



**DRAFT<sup>1</sup>**

**MNST 5125 Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling**

North Park Theological Seminary

2026 Summer Intensive

3 credit hours

**Full Course Dates May 18<sup>th</sup> -July 10<sup>th</sup>**

**In person Intensive: June 1<sup>st</sup>-June 5<sup>th</sup>**

9am-5pm

1 hour lunch break

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Elizabeth O. Pierre, PhD

Nyvall Hall

Email: [copierre@northpark.edu](mailto:copierre@northpark.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment

**Please note:** Instructor will respond to emails within 24 hours between Monday-Friday(5pm)

Any emails sent on Fridays after 5pm, instructor will respond by noon on following Monday.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to help students become more effective and theologically reflective as pastoral caregivers. Developing listening and empathic skills will be integral to this course. It will provide an introduction to basic pastoral care frameworks along with its relationship to psychological and developmental theories. The role of empathy, intercultural perspectives, issues of trauma and loss in pastoral care will be reflected upon theologically and psychologically through lecture, readings, movies, and class and group discussions. Finally, this class will provide ways for students to grow in assessing their own strengths and growth edges and learn how this may facilitate or impede their effectiveness as pastoral care givers

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will understand the different modes of pastoral care and learn how to apply them in their ministry.
2. Students will understand fundamental psychological and developmental theories and how they assist with providing care and counseling.
3. Students will develop basic listening and empathy skills.
4. Students will reflect upon the cultural issues and their impact on pastoral care.
5. Students will learn how think critically, theologically, and systematically in pastoral care situations.

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<sup>1</sup> Schedule for topics/discussions may change during the intensive week.

6. Students will gain greater self-awareness in order to foster healthier interpersonal relationships and practice through assignments and group interactions online.

## REQUIREMENT FOR CLASS

### Individual Meetings

Each student will meet with Dr. Pierre for 15 minutes for a brief check in and to discuss class prior to first in person meeting.

**Meetings will occur between May 18<sup>th</sup>-May 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Student will sign up on CANVAS calendar for scheduling.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Doehring, Carrie. *The Practice of Pastoral Care: Postmodern approach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.

Fortune, Marie. *Sexual Violence: The Sin Revisited*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2005.

Gilbert, Roberta M. *Extraordinary relationships: A New Way of Thinking about Human Interactions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017.

Herman, Judith. *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Power*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2015.

Lartey, Emmanuel Y. *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral care and Counseling/* Second Edition. New York, NY: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003.

Anderson, Herbert, and Kenneth R. Mitchell. *All our Losses, all our Grievs: Resources for Pastoral Care*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983.

Nichols, Michael. P and Martha B. Strauss. *The Lost Art of Listening: How Learning to Listen Can Improve Relationships*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: The Guilford Press, 2021.

### Scanned Material<sup>2</sup>:

\* Clebsch, William A & Jaekle, Charles R. *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective*. New York: Aronson, 1983.

\*Capps, Donald. *Giving Counsel: A Minister's guidebook*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001.

\* Carter, Betty, Monica McGoldrick and Nydia Preto, *The Expanded Family Life Cycle: Individual, family, and Social Perspectives*. Fifth Edition. New York: Pearsons, 2015.

\*Clifton-Soderstrom, Michelle. "Covenant Freedom for All or Free-for-All."

And response to Article

\*Kelcourse, Felicia B., ed. *Human development and faith: Life-cycle stages of body, Mind, and soul*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004.

\* Pineda-Madrid, Nancy. *Suffering and Salvation in Ciudad Juarez*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011.

\* Pross, Christine. Burnout, "Vicarious Traumatization and its Prevention." *Torture*, 16, no.1(2006): 11-8

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<sup>2</sup> DO NOT PURCHASE THESE MATERIALS. I will scan and upload on CANVAS.

\* Sheppard, Phillis. "Mourning the loss of cultural selfobjects: Black embodiment and religious experience after trauma." *Practical Theology*, 1, no. 2 (2008): 233-257.

## ASSESSMENTS

### 1. READING REFLECTIONS and RESPONSES

Students will submit a brief written reflection on assigned readings and videos.

