

BEXLEY SEABURY SEMINARY

**Pastoral Theology – ML 336
3 Credit Course**

Term and Year Offered: Fall, 2022

Learning Environment: online synchronous sessions via Zoom; onsite in Chicago October 14-15, 2022 and asynchronous assignments.

Synchronous Meeting Dates/Times via Zoom: September 19, 2022 (4 pm to 5:30 pm central) and September 26, 2022 (4 to 5:30 pm central); October 24, 2022 (4 pm to 5:30 pm central) and November 28, 2022 (4 to 5:30 pm central);

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Onsite in Chicago: October 14, 2022 (11 am to 8 pm central – including dinner) and October 15, 2022 (8:30 am to 1 pm central – joint worship and lunch with “Pastoral Offices” class)

All synchronous and onsite sessions are required.

Instructor(s): Emlyn A. Ott

Contact Information: Email - eott@bexleyseabury.edu

Cell phone – *Will be made available in the syllabus posted in the Canvas site for this course.*

Office Hours: I wear several hats, including overseeing the Doctor of Ministry programs and directing a non-profit ecumenical agency located in Ohio, where I live.

Appointments available via phone or video conferencing Monday through Friday and as needed on weekends.

E-mail or text is the best way to reach me. Please give me a few options for time when a phone or Zoom conversation might work. I am available before and after synchronous times as well and am glad to schedule times to have general or specific conversation. I will be in touch with each of you and schedule an individual Zoom conversation before the start of the course to get an idea of your personal learning goals for the course. You will receive an invitation to schedule time with me the first week of September.

Course Description:

This course is a wholistic introduction to caring ministries focusing on the ultimate meanings and concerns of human beings. “Pastoral Theology” focuses on the spiritual/theological needs of persons as well as on psychodynamic concerns. The appropriate balance of listening and speaking when providing care are central to the course. Students will be introduced to the capacities cultivated to encourage self and community “soul work.” Particular attention will be paid to the practice of “presence” in conversation, engaging in theological perspectives on pastoral care, distinctions between “care” and “counseling,” injustice and the care of souls, and the care of persons and families through the process of death and dying.

Course Goals and Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

Goal 1: Develop an awareness of one's own view of the church and its roles in people's lives with perspective on personal formation for ministry.

Course Learning Outcome: You will have the capacity to articulate and claim a view of the church (affectionately known as "ecclesiology") in regards to pastoral theology that is Biblically faithful and theologically sound.

Curriculum outcome: MDiv 1.1, 1.3

Assessment: Posted responses to presentations; Paper # 2; Paper # 3

Goal 2: Develop a perspective on the nature of the human, what constitutes the spiritual, emotional and theological challenges of being human and the pastoral care giver's role in "soulcare."

Course Learning Outcome: You will have the capacity to articulate and claim a perspective that contributes toward the development of the pastoral care giver and the community which they serve which is Biblically sound, theologically coherent and psychologically meaningful.

Curriculum outcome: MDiv 3.3, 3.4

Assessment: Posted responses to presentations; Paper # 1; Paper # 2; class presentations

Goal 3: Expand awareness of the experience of human beings and how ministers, individuals and communities of faith can respond with integrity with special attention to responses to experiences of injustice, polarization, racism, anxiety and exclusion.

Course Learning Outcome: You will have the ability to further understand and articulate the human condition in a way that is theological and true about the realities of life, the human spirit and life with others.

Curriculum outcome: MDiv 3.3, 5.4

Assessment: Posted responses to readings and presentations; participation in conversations; verbatim conversation and peer/colleague process

Goal 4: Experience in-depth and thoughtful pastoral care and colleague conversations combined with feedback and review of dynamics.

Course Learning Outcome: You will have the capacity to listen well and respond to others with awareness and respect.

Curriculum outcome: MDiv 5.4

Assessment: Interactive conversations and exercises; verbatim conversation and peer/colleague process; paper # 1

Goal 5: Integrate an understanding of human beings and self and our relationship with God as reflected in the process of grief, death and dying and the church's theological, ritual and spiritual resources at the time of death and beyond.

Course Learning Outcome: You will have the capacity to employ Scripture, prayer, liturgy, pastoral care and reflection on the process of death and dying.

