P-510 Introduction to Pastoral Psychotherapy
Wednesdays, 8:30 am until 11:15 am
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Purpose:

The purpose of this class is to help students develop an understanding of the core practices of pastoral psychotherapy in its individual and systemic expressions. Students will learn the basic skills, parameters, and interpretive tools necessary for furthering their studies in working with clients at the intrapsychic-systemic boundary. Thus, we will focus on such issues as: listening skills, boundary issues, developing treatment goals, the therapist/client relationship, theories of change, the theological and spiritual frames of pastoral psychotherapy, and ways to understand the flow of treatment as it unfolds in one's work with clients. Of course, there is no substitute for working as a client with a gifted clinician as a means of learning the practices of pastoral psychotherapy. I strongly recommend that students who intend to practice pastoral psychotherapy engage in this process. To put it more firmly, there is no non-symptomatic rationale for not doing so.

Pastoral psychotherapy as we will be addressing it in this class focuses on four movements, helping to transform:
- Suffering into relationship
- Relationship into speech
- Speech into prayer
- Prayer into mourning and wonder

These movements are non-linear, recursive features of the therapeutic relationship. Drawing on psychoanalytic, cognitive-behavioral, and systemic forms of therapy in addition to theological and spiritual resources, the class will help introduce you to these movements and their place in the overall therapeutic task.

Requirements:

The requirements for successful completion of the course include: (1) two in-class exams (each counts 1/3 of course grade) and (2) a 15 minute video of your conducting therapy with a mock client. Students must turn in the video and a two page, single spaced analysis of your work with this client. The analysis should include an interpretation of what is happening in this work and an evaluation of your work as a therapist, i.e. what do you think you did well, what needs further improvement, etc. These will be presented the final two class sessions. The video and analysis counts for 1/3 of the course grade.

Class Structure:

Classes will be composed of lectures (by the instructor and occasional guest lecturers who are experts in their fields), discussion, role plays and other practice exercises.
Practice Exercises:

The purpose of the Practice Exercises is to provide a context for students to practice the arts and disciplines of pastoral psychotherapy. Each PE will be composed of two or three students from the class. Evaluation and assessment tools may be used for students to provide feedback to one another to encourage each other’s development as therapists. The challenge, of course, is to provide feedback to one another that is constructive and useful, i.e. that both affirms where affirmation is warranted and honestly addresses areas of needed improvement. The ability to provide such feedback is as much a marker of one's growth as a professional as is one's ability to respond well to clients (indeed, the latter hinges on your awareness of, and your ability to do something useful with, the variety of things you experience with the client).

Take special note: all conversations within the PE context are confidential and must be treated as such. In other words, no conversation within the PE context may be discussed with anyone outside of that group except the course instructor. Any violation of confidentiality will result in grade reduction or expulsion from the class.

Required Readings

Pamela Cooper-White, Many Voices: Pastoral Psychotherapy in Relational and Theological Perspective.
Mary Jo Peebles-Kleiger, Beginnings: The Art and Science of Planning Psychotherapy
Jeffrey Young, et. al., Schema Therapy
Karen Maroda, Psychodynamic Techniques: Working with Emotion in the Therapeutic Relationship
Judith Mishne, selections from Multiculturalism and Therapeutic Process*
Kris Yi, “Transference and Race”*
Daniel Siegel, “An Interpersonal Neurobiology of Psychotherapy: The Developing Brain and the Resolution of Trauma”*
Kenneth Pargament, “Explicit Spiritual Assessment”*
Helene Russell and K. Brynolf Lyon, “Positioning Practical Theology: Contextuality, Diversity, and Otherness”*

Important Note Regarding Technology Etiquette

Students must turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices while the class is in session. Computers, Ipads, and other devices may be used only for the purpose of class work. Students using these devices for things other than class work will be asked to leave the class. If you have an emergency situation that requires the use of your cell phone, please get approval from the instructor.

Attendance and Incompletes

Attendance is expected at every class session. Students anticipating they will miss more than two sessions should enroll in the class at another time. Incompletes are strongly discouraged and are granted only at the discretion of the Academic Dean's office.
Course Outline

I. Introduction and Overview of Psychotherapeutic Work

January 19-- Introduction: Pastoral Psychotherapy at the Intrapsychic/Systemic Boundary, Theologically Understood

PE Task: Client role: tell a story from your life that you think comes close to illuminating most fully your sense of who you are as a person. Therapist role: explore the meaning of that story with the person, attempting to understand its significance and its implications for that person's experience of themselves.

January 26-- Beginning Therapy, An Overview

Reading: Peebles-Kleiger, pp.1-68
Russell and Lyon, “Positioning Practical Theology”

February 2-- Issues in Assessment, I

Reading: Peebles-Kleiger, pp. 69-165
Pargament, Two chapters on Spiritual Assessment*
Mishne, “Referral, Assessment, and Diagnosis”

PE Task: Client role: describe a situation in which you felt deeply misunderstood. Therapist role: explore the client's experience of that situation (what feelings were involved, how they responded to those feelings, analogous experiences in their early life) in your attempt to know more deeply what it was like for them to be misunderstood.

February 9-- Issues in Assessment, II

Reading: Peebles-Kleiger, pp. 166-242
Kris Yi, “Transference and Race”*

February 16-- Treatment Planning

Reading: Peebles-Kleiger, pp. 243-289

PE Task: TBA

February 23-- The Emotional Work of Therapy: A Psychoanalytic Perspective

Reading: Maroda, pp. 1-135
March 2-- The Emotional Work of Therapy: A Psychoanalytic Perspective  
Reading: Maroda, pp. 136-244

March 9-- Reading Week, No Class

March 16-- Schema Therapy: A Cognitive Behavioral Approach to Personality  
Reading: Young  
In-class exam

March 23-- Schema Therapy: A Cognitive Behavioral Approach to Personality  
Reading: Young

March 30-- Therapy and Interpersonal Neurobiology  
Reading: Siegal, “An Interpersonal Neurobiology of Psychotherapy: The Developing Brain and the Resolution of Trauma”*  
PE Task: Role play will be handed out in class

April 6-- Thinking Theologically about Therapy, I  
Reading: Cooper-White, pp. 1-94

April 11-- Thinking Theologically about Therapy, II  
Reading: Cooper-White, pp. 95-184

April 20-- Holy Week, No Class

April 27-- Thinking Theologically about Therapy, III  
Reading: Cooper-White, pp. 185-248

May 4-- Final In Class Examination