Respond to at least 2 of the readings when there are multiple readings in each module.

Students will also respond to at least 2 of their colleagues' reflections.

The discussions will be in groups of 5. You will respond only to those within your group.

**Initial Post:** On **Monday** evenings by 11pm.

Initial post is between 500-1000 words long, summarizing and critiquing the readings. Please include your own insights and questions and how the readings may impact how you engage ministry. I also encourage you to consider how COVID19 and other recent events (political, international, etc.) apply to what you are learning.

**Response:** On **Friday** evenings by 11pm.

Response to colleague's post is 100-500 words. Provide feedback, ask questions or for clarification and/ share resources.

### 2. 12 STEP/SUPPORT PAPER: Report on Support Groups

**DUE: SATURDAY, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm.**

#### **Instructions:**

**3-5-page paper**, double spaced, paper describing how support groups (see below).

Your congregants will undoubtedly struggle with various addictions. It is important to have an idea of their world and struggles and thus become more empathic and learn how to support these individuals and their families in our church communities. The meetings listed above can be found in almost every city. They have various times to accommodate most individuals. There are some of you in class who are traveling from outside of the Chicago area; if it is easier for you to attend a meeting in your community, feel free to do so. I have listed several websites where you can locate meetings for your convenience. PLEASE READ WEBSITES CAREFULLY and ATTEND AN **OPEN MEETING**. At an open meeting any person can attend. You do not have to identify yourself. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Here is what I would like you to include in your paper:

- Thoughts and feelings and prior and during the meeting.
- Describe the people and setting as vividly as you can. What do you see? Smell? Hear?
- Describe any concerns or fears that you have prior and during the meeting.

- Where did you sit and why?
- What makes such groups so appealing and healing for participants?
- Where do you see and experience God in the meeting?
- How might you apply what you learned and experienced personally or in your ministry context?

### **SUPPORT GROUPS**

- Alcoholic Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Al-Anon Family Groups
- Overeaters Anonymous
- Sex Addiction (SAA)

### **PRESENTATIONS**

#### **DUE WEEK OF INTENSIVE**

**The presentations are 25 minutes long.**

Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S.—43.8 million, or 18.5%—experiences mental illness in a given year.<sup>3</sup> As pastors you will inevitably encounter congregants who are struggling with a mental illness or mental illnesses. Therefore, it will be important to learn basic pastoral care skills to support congregants and their families.

Students will have the opportunity to research and present on a mental illness such as the following:

- Alcohol Use
- Bipolar
- Major Depression
- Eating Disorders (Binge Eating or Anorexia)
- General Anxiety Disorder
- Neurodevelopmental disorders such as: Autism, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity (ADHD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Substance Abuse (Feel free to focus on a specific substance).

Given the size of our class and the nature of this topic, I recognize that the presentation will not be very comprehensive, but you will notice that there are consistent themes among the mental illnesses which are critical for you to comprehend as pastors.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>



Psych Info, JSTOR, Psych articles and ATLA are just a few databases that will be helpful for your research. Please answer the following questions for your presentation:

- a. **What is the etiology(cause) of the mental illness/disorder?**
- b. **What are the symptoms?**
- c. **What treatments are helpful?**
- d. **What are the possible theological/spiritual implications for persons who struggle with this particular mental illness?**
- e. **What role does contextual factors such as race, class, gender, etc. play?**
- f. **Include a list of resources that will be helpful for supporting individuals with this mental health illness.**
- g. **Provide practical ways of how you will implement what you have learned within your context.<sup>4</sup>**

**NOTE: YOU WILL HAVE TIME DURING INTENSIVE WEEK TO WORK ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.**

## **2. FINAL PAPER**

**DUE SATURDAY, July 11<sup>th</sup>**

### **2. Genogram**

Genogram with 7-10 page, Times Roman 12, double spaced, written reflection (**Further instructions are posted on CANVAS**)

- This is an elaborate drawing of your family system, their relationships to each other and to you.
- Reflection will consist of the family dynamics, critical family issues, the strengths and growth edges of your family that emerge from the genogram and how this may impact your role as pastoral care giver and your ministry.