Curriculum outcome: MDiv 1.1, 1.3, 4.1, 5.4

Assessment: Paper # 3

Learning Methodology:

As a course with both online and onsite components, “Pastoral Theology” is organized so participants will spend time in both modalities with one another and with colleagues and guests in the class. The course will begin with reading a story in which “soul care” is embedded in a pastoral leadership challenge. Several “embodied” interactive conversations will be included in synchronous sessions so that each participant will have opportunities for experiencing and expanding their understanding of what is distinctive about the pastoral/priestly/deacon’s/lay leader’s relationship in leadership. Asynchronous readings and conversations will offer aspects of theologically based “care of the soul” conversations during the semester with individuals that are a part of the community in which each one lives and serves.

Before, between and after synchronous sessions, there are a combination of assignments that involve posting responses, viewing videos and/or reading material and responding to class prompts, as well as participating in a conversation with a “soul-seeker” in one’s fieldwork or ministry setting. That conversation will be processed in a structured colleague feedback framework during the October onsite class time. The asynchronous assignments can be accomplished keeping in mind the student’s schedule. Specific dates for completion are noted in the syllabus. There are assignments appointed for each week throughout the semester.

Each student will be expected to have consistent and strong internet access during synchronous sessions and the necessary equipment to engage fully in sessions. Students are also expected to join sessions from a location where they can listen well and take notes as needed. That is, not from trains, planes, automobiles or birthday parties. 😊
Students are also expected to be present in person in Chicago October 14-15, 2022. Only in the case of emergencies will exceptions be considered.

Required Books:

Bowler, Kate. *No Cure For Being Human (And Other Truths I Need to Hear)*. New York: Random House, 2021. ISBN: 978-0593230770

Doehring, Carrie. *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern Approach*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-664-23840-7

Huneven, Michelle. *Search*. New York: Penguin Press, 2022. ISBN: 978-0-593-30005-3

Kujawa-Holbrook, Sheryl and Karen B. Montagno, editors. *Injustice and the Care of Souls: Taking Oppression Seriously in Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.

Long, Thomas G. and Thomas Lynch. *The Good Funeral: Death, Grief and the Community of Care*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013.
ISBN: 978-0-664-23853-7

Palmer, Parker. *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2004. ISBN: 0-7879-7100-6

Overview of Assignments, Themes and Timeline:

Week of	Topics and Focus	Readings and Assignments to be completed this week. When there are synchronous sessions, readings and assignments should be completed prior to the time of the session with posting responses following class time.
September 5 (Semester begins September 6)	Orienting Self, World and IT	Post: Introduction of yourself on Canvas by 9/10 Read: Huneven Review: Canvas site and calendar
September 12	Building a class community	Post: Response to one another's intro by 9/14 Read: Bowler Post: Response to Canvas prompt on Bowler and Huneven by 9/17
Sync Class on September 19 4 to 5:30 pm central	<u>Focus of Synchronous Class Time:</u> <u>19th:</u> Community Building for Online Gatherings The All-Too Human Context for the Care of Souls	Read: Kujawa-Holbrook and Montagno, Chapters One, Two and Three Watch: "Scrubs", Season 8, Episode 2 (Hulu, Amazon Prime) Post: Response to Canvas prompt by 9/23
Sync Class on September 26 4 pm to 5:30 pm central	Keeping It All in Mind (Sort Of) Verbatim Preparations	Read: Doehring, Chapters One and Two Post: Response to Canvas prompt by 9/30
October 3	Engaging the Care: What is Embodiment and Relationship?	Engage: Soulcare Conversation (interactions that prepare for Paper #1) Read: Doehring, Chapters Three and Four
October 10	Conversations about Being Human	Post: Care of Soul Conversation, Verbatim and Reflection (paper #1) due 10/12
Onsite Class – October 14 – 11 am to 8 pm central October 15 – 8:30 am to 1 pm central	Engaging the Process of Collegial Support and Challenge	Read: Doehring, Chapter Five
October 17	Meaning in Presence and Participation Listening for Places of Strength and Vulnerability	Post: Response to Canvas prompt by 10/19 Read: Doehring, Chapter Six Engage: Chapter Choice from <i>Injustice and the Care of Souls</i>

