RELIGION, MEDICINE, AND PASTORAL CARE
Christian Theological Seminary Course P-638
Pastoral Theology and Psychology
Fall 2007

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Brief Course Description:
This course examines the theological, research, and professional issues faced by religious and healing communities. Includes attention to medical ethical concerns and pastoral care to the sick.

Purpose and Perspective of Course:
Both American culture and Christian churches are re-awakening to the essential unity of the human self as expressed by an intense interest in “spirituality and health.” This course will study both theological and scientific understandings of this unity. The course will also examine implications for self-care, congregational ministries, and ministry in the medical culture. The perspective of the course is rooted in the evolving and renewing theologies of mainline American Protestant communities and the medical scientific research that is open to mind-body-spirit wholeness.

Desired Outcomes:
• Increased understanding of the inter-relatedness of body, mind, spirit
  ✓ Application of this knowledge to the student’s own lifestyle for essential habits of nutrition, exercise, relaxation, and spiritual nourishment
• Substantive knowledge of the role of healing practices within faith traditions
  ✓ Increased knowledge of the student’s own tradition’s approaches to healing ministries
  ✓ Increased knowledge of a tradition’s approaches to healing ministries which differs from the student’s tradition
• Practical knowledge of how spirituality relates to healing, health promotion, and church ministries
  ✓ Explore the faith factors in healing
  ✓ Increased understanding of the meanings of illness and healing
  ✓ Knowledge of research which describes relationships between religion/spirituality and health/healing
  ✓ Knowledge of the church’s role in public health initiatives (smoking, firearms, hunger, violence, access to medical care)
  ✓ Develop pastoral assessment skills in discerning needs of persons for healing
  ✓ Develop pastoral intervention skills in use of religious resources for healing
• Increased understanding of the interface between the religious community and the healthcare industry and between theology and ethics
  ✓ Focused awareness of key principles and developing issues within bioethics
Course Methods and Requirements

1. **Lectures** will develop a core perspective and offer general principles.

2. **Class discussions** will illustrate, amplify, and challenge basic perspectives and principles. Reading and reflecting upon assigned texts as scheduled will facilitate responsible discussion. Be prepared to respond to questions such as: What was the most significant idea you encountered? What would you like to challenge or to discuss more thoroughly?

3. **Required Readings** will provide broad theoretical and practical perspectives.
   - Articles listed in the schedule have been placed on reserve in the library.

**Recommended Readings:**

**Recommended Resources:**
- The Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling is the core reference tool for the field. You will find numerous articles related to all class topics. I highly encourage your routine use of this tool. It is becoming somewhat dated, but is still an excellent resource.

4. Participate in the **Well Being Group**. 10 points.
   This experiential group will utilize the workbook *Anchoring Your Well-Being* to explore the personal dimensions of health and healing. Prepared participation is expected. Each absence will deduct 1 point from your grade.

5. Write a **reading-reflection journal**. 15 points.
   This journal should track your thoughts and feelings in response to lectures, readings, discussions, and exercises. Summaries of key insights are to be submitted 3 times (10/3, 11/7, 12/12). Each summary should highlight one core principle learned or key question answered and one new question or puzzle discovered. Every required reading and each class should have at least one entry.
6. Participate in at least one **spiritual healing practice**. 
This should be a practice(s) which you have never engaged before; e.g., walk a labyrinth, 
attend yoga or tai chi classes, attend healing services, meet with a spiritual director. 
**Anchoring** includes numerous suggestions and ideas. Participation time should total at 
least three hours. Please submit your plan for this practice no later than October 3.

   A. Write a 3-page summary and reflection on your experience including relevant 
      theoretical connections. Due on November 14. **15 points.**
   B. Make a 10-minute presentation to class about your experience on November 28. **5 points.**

7. **Write a paper comparing one practice of religion and health in two traditions.**
Practices might include the role of the pastor with the sick, the place of the congregation in 
health education, practices related to sexuality or dying, teachings about some current 
moral issue such as stem cell research or health care access for the poor. 
Review key literature that describes your own tradition’s understanding of and practices for 
spirituality and healing. Choose one practice to explore in depth. Review key 
literature that describes another tradition’s understanding of and practices for spirituality 
and healing with a focus on the parallel practice from your tradition.

