Academic Quality in the School of Counseling at Walden University. I have served as a counselor for 24 years, and I have been a counselor educator for 14 years.

I celebrate this opportunity for me to serve as an instructor with Course of Study. Along with you, I look forward to our shared learning in the Course of Study environment. I have taught counseling students various aspects of the counseling profession including professional ethics and professional identity, group counseling skills, clinical supervision, counseling skills, crisis counseling, and research skills. This is the second year for me to teach COS 323. I have also served on the Board of Ordained Ministry, served as an interim pastor on numerous occasions, and served as a community member in disaster management roles. I am married to Terri and have four children and four grandchildren. I enjoy running, sports photography, fishing, and hunting. I look forward to getting to know you and discussing our shared experiences in ministry!

Peace to you!

Walter