

## **Introduction to Pastoral Counseling**

CEPS 8411

3.0 units

Starr King for the Ministry – Graduate Theological Union

Fall, 2019

### **Instructor Information**

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

### **Meeting Dates and Times**

This is an online, Moodle-based asynchronous course with added skill practice with a partner.

### **Course Description:**

This online pastoral counseling course will introduce students to culturally responsive counseling practices and will 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. You will be paired with a classmate who will be your practice partner through the semester and you will be expected to work with them weekly. 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 (some links are optional)
- 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 your practice partner (and other cooperative friends/family members/co-workers, etc. if you choose).

#### **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:**

There is one required textbook. It was published in 2016 and it's the best text—it is worth owning and keeping on your professional bookshelf.

I suggest buying the electronic version (PDF format) this year. The price is getting frightfully expensive.

### **Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice 7<sup>th</sup> edition**

Only the **SEVENTH EDITION** (!) please!

By Derald Wing Sue and David Sue

#### **It is a 2016 book and its cover is white!**

(8<sup>th</sup> edition has black cover with canoes, 6<sup>th</sup> edition has black cover with weird design, 5<sup>th</sup> edition has sort of lavender cover with smooth stones)

ISBN-13: 978-1119084303

ISBN-10: 111908430X

No other text is required. I will provide scanned chapters from several other books.

**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**

- I know from my on-line counseling course in previous years 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 – Identities – an introduction**

Sue & Sue (S&S) chapter 1 and pages 220 (bottom) – page 224 (top)

Looking at identities, intersectionality

Binaries or not?

Practice: Observing people (body language, etc)

#### **Week 2 – This is the “counseling L”**

S & S chapter 2 and 3

Isms/oppressions/multicultural framework

Roles of pastoral counselor

Practice: Attentive/therapeutic listening

#### **Week 3 – Counseling in context**

S & S chapter 4 and 5

Pastoral counseling environments

Bronfenbrenner’s model and Social Dominance Theory

Practice: Listening and reflecting

#### **Week 4 – Mostly microaggressions**

S & S chapter 6

Microaggressions, being an ally

Power analyses and differences – stereotypes, stigma

Practice: Questions and reflecting

#### **Week 5 – Empathy**

S & S chapter 7 and 8

Grounding and centering

Personally preparing for counseling (trauma-informed counseling)

Practice: Working with empathy, sensitivity

#### **Week 6 – Counseling theories old and new**

S & S chapter 9 and 10

Spending time with Carl Rogers

Newer models and theories (e.g. CBT)

Practice: Unconditional positive regard (UPR)

**Week 7 – Professional ethics**

S & S chapter 11 and 12

This week is a lecture and resources compiled by Prof. Megan Dowdell. She is an ethicist and co-taught this class with me last year.

**Week 8 – Reading week****Week 9 – Starting family systems theory work**

S & S chapter 13 and 14

Introducing Bowen family systems theory (BFST)

Genogram introduction

Practice: Genogram research

**Week 10 – The nuclear family emotional system**

S & S chapter 15 and 16

Nuclear family systems

LGBT issues for pastoral counselor

Practice: Finish family genogram

**Week 11 – Differentiation of self**

S & S chapter 17 and 18

Differentiation of self

BFST in multicultural contexts

Practice: Using the Differentiation of Self Inventory

**Week 12 – Triangles and emotional cut-off**

S & S chapter 19 and 20

Triangles and emotional cutoff

BFST in congregations

Practice: Triangle-watching

**Week 13 – Multigenerational transmission**

S & S chapter 21 and 22

Multigenerational Transmission Process

BFST in society

What's happening today – framing in BFST

Practice: BFST and current events/politics

**We are left with S and S chapters 24, 25, 26 unread. Please don't ignore them—try to find the time to look at them!**