

INTRODUCTION AND SYLLABUS

Modern counseling has its roots in the spiritual formation practices of the church over the centuries. Christian counselors can draw from the best of modern counseling research, but also have the resources of the word, the Holy Spirit, and the church to guide their cooperation with God in bringing care and healing to hurting people. The ultimate goal of counseling is to help people become conformed to the image of Christ and to display the fruit of the spirit as expressed in Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

A. COURSE CONTENT

This course provides students with

- a. An introduction to a theological and psychological model of humans that can guide our understanding of how people develop in either healthy or unhealthy ways
- b. A model of the counseling process that that will guide them in helping people grow and change
- c. Practice in basic therapeutic skills

B. COURSE MATERIALS

The primary text book is Clinton, T., & Ohlschlager, G. (2002). *Competent Christian Counseling*. New York, NY: Random House.

c. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course, students will be able to

- a. Articulate a Biblical and clinical foundation for counseling.
- b. Articulate the basic roles and goals of the counselor and client relationship with an understanding of the possibilities, limitations, and demands of counseling.
- c. Use basic counseling interview skills in a clinically professional and ethically sensitive manner following a generic model of the counseling process.
- d. Develop an initial awareness of their own strengths and limitations as counselors.

- e. Have a framework for evaluating the counseling resources, strategies, and services available in their communities.

D. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- a. Students will attend 16 hours of class which will consist of a mix of lectures on the course material and role-play practice of listening skills.
- b. Students will complete at least 15 hours in reading course materials and writing brief responses to the materials.
- c. Students will spend at least 15 hours preparing a special research paper that will give them opportunity to apply the course content to their own practical areas of ministry. For BA level students, this paper must be at least 10 pages in length. For MA level students, the paper must be at least 15 pages in length.
- d. Students will take the final exam in order to evaluate their understanding of basic course concepts. Final exam questions will be taken from the content in this document and from the assigned readings in the textbook. The final exam will be multiple-choice.

E. READING AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- a. Read all 8 chapters of this document and write answers to the questions at the end of each chapter. Each question is worth 1 point.
- b. Read pages 1-293, 712-724 in *Competent Christian Counseling* (Clinton & Ohlschlager, 2002) and answer the following questions. Each question is worth up to 4 points:
 1. What are the three classifications of Christian counseling and how do they differ from each other?
 2. What are the three phases of Christian counseling Clinton and Ohlschlager present and the goals of each phase?
 3. What is the soul and how is an understanding of the soul important to Christian counseling?
 4. What are some clinical cues for suspecting that a biological problem is disguised as a psychological problem?
 5. What is the problem with schoolism as a theoretical understanding of counseling?
 6. What is systematic eclecticism?
 7. Why is Christian character so important to the work of a Christian counselor?

8. Define empathy, and describe what it is not.
 9. What are the stages of readiness for change, what characterizes each stage, and why is knowing the readiness stage of a client important?
 10. What attitudes and behaviors should a Christian counselor be ready to confront?
- c. From Part IV and Part V of *Competent Christian Counseling*, select and read two chapters, then write a 2 page summary of the chapters. The two chapters selected can come from either Part IV or Part V, or both. Each chapter summary is worth up to 5 points.

F. SPECIAL PROJECT

Using the text book, class notes, and any other materials you believe helpful, write a research paper on some aspect of Christian counseling that is personally relevant to your ministry or life. You must have your special topic approved by the instructor. Students taking this course at the Bachelors level must write at least a ten

(10) page research paper. Masters level students must write at least a fifteen (15) page research paper. The paper is worth 60 points.

G. BENEFITS OF THE COURSE

The sin in our fallen world results in people experiencing pain in their inner worlds and in their relationships. By having a theological and psychological understanding of people, basic listening skills, and guided by the Holy Spirit, we can help people seek God, see His hand in their struggles, and grow through their pain to become mature in their faith.