   A. Submit your plan for this paper no later than September 19.
   B. Write a 5 to 8 page paper which summarizes your key learning and which 
      compares/contrasts the practices of the two traditions. Due on October 24. **20 points.**
   C. Present the above paper to the class. **5 points.** Will be scheduled on November 7.

8. **Write a research paper.**
This paper will demonstrate your theoretical understanding of one aspect of emotional 
pain (e.g., forgiveness, guilt and shame, tragedy, suffering) or of physical pain (e.g., 
becoming pregnant, chronic pain, access to care, care of dying). At least one citation from 
each of the required books and three of the required articles must be included. Your paper must be clear as to the issue or problem considered, the socio-cultural situation from and to which you are writing, and include implications for pastoral practice. You must also include your own definition of spirituality, health, and healing. An excellent paper will integrate perspectives from religion, medicine, ethics, and pastoral care into the discussion. 8 to 11 pages.

   A. Please submit your plan for this paper no later than November 7.
   B. Due at beginning of time period scheduled for final exam (week of December 19). **30 points.**
   C. Present your research in progress to the class. Will be scheduled on December 12.
⇒ Notes Concerning Assignments:

1. **Grading Criteria:** Responsiveness to and focus on stated assignments is essential. Writing skill (or speaking skill), conceptual clarity, and cohesive presentation are expected. Breadth and depth of understanding add to your grade. Critical analysis and synthesis of material moves toward “excellence.” Creativity and risk taking will be rewarded.

2. **Due Dates:** Any late paper or presentation will have its assigned grade reduced by 2 grades per class period late (e.g., an ‘A’ becomes a ‘B+’ after 1 class, a ‘B-’ after 2 classes, etc.). Any time after the conclusion of a class period is considered late. Grace **may be** extended due to crisis events that are not predictable or within the student’s control (e.g., your printer running out of ink is considered within your control).

3. **Format:** Prepare all assignments in 12-point font, 1 to 1.5 inch margins, right margin unjustified. Document quotes and references via the in-line method (APA).

4. **Consultation:** Any paper may be submitted early for written feedback from the professor. If a paper is submitted early, it will be graded and that grade weighted as 20% of the final grade (e.g., 3 submissions graded C, B, and A will have a final grade weighted as C, B, A, A = B+). Each submission must include a “Comments Page” for my written feedback and each rendition of the paper must include all previous Comments Pages. Expect one-week turn-around time for consultation.

5. **Group study:** You are encouraged to study, discuss, and write in collaboration with others, especially around shared reading materials. However, all submitted assignments must be “unique” and demonstrate your own mastery of the materials.
**Tentative Course Schedule**

Note: The following schedule may be amended due to student interests, availability of guests, or other emerging opportunities. Changes in required written assignments (either content or due dates) should not be expected; if changes occur, these will be published in writing.

**September 5**  Introduction to class and participants.
1. Overview of Key Agenda
2. Syllabus and Course Requirements
3. Participant introductions

**Section 1  Healthcare: Theological and Medical Values**
- How do we understand the human person as a unity, not dualism? How does this link to the history of religion-medicine interaction; foundation for today’s linkages? How do the boundaries of science and religion coincide and diverge?
- Develop a operational definitions of “spirituality,” “health,” and “sickness.”
- What is difference in human models of medical – psychosocial – bio-psychosocial–spiritual?
- Care and cure in faith traditions, “scientific” medicine, “traditional” medicines, and “integrative” medicine.