**OR**

### **3. 2. Case Study**

- Write a 7-10-page paper, Times Roman 12, double spaced on how you will provide pastoral care to **ONE** of the following families. Please note that you choose the context and racial identities of families and others involved.
  - 1) A family whose teenage son was shot and killed by a police officer during an altercation at his high school.
  - 2) A family whose teenage daughter was raped by an acquaintance at a high school party.
  - 3) A family whose young son was a victim of a school shooting.
  - 4) A co-pastor has been accused of sexual harassing a congregant.
  - 5) Congregants who have been affected by COVID19

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<sup>4</sup> Each student in the group will briefly state how they plan to apply what they learned.



- You are welcome to use a current case in your congregation. Please meet with instructor for further instruction.

In your case study:

- Include an outline of a sermon that you would preach to your congregation. Please include key biblical texts.
- Include the pastoral function (healing, sustaining, liberating, empowering, etc.) that would be most appropriate for this crisis. There is no right or wrong answer, just make sure to provide a rationale for your choice by drawing upon the materials from the course and/or other academic resources.

### **GRADING SCALE.**

A: Superior work (A = 95–100; A- = 93–94) This grade applies to exceptional work, the quality achieved through excellence of performance, not merely the fulfillment of the course requirements.

B: Above average (B+ = 91-92; B = 88-90; B- = 86-87) This grade applies to meritorious work, definitely above average, applied to more than the fulfillment of requirements.

C: Average (C+ = 84-85; C = 80-83; C – = 78-79) This grade applies to average work that still fulfills the course requirements.

D: Unsatisfactory (D+ = 76-77; D = 72-75; D – = 70-71) This grade, while indicating the student has completed a course, is to be understood as reflecting below average work. Course work receiving this grade will not be counted toward a degree.

F: Failure (69 and below) To receive credit in the subject, the course must be repeated.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

- **Attendance is required for successful completion of class.**
- **Late submission**
  - **Late submission of assignments will affect student's grade: a half grade deduction for each day late.**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment

and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–27.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

North Park is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this class related to a disability, contact the Center for Student Engagement by email [ada@northpark.edu](mailto:ada@northpark.edu) or phone at 773-244-5737 to schedule an appointment with the Learning Specialist. You can also stop by The Center for Student Engagement, located on the first floor of the Johnson Center.

## **TITLE IX**

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773-244-6276 or [TitleIX@northpark.edu](mailto:TitleIX@northpark.edu)) for information about reporting, campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University’s Title IX coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student’s safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking.

Please refer to North Park’s [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information and further details.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of “I” will automatically be changed to “F.” For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).



## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **June 1, 2026**

Introductions

Orientation to Course and Class Structure-Introductions

Listen, Listen, Listen! Growing in Listening and Empathic Skills

**Read:** Nichols, *The Art of Listening*, Part 1& 2

**Read:** Doehring, *The Practice of Pastoral Care*, Chapters 1-3

**Activity:** Role Plays

### **June 2, 2026**

Introduction to Psychological Theories and Family Systems

Overview of the Family Life Cycle and

**Instructions for Genogram Assignment**

Video in class: [Everybody Rides the Carousel](#)

**Read:** Carter and McGoldrick, *The Expanded Family Life Cycle*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Chapter 1

*Will be uploaded on Canvas*

### **June 3, 2026**

Cultural Issues in Pastoral Care

**Read:** Lartey, *In Living Color*, Chapter 1&2

**PRESENTATIONS**

### **June 4, 2026**

**Pastoral Care, Trauma, & Loss**

Read: Fortune, *Sexual Violence: Sin Revisited*: Chapters: 2, 6, & 10

Read: Mitchell & Anderson: Part 1

**Activity:** Role Plays

### **June 5, 2026**

Establishing Boundaries in Pastoral Care, Presentations, and Self Care Practices

**Read:** Doehring, *The Practice of Pastoral Care*, Chapter 4

**Read:** Capps, *Giving Counsel*, Chapter 5

**PRESENTATIONS**



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