Sync Class on October 24 4 to 5:30 pm	Engaging with the Reality of Pastoral Theology and Soulcare	Read: Doehring, Chapters Seven and Eight Post: Response to Chosen Chapter in Kujawa-Holbrook and Montagno by 10/31
October 31	The Impact of Lifelong Soulwork	Read: Palmer, Chapter 1-4 Engage: Paper # 2 Post: Response to Canvas prompt by 11/4
November 7	The Care of Souls During Grief and Loss	Post: Paper # 2 Read: Long and Lynch, pp. x - 110 Watch: Frontline, <i>The Undertaking</i> , 2007, Episode 13
November 14	Relationships and Rituals that Care for Soul and Community	Read: Long and Lynch, pp 112 – 237 Post: Response to prompt on Canvas by 11/12 Watch: Video of conversations with The Rev. Devin Rodgers and Ms. Jasmine Tuggles Post: Response to prompt on Canvas by 11/18
November 21	Break Week for Thanksgiving	
Sync Class November 28 4 to 5:30 pm central	The Process of Preparation for Funerals and the Care of Grieving Souls	Engage: Conversations with clergy colleagues around processes they use for funeral preparation and the care of souls; preparations for paper on Church's Role in the Midst of Death and Dying (Paper #3) Post: Response to prompt on Canvas by 12/2
December 5	Movement, Meaning and Hope	Write: Paper #3; Post: Paper # 3 due 12/9

Expectations and Requirements:

Involvement in class and engagement in processes for the class is an important part of the experience and will be taken into consideration in the grading process. (10% of grade)

Online Introduction Assignment. Well, these times are interesting! This class was developed this year as another hybrid experiment—2.0, with both online and onsite components. What we now have is an opportunity to explore and compare the dimensions of pastoral theology and care of the soul via digital engagement as well as peer interaction, worship and colleague groups onsite. Let’s listen to and observe how we experience this! What does embodiment look like when people are not physically together and when we are? And in what ways can communities of faith be “present” in new and expanding ways? All of that will be part of our time together. We are using this experience to explore how to engage in soul work in ways that are needed for our times. “Presence” and “soulcare” are encouraged by the way that we are, the ways we listen and the ways that we respond. We have an opportunity to build community in several ways!

Prior to 5 pm (central) on September 9, post an introduction of yourself to the rest of the class. Include in that intro a picture of yourself that reflects something about you that you would like to share, where you are located and in what context you serve. Say a sentence or two about your family, chosen or by birth. Then include a response to the following:

What person or persons would you say have impacted your understanding of being human, of faith, your spiritual life and left a permanent place in your heart and soul. Explain what it was about this person that contributed to your growth and the ways in which you were impacted. (5% of grade)

Online Posting. Throughout the semester, you will be given weekly reading, reviewing and posting as indicated. You are expected to respond to the prompts on Canvas in the assignment grid. (10% of grade)

Chapters of Interest in *Injustice and the Care of Souls*. The Kujawa-Holbrook/Montagno text is a required book for the course for many reasons. It is rich with application and observation of a variety of different pastoral theology contexts. We will all read some of the book. During the synchronous class time on October 24, you will be asked to share with the rest of the class what it was that you took from a particular chapter and how it has shaped your understanding (or not) of the perspective on justice in the care of souls. Just a 6-7 minute presentation and you are welcome to use creative forms of presentation. (10% of grade)

Paper # 1 - Care of Soul Conversation, Verbatim and Reflection 7-8 pp. Due 10/12/22 posted on Canvas (25% of grade)

Early in September, make contact with your fieldwork supervisor, colleague or pastor. Be in conversation with them about an on-going relationship that you would like to develop in pastoral care around a person associated with the ministry setting that your supervisor, etc. would view as someone grappling with “soulwork.” In particular, consider someone with whom there is “wrestling” around the current challenges faced in response to internal or external spiritual questions and/or social justice regarding racism, diversity and violence against “others.”