**September 12**
1. Biblical and theological perspectives on health and healing
2. Well Being Group, Chapter 1
Reading: Evans, Chapter 1
Vaux, “Topics at the Interface of Medicine and Theology,” Library
Gill, Chapter 3
DPCC: health, wholeness, suffering, illness, salvation

**September 19**
1. Pastoral perspectives on health and healing
2. “Care” and “cure” within spiritual and medical contexts
3. Well Being Group, Chapter 2
Reading: Evans, Chapter 2
Marty, “The Tradition of the Church in Health and Healing,” Library
Taylor, Chapters 7, 9
Gill, Chapters 4, 5
DPCC: spirituality, healing
Due: Proposal for Comparison of Religious Practices Paper
September 26  No Class.
  • “Comp time” for Spiritual Healing Practice Experience exercises.
  • You are invited to attend a lecture “The Wesleyan Contribution to Ethics and Medicine,” Methodist Hospital Petticrew Auditorium, 3:30 PM

October 3
  1. Medical and scientific perspectives on health and healing
  2. Physician interview
  3. Well Being Group, Chapter 3

Reading:  Evans, Chapter 3
          Berlinger, “Spirituality and Medicine,” Library
          Evans, “The Focus on Medical Care,” Library

Due:    Reading-Reflection Journal 1
Due:    Proposal for spiritual healing practice experience and paper

Section 2  Religion, Spirituality, and Health Outcomes
  • Research on Mind-Body-Spirit Connectedness
  • Research on Physical Health
  • Research on Psychological Health
  • How can faith and medical research be integrated?
  • In what way is spirituality a dimension of health?

October 10
  1. The Health Effects of Religion
  2. Well Being Group, Chapter 4

Reading:  Levin, Chapters 1, 2

October 17
  No class. Reading Week.

October 24
  1. The Health Effects of Spirituality
  2. Well Being Group, Chapter 5

Reading:  Levin, Chapters 3, 4, 5

Due:    Comparison of Religious Practices Paper

Section 3  Churches’ Ministries for Care and Cure – Congregational Health Ministries
  • Curative Acts
  • Caring Acts
    ✓ What does the practicing pastor need to know about health and healing?
    ✓ How can the church adopt promoting health and preventing disease as one of its vital ministries?
    ✓ Appreciate the complex interaction of health factors: body (genetics, self-care), individual (life experience, unique personality), environmental (family, mentors), socio-demographic, organizational (religion, social services).
October 31
1. Congregational Health Ministries
2. Parish Nurse Interview
3. Well Being Group, Chapter 6
Reading: Evans, Chapters 7, 8, 9
Levin, Chapters 6, 7, 8
DPCC: congregation, wholistic health care

November 7
1. Faith Communities, U.S. Society, and the Healthcare Industry
2. Presentation of Religious Practices Papers
3. Well Being Group, Chapter 7
Reading:
Evans, “Problems in the Medical Model,” Library
Evans, “The Pastor, Physician, Nurse as Healer,” Library
Taylor, Chapter 13
DPCC: health care delivery
Due: Research Paper Proposal
Reading-Reflection Journal 2

November 14
1. Pastoral Care and the Health of Body-Mind-Spirit
2. Hospital chaplain interview
3. Well Being Group, Chapter 8
Reading: Evans, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7
“Professional Chaplaincy: Its Role and Importance in Healthcare,” Library
Due: Spiritual Healing Practice Paper

November 21  No class. Thanksgiving holiday.

Section 4 Key Ethics Issues
- Public Health – abortion, genetics, euthanasia, allocation of scarce resources, priority for health promotion and disease prevention
- Individual choices – informed consent, end of life choices, reproductive choices
- Culture of science issues – human experimentation

November 28
1. Methods for Bioethics Thinking
2. Spiritual healing practices presentations
Reading: “Religion and Theology,” Library
“Toward a Richer Bioethics: A Conclusion,” Library
Gill, Chapters 1, 2
Taylor, Chapters 1, 2
December 5
1. Key Principles and Difficult Problems in Bioethics
2. Medical ethicist interview
3. Well Being Group Closure
        DPCC: moral dilemmas

December 12
1. The Pastor’s and Church’s Role in Bioethics
2. Research in progress summary presentations
3. Concluding Conversation
Reading: “The Christian Pastor’s Role in Medical Ethics” Library
Due: Reading-Reflection Journal 3

December 19  Exam Week.
Due: Research Paper