

## **Introduction to Pastoral Counseling**

CEPS 8510-01

3.0 units

Starr King for the Ministry – Graduate Theological Union

Fall, 2017

### **Instructor Information**

Rev. Devorah Greenstein, PhD

[dgreenstein@sksm.edu](mailto:dgreenstein@sksm.edu)

Office hours: email me to schedule an in-person, phone, or Skype appointment

### **Meeting Dates and Times**

This is an online, Moodle-based asynchronous course.

### **Course Description:**

This online pastoral counseling course will introduce students to culturally responsive counseling practices and foster multicultural awareness. Students will examine societal and institutional structures of power and privilege, and will become more aware of the biases, prejudices, and microaggressions that are detrimental to the growth of the human spirit.

Students will study major counseling theories and will practice basic helping skills centered on Person-Centered (Rogerian) counseling and Bowen Family Systems Theory. Contextual pastoral elements will be included, especially in the use of Bowen Family Systems as applied to congregational contexts.

This is an asynchronous course, with written lectures and frequent use of videos and links to online resources. Weekly personal reflections and weekly skill-practice exercises will be required, as well as some academic writing. It is an intermediate/advanced course intended for MDiv students, and with doctoral upgrade possible.

### **Learning Objectives**

During this course, students will:

- Develop foundational counseling theories and some basic counseling skills for work with individuals and families
- Gain knowledge of the larger cultural and societal contexts that frame counseling work.
- Develop an understanding of what is at the core of multi-religious non-sectarian pastoral counseling and how to function in multicultural contexts.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the conclusion of the course, students will

- Be familiar with basic counseling theories and practices
- Have examined intentional and unintentional oppressions and privilege
- Be familiar with Rogerian counseling techniques and Bowen family systems theory and their applications

- Be aware of situations that pastoral counselors often face

## Course policies

### Course assignments required each week:

- Read my written Moodle lecture and follow the embedded links (many links are optional – I will tell you if you are required to follow a link)
- Read the assigned textbook chapters and assigned articles (on Moodle)
- Complete that week’s assignments. Each week will include a theory assignment, most weeks will include skill practice for you to do with friends/family members/co-workers, etc.

### Assignments will also include:

- Genogram chart and brief accompanying reflection paper – patterns, meaning, multigenerational impact, stories – “every family has a story – what is yours?”

## Grading

I appreciate self-directed, intrinsically-motivated students who do the work because they understand this subject is important. I do not like to have to monitor, cajole, nag, penalize students who are taking advantage of my preferred Pass/Fail grading scheme. If you plan on taking this course for a letter grade, contact me immediately at the beginning of the semester.

### Required Textbooks:

I chose textbooks that are readily available new and often have used copies on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com) (prefer the latter – Abebooks is a consortium of independent book sellers).

I chose a specific older edition of the first book for economy; **be sure to select the correct edition and publishing year**. This is a book you’ll want to have on your professional bookshelf for use after you have completed the course.

Sue, Derald Wing; Sue, David (2008). *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice* **5<sup>th</sup> edition**. John Wiley & Sons.

Buy this book used. (Newer editions cost over \$100. Do not buy a new edition – buy the FIFTH edition and only the FIFTH edition.)

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition costs a few dollars. It will serve you well.

The second book is also an older edition. It is harder to find used, but it is a paperback and there are enough used copies available online for each of you.

Cochran, Jeff and Cochran, Nancy (2006) *The Heart of Counseling: A Guide to Developing Therapeutic Relationships* **FIRST edition**

Buy this book used. There is a new second edition that costs about \$70. This first edition will cost you about \$25. Do not spend more than \$25-30 on this book. Let me know if Amazon or abebooks run out of inexpensive copies.

The third book is on the required MFC book list for Unitarian Universalists.

Kujawa-Holbrook, Sheryl and Montagno, Karen (2009) *Injustice and the Care of Souls: Taking Oppression Seriously in Pastoral Care*. Published by Fortress Press. Oddly I see that new copies are available on abebooks for less than new copies on Amazon. It's less than \$30.

**Suggestions for getting the most from this course (adapted from *The Heart of Counseling*):**

- Decide that you are willing to devote the time and effort needed to do a quality job for this course – that you not fall behind and that you set time and energy aside to do your work.
- It is wise to work ahead when reasonably possible and detrimental to your learning to fall behind. The topics of the course build, with each week's topics growing logically from the previous weeks' topics. It will be difficult to catch up if you are behind.
- Give yourself time to reflect and contemplate about important concepts during and after reading, and following each class meeting. Talk to classmates/friends/partners about what you're learning. Think of how the concepts apply to you and your call to ministry.
- Come to the online class with an open frame of mind and be willing to take risks in thought, action, and self-expression for the purpose of your learning and self-development. You are not expected to have previous counseling experience or knowledge. Don't let yourself feel intimidated; challenge your fears and push yourself to make yourself the best pastoral counselor that you can be for your future counselees.
- Of course, you are expected to do each week's work, unless there is a valid emergency or seemingly unavoidable reason to miss. Missing classes will cause you to fall behind and leave gaps in your learning and development. We will have some skills practice in nearly every class.
- Respect confidentiality! Active involvement in the class meetings and activities entails a level of personal self-disclosure. Because of the nature of the vulnerability inherent in this, and the trust and openness required, it is

extremely important that confidentiality be maintained. Revealing any personal information about classmates, gained from class meetings or activities, is a breach of confidentiality.

- Most of all give it your all, immerse yourself in this study, enjoy and be passionate in your learning. Our main hope is that you will be well pleased with how much you will challenge yourself and how much you learn.

### **About this class**

- We know from our on-line counseling course last year that these are intense topics. Be prepared to be present to others and yourself.
- This will be an inclusive online classroom and I insist that each of you be supportive and non-confrontational or judgmental.
- The class is not counseling for you; it is a class *about* counseling.
- If you get to any topic that “triggers” or troubles you – you don’t have to keep reading, but you do have to email me so I can give you an alternate assignment.

### **Course Schedule**

(The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule and assigned readings to achieve course objectives.)

#### **Week 1 –**

Looking at identities, intersectionality  
Binaries or not?  
Practice: Observing people (body language, etc)

#### **Week 2 –**

Isms/oppressions/multicultural framework  
Roles of pastoral counselor  
Practice: Attentive/therapeutic listening

#### **Week 3 –**

Pastoral counseling environments  
Bronfenbrenner’s ecobiological model  
Practice: Listening and reflecting

#### **Week 4 –**

Microaggressions, being an ally  
Power analyses and differences – stereotypes, stigma  
Practice: Questions and reflecting

#### **Week 5 –**

Grounding and centering  
Personally preparing for counseling

Practice: Working with empathy, sensitivity

**Week 6 -**

Spending time with Carl Rogers

Newer models and theories (e.g. CBT)

Practice: Unconditional positive regard (UPR)

**Week 7 -**

Introducing Bowen family systems theory (BFST)

Genogram introduction

Practice: Genogram research

**Week 8 -**

Nuclear family systems

LGBT issues for pastoral counselor

Practice: Finish family genogram

**Week 9 -**

Differentiation of self

BFST in multicultural contexts

Practice: Using the Differentiation of Self Inventory

**Week 10 -**

Triangles and emotional cutoff

BFST in congregations

Practice: Triangle-watching

**Week 11 -**

Family Projection Process,

Multigenerational Transmission Process

Practice: BFST validity?

**Week 12 -**

BFST in society

What's happening today - framing in BFST

Practice: BFST and current events/politics

**Week 13 -**

Review, catch up, expand as necessary