Following that recommendation, you are asked to have at least two phone, physically distant, in person or video conference conversations of 30 to 45 minutes with the person recommended by

your supervisor or colleague. Using Doehring's overview of verbatims and your own experience of verbatims in CPE, take one of the conversations held with the person with whom you spend this time:

- As soon as possible, write down the sequence of the conversation, noting the flow and particularly the jarring moments, transitions, or shifts in depth or breadth. Prepare a complete script of the conversation, numbering each line for easy reference. Your experience with verbatims in CPE is a helpful foundation. Include a script of no more than three pages of the conversation as a part of the paper submitted.
- Make use of one page of your paper describing the bullet points which follow. Describe what you knew about the person before you began the conversation. Describe the circumstances in which the conversation took place, how it began and how it ended.
- Include a description about what you notice of the physical aspects of the visit: location, comfort, body language both in yourself and the conversation partner. Note in particular the impact of the way that you are interacting (in person or via other means) on the comfort level and focus.
- Include an information describing your own emotional, spiritual and physical state at the time of the visit. Make reference to your own spiritual and theological formation and connect at least 3 references to embedded theology, lived theology, trust, and some of the aspects of being with another that make it difficult for you to listen. How does this encounter challenge you to further learning about yourself?
- With the remaining 2 to 3 pages, make use of your thinking about the unique spiritual journey of this person and the unique place of the perspective of soul work in the life of this individual with whom you have visited. What would you consider to be his or her struggles/pains/hopes/beliefs? Describe what you would consider to be the spiritual/emotional/community challenges which you believe was at the heart of this conversation using at least three of the resources used in class.

(If you do not have a ministry or fieldwork site, see the instructor ASAP to get some alternative resources.)

Your case will be read by others in the class as well as the instructor and we will covenant to keep the material confidential.

Paper # 2 - Defining and Claiming Your Understanding of "pastoral theology" – 3-4 pp. **Due 11/11/22 posted on Canvas** (15% of grade)

Making use of your emerging perspective on the unique place that pastoral care and theology has in your vocation and the life of the church, create a 3-4 page belief paper that currently describes how it is that you approach the care of souls as a ministry leader including your view of the challenge of being human. Include how your perspective intersects with your personal faith and the perspective that your denomination has on pastoral/priestly/diaconal or lay leadership.

This paper is for use in this class, and for your own formation, and will not be shared in any other context.

Include in your paper Biblical and theological perspective that you hold as formative, as well as at least three references to resources (Huneven, Doehring, Montagno, Gill-Austern, Palmer, Long and Lynch) that are a part of this course.

- Include what God is doing in creation, as an “earth-maker, pain-bearer and life-giver”.
- Given your experience of life, leadership, relationships and readings, describe what you consider to be the place of storytelling, of context, of listening, and of theological presence in the care of souls and the impact of pastoral care.

Paper #3 - Defining and Claiming Your Understanding of the Church’s Role in the Midst of Death and Dying – 7-8 pp **Due 12/9/22** (25% of grade)

In this paper you are to define your ecclesiology with respect to the role of the pastoral theologian in the process of death and dying.

In other words, you are to answer the question, “What is the church’s role, and my perspective, in the proclamation of the resurrection and its impact on the care of individuals, families and communities at the time of death?”

Interview a pastor of your choice (supervisor or colleague) and determine from that person their process for working with families at the time of death. Making use of that information and other aspects of class presentations, readings and discussion, [prepare a template for your own funeral](#) in a cohesive form that tells a story and communicates the main points of the planning including:

- a. Lessons and musical suggestions
- b. A liturgical/worship framework for the service.
- c. Suggested location for service, burial, cremation; overview of items that you would need to take care of prior to your death.
- d. A letter to key family members expressing the most important pieces of your faith and life that you would like them to have following your death.
- e. Your personal rationale for preparing the service as you have, making use of Biblical, theological and pastoral care perspectives.

You are welcome to be as creative and expansive as you like in the presentation of the ideas. In pulling all of this together, conclude with at least two pages responding to the following:

- Expand on your view of the church’s role in soulcare in general, and in caring for those in the midst of loss, grief and death. This is an extension of your ecclesiology made practical and real.
- Give your critical appraisal (positive and negative) of at least two or three of the understandings of the church’s role in the care of souls that you have encountered in this class.
- A theological understanding of the church’s “mission” and how the care of souls is part of this mission

About Written Assignments and other Details:

Submit all assignments on the Canvas course web site. Your work will be returned electronically unless one of us is subject to technical disaster. *Please* do not ask to negotiate due dates. Now that you know when your assignments are due, plan accordingly.

All materials submitted via Canvas will be returned through Canvas or via email. The instructor will do her best to return materials with feedback and a grade within two weeks of the due date of the assignment. Posting assignments will be responded to within a week.

