This course explores Christian pastoral care. Why is pastoral care necessary? What are its historical foundations? What methods do we use in providing effective pastoral care? Students will be encouraged to explore their pastoral identity through self-awareness of their own emotional history and social location. Deep listening and empathy will be cultivated through the assignments, case studies and role playing in class. We will survey a variety of pastoral care contexts and issues, as well as the importance of ethical boundaries and self-care. Learning from each other, including student presentations, is an important component of this course.

Required Readings: A courseware book has been prepared and is available at the University Bookstore. Readings not in the courseware book are preceded by an asterix* and are on reserve at the Milton Good Library.

EVALUATION:

10% Class Attendance
Being present and participating in class discussion and activities is essential for the pedagogical method of this course. Students are expected to come to class having read the required readings for the day. Be prepared to provide a two or three sentence answer to: “What is this reading about?”, as well as a question that this reading raises for you. If you are unable to make the class, please let me know if you will be absent.

10% Journal “Receiving Empathetic Caregiving”, 500-750 words Due: September 21
The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on your experience of being a “care receiver”. Choose a significant conversation you have had in your life, where someone showed care to you in a difficult time. Were there non-verbal clues that showed you this person was caring? How did the person encourage you to share your story? What was their response to what you shared? Was there anything about the encounter that made you feel at ease/uncomfortable? How did you know that the person empathized with you?

10% Journal “My Identity as a Caregiver”, 1000-1250 words Due: October 5
The purpose of this assignment is to encourage reflection on yourself as a spiritual caregiver. What strengths does your personal/family history equip you with for this work? What challenges do you face as a caregiver as a result of your personal/family history? Give an example of a caring conversation you had with someone where your history impacted the type of caregiving you were able to provide.

20% Paper: “Caregiving Partners” Paper, 1250-1500 pages Due: October 26
Choose a partner, and schedule two 60 minute blocks of time together. In the first 30 minutes one of you will be a caregiver, and one will be the care-receiver. The caregiver will come with an identity (e.g. a woman in a nursing home, a man who is unemployed). The conversation will likely work best if you assume an identity of someone you know well who is going through this type of pastoral issue. The care receiver will share a few sentences about the
context for this meeting, (e.g. “We are meeting for the first time, I am a fifty-year-old man having heart surgery, you are a chaplain.”) Have a timed 30-minute pastoral conversation. After the 30 minutes, come out of your roles, and debrief the conversation for an additional twenty minutes.

For the care receiver:
1. Did you feel heard?
2. Did you feel cared for?
3. Where did you feel most comfortable? Where did you feel most uncomfortable?
4. Is there something you would have liked to share, but you never got a chance?

For the caregiver:
1. At what points in the conversation did you feel you were making a connection?
2. Were there any points where you felt at a loss or uncomfortable?
3. How well do you think you encouraged sharing about topics of meaning and/or faith?
4. Is there something you would have liked to talk about, but didn’t know how to ask?

At your next meeting, reverse roles.
Write a paper about this experience addressing your experience of being both a caregiver and a care receiver. Be sure to address the four questions for each role. What did you learn about the caregiving role, and yourself as a caregiver through this exercise? Be sure to include not just your own impressions, but the feedback you received from your partner.

20% Student Seminar, 25-30 minutes       Scheduled on either: November 16, 23 or 30
In consultation with the instructor, you will choose a pastoral care context and research how best to provide pastoral care in that context. Examples could include a physical health crisis, a mental illness, a disability, the birth or death of a family member, unemployment, or divorce. The presentation will:
1. Describe the pastoral issue and why you chose it.
2. Outline pastoral concerns and responses.
3. Comment on the theological questions this issue raises.
4. Include an annotated bibliography (to be handed out) with at least five entries recommending the best resources on this topic.
5. A prayer you have written for people experiencing this issue.
6. A short (5-10 minute) facilitated discussion where you will respond to and ask questions on this issue.
You will be evaluated on each of these points, as well as your skill in engaging the class.

30% Research paper, 2500-3000 words       Due: December 14
Write a research paper on the pastoral care issue of your seminar topic.
1-2 pages: describe the pastoral care issue
5-6 pages: outline pastoral concerns and responses
3-4 pages: explore the lived theological implications of this pastoral care issue
Your bibliography will show an extensive research of this topic, including books and articles.

NOTES:

Confidentiality
In the course of our discussions as we explore pastoral caregiving, the students or instructor may wish to share stories of a personal nature. It is expected that personal stories you hear in class will not be repeated without the express permission of the person who told the story.
Cautions
Pastoral care sometimes involves interacting with people in the stressful and disturbing times of their lives. We will be discussing these various contexts for pastoral care. Depending on your history, this may cause emotional stress or uncomfortableness. Topics will be announced ahead of time, talk to the instructor if there is a discussion that you feel unable to attend.

Citations and Plagiarism
Your sources must be fully documented, according to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). The latest edition is available on-line here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/ch14/ch14_toc.html. Please use the notes and bibliography system rather than the parenthetical author/date system. Using undocumented quotations from published sources, or submitting work that is not your own will have serious ramifications for your academic career.

Tardy Assignments
Punctual submission of assignments is expected. Late assignments will be accepted only if you have talked to the instructor ahead of time for an extension.

CLASS SCHEDULE & REQUIRED READINGS

**September 14**
**Week One:** Pastoral Ministry: Who, What, When, Where, How and Always Why
Skill Development: Your Body, Your Identity

**September 21**
**Week Two:** Underpinnings: Scriptural and Historical
Skill development: Centering
Readings:

**September 28**
**Week Three:** Knowing the Caregiver
Skill development: Self-awareness
Readings:


**October 5**

**Week Four:** Developing a Theology of Pastoral Care  
Skill development: Empathy  
Readings:  


**FRIDAY, October 14**

**Week Five:** The Location of Pastoral Care  
Skill development: Communicating Empathy  
Readings:  


October 19
Week Six: The Focus of Pastoral Care
Skill development: Encountering Emotions
Readings:


October 26
Week Seven: Varieties of Pastoral Care
Skill development: Paying Attention to Reaction and Over-reaction
Readings:


November 2
Week Eight: Pastoral Care in Worship
Skill development: Connecting with Community
Readings:


**November 9**  
**Week Nine:** Topics in Crisis Care: Grief and Loss  
Skill development: Availability and Pacing  
Readings:  


**November 16**  
**Week Ten:** Topics in Crisis Care: Violence  
Skill development: Being a Pastoral Presence and Knowing When to Refer  


**November 23**  
**Week Eleven:** Boundaries and Self-Care  
Skill development: What you Can/Can't Do, What you Should/Shouldn't Do  
Readings:  

November 30

**Week Twelve: A Pastoral Care Identity**

**Readings:**