The authors of written works, characters in videos and via Zoom conversation and your colleagues in class are your dialogue partners. Each of your written assignments needs to show evidence of how you are interacting with what you are reading, experiencing and hearing. Each of your written assignments needs to show evidence that you are taking those conversations a step deeper than regurgitation.

Regarding Bexley Seabury Process:

If you are taking this course for continuing education credits or as an auditor, you will be expected to be present for all synchronous sessions, to read the course material and to respond to the posting questions for the course.

Worship opportunities are integrated into the class sessions each time that the class meets.

Students taking the course for credit are expected to complete the evaluation as part of their participation in the learning experience. Auditors are encouraged to complete the evaluation as well. Evaluations will be available in Populi near the end of the course and will remain open until the grade deadline for each term. Evaluations should be completed based on your experience of the course and should not be based on your final grade. For this reason, during the grading period, you will not be able to see your grade in Populi until you have completed the evaluation. After the grade deadline, you will be able to see your grade in Populi, but you will no longer be able to share your voice through the course evaluation.

Better Practices for Zoom Sessions

Zoom works best when certain criteria are met:

- The latest version of Zoom is installed. Periodically check for updates and download the latest version.
- One computer::one user. Everyone should have their own device (including camera and mic) and zoom link. This helps everyone come to the space individually and with equal access to interaction.
- If you are in a shared or noisy space, use headphones/earbuds. In general, it is normally best to keep your mic muted unless you are speaking. This helps minimize background noise.
- Minimize distractions around you (try to be in the same location for the duration of the session). If you **must** be in transit, mute your mic.
- Plan ahead to ensure you have a stable internet connection for the duration on the session. If your connection becomes unstable, it may be helpful to turn off your video when you speak.
- Otherwise, cameras should generally be on, unless you need to step away to take care of something. This contributes toward demonstrating your presence and participation in class during the session.

Course Grading & Feedback:

All course assignments will be reviewed based on the following rubrics:

1. Ability to describe pastoral theology in a Biblically faithful and theologically sound way.
2. Ability to articulate what contributes toward the development of the spiritual and theological foundations of the pastoral care giver and the community which they serve.
3. An understanding of the human condition in a way that is theological and true about the realities of life, the human spirit and life with others.
4. Demonstrating the capacity to listen well and respond to others with awareness and respect.
5. Ability to employ Scripture, prayer, liturgy, pastoral care and reflection during the process of death and dying.

Points will be assessed based on the percentage of the course grade that has been assigned to that course requirement and the clarity with which the rubrics are demonstrated in the assignment.

Please be aware that the Canvas gradebook reflects cumulative grades for assignments for your course, but the final official grade for the course will be recorded manually by the instructor in Populi.

Bexley Seabury requires a minimum grade of C to pass a course.		
Grade	Points	Description
A (4.00)	96-100	Superior/Mastery
A- (3.67)	90-95	Excellent
B+ (3.33)	87-89	Very Good
B (3.00)	84-86	Good (high)
B- (2.67)	80-83	Good (low)
C+ (2.33)	75-79	Acceptable (high)
C (2.00)	70-74	Acceptable/Adequate
F (0)	< 70	Unacceptable (Fail)
A grade of "P" in a Pass/Fail course is equivalent to a grade of C or above.		

A Word about Assessment:

Bexley Seabury Seminary regularly evaluates the quality of our programs using a variety of data, including documents that are deposited into student portfolios. These portfolios consist of designated student work (artifacts) from each course, along with the instructor's graded artifact. The assessment artifact for this course is Paper #3.

We use your portfolio to assess student learning (in the aggregate) and the effectiveness of our curricula in reaching desired goals and objectives. This process does not involve any further evaluation of your work for grading purposes. No identifying information will be included in any evaluation or report provided to our accreditors or other outside parties. For further information, see the Student Handbook. You may also talk with your instructor, your advisor, the Assessment Coordinator (Lelia Fry, lfry@bexleyseabury.edu), or the Academic Dean, (Jason Fout, jfout@bexleyseabury.edu)

All students in Bexley Seabury courses are expected to be familiar with the following information that is provided on Canvas:

- Academic Policies and Forms;
- Requests for Withdrawals, Extensions and Incompletes;
- Technological Requirements and Assistance;
- Writing Guidelines and Assistance;
- Course Netiquette;
- Prohibition of Plagiarism.