

Conrad Grebel University College
University of Waterloo
TS 684: Pastoral Care
Winter 2024

Class Time: Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:50

Location: Room 2201

Instructor: Assistant Professor Carol Penner

Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00 – 12:00 or by appointment

Office Location: Room 2112

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Course Description:

This course explores Christian pastoral care. Why is pastoral care necessary? 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. A variety of pastoral care contexts and issues will be surveyed, as well as the importance of ethical boundaries and self-care.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will be able to describe the biblical roots and theological importance of pastoral care.
2. Students will be able to identify a variety of pastoral care approaches for a specific pastoral context.
3. Students will develop effective communication skills for pastoral care.
4. Students will analyze how their own contexts (age, gender, culture, class, race, sexual orientation, geography), personal history, and emotions shape their work as a pastoral caregiver.
5. Students will give and receive feedback about their pastoral caregiving skills, with an emphasis on empathy that is observable.
6. Students will be able to delineate the ethical obligations of a pastoral caregiver, including healthy boundaries and the importance of self-care.
7. Students will be able to identify how pastoral care is delivered in culturally diverse congregational and community settings, with special attention to the marginalized.

8. Students will understand the importance of and be resourced for next steps in life-long learning.

Required Reading Materials:

Texts:

Baab, Lynne M. *Nurturing Hope: Christian Pastoral Care in the Twenty-First Century*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018.

Savage, John. *Listening & Caring Skills: A Guide for Groups and Leaders*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Articles:

Boers, Arthur Paul. "Hazards, Hazards Everywhere," in *Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior*, pp. 32-56. Herndon: Alban Institute, 1999.

Calder, Andy. "'God Has Chosen this for You' - 'Really?'" A Pastoral and Theological Appraisal of this and Some Other Well-Known Clichés used in Australia to Support People with Disabilities." *Journal of Religion, Disability & Health* 8, no. 1-2 (2004): 5-19.

Dykstra, Robert. "The Intimate Stranger," in *Images of Pastoral Care: Classic Readings*, edited by Robert Dykstra, pp. 123-136. St Louis: Chalice Press, 2005.

Ekblad, Bob. "Reading and Praying the Psalms," *Reading the Bible with the Damned*, pp. 127-153. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Faber, Heije. "The Circus Clown," in *Images of Pastoral Care: Classic Readings*, edited by Robert Dykstra, pp. 85-93. St Louis: Chalice Press, 2005.

Hamman, Jaco J. "The Capacity to be Alone," in *Becoming a Pastor: Forming Self and Soul for Ministry*, Revised Edition, pp. 114-144. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2014.

Howard Merritt, Carol. "Fostering Intergenerational Relationships," in *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation*, pp. 19-38. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2007.

Lebacqz, Karen and Ronald G. Barton. "An Ethical Framework," in *Sex in the Parish*, pp. 113-132. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991.

Liberty, Patricia L. "Grief and Loss: Dealing with Feelings," in *When a Congregation is Betrayed: Responding to Clergy Misconduct*, edited by Beth Ann Gaede, pp. 40-45. Lanham: Alban Institute, 2006.

McClintock, Karen A. "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling," in *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*, pp. 115-130. Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2004.

McCloughry, Roy and Wayne Morris. "From Care to Friendship," in *Making a World of Difference: Christian Reflections on Disability*, pp. 83-93. London: SPCK, 2002.

Meller, William H and Robert H. Albers. "Depression," in *Ministry with Persons with Mental Illness and Their Families*, edited by Robert H. Albers, William H. Meller & Steven D. Thurber, pp. 11-32. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Scheib, Karen D. "Reading Lifestories: The Art of Close Reading," in *Pastoral Care: Telling the Stories of Our Lives*, pp. 101-118. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016.

Scheib, "Restorying in Transition and Travail," in *Pastoral Care*, pp. 119-139.

Schlager, Bernard. "Coming Out," in *Ministry Among God's Queer Folk: LGBTQ Pastoral Care*, edited by Bernard Schlager and David Kundtz, pp. 124-152. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019.

Smith, Kathleen S. "Worship in Times of Crisis," in *Stilling the Storm: Worship and Congregational Leadership in Difficult Times*, pp. 53-89. Lanham: Alban Institute, 2006.

Taylor, Charles W. "Race, Ethnicity, and the Struggle for an Inclusive Church and Society," in *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict*, edited by Pamela D. Couture and Rodney J. Hunter, pp. 152-164. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995.

Evaluations:

Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
Journal: Receiving Empathetic Caregiving	10%	January 16
Journal: My Identity as a Caregiver	10%	February 1
Major Seminar	40%	March 19, 26 April 2
Prayer Assignments	10%	January 23, Feb 13, 27, March 5
Critical Book Review	30%	April 9

Assignments:

#1. Journal: Receiving Empathetic Caregiving (10%)

Goal: To demonstrate personal reflection on the pastoral role and develop insight into the effects of empathetic caregiving.

Due Date: January 16

Length: 500-750 words

Details: Upload your assignment on LEARN, it should be double spaced, in a Word document

Choose a significant conversation from your own life, where a pastor or church leader showed care to you in a difficult time. Journal about this experience.

Questions to help your reflection:

How did the pastor/leader encourage you to share your story?

What helped to make you feel at ease or comfortable enough to share your story either before or during the conversation?

Were there non-verbal cues that showed you this person was caring?

What was their response to what you shared?

Who talked the most in this encounter?

Was there silence in this encounter?

Did the pastor acknowledge the emotions you were feeling?

Did the topic of faith or God emerge in the conversation, and how did that happen?

How did you know that the pastor empathized with you?

What significance did this conversation have for you?

#2. Journal: My Identity as a Caregiver (10%)

Goal: To demonstrate self-awareness of your own identity as a pastoral caregiver.

Due Date: February 1

Length: 1000-1250 words

Explore how your own identity impacts your work as a pastoral caregiver.

Questions to help your reflection:

What strengths do you bring to this work from your personal/family history?

What challenges do you face as a caregiver as a result of your personal/family history?

How does your personality impact your caregiving role? As you respond, refer to personality testing that you may have done.

How comfortable are you with your own emotions and with talking about emotions?

Outline an example of a caring conversation you have had with someone that you think went well, or perhaps didn't go well.

a) What relationship did you have with the person you were helping?

b) How did your personal/family history impact the caregiving you offered.

c) What were the emotions in the conversation, and were they acknowledged?

d) Looking back with hindsight at that conversation, is there anything you would have done differently?

#3. Major Seminar Presentation (40%)

Goal: To demonstrate the ability to outline the issues arising within a specific pastoral care context, and to describe a variety of pastoral care approaches to that issue. This ability is important for future lifelong learning.

Due Date: March 19, 26 or April 2

Length: A 25-30 minute presentation, and then lead a 30 minute discussion

Choose an issue from the list below that resonates with a pastoral care concern that has touched someone you know. Note: you must confirm your topic with the instructor.

Serious illness

Death and Bereavement

Miscarriage or stillbirth

Sexual abuse or assault

Palliative care

Incarceration

Disability (choose a specific type)

Childbirth/arrival of a baby

Mental illness (choose a specific type)

Marriage breakdown and divorce

Suicide

Conflict in the church

Addiction (choose a type of addiction)

Homelessness

Marriage preparation

Your seminar should include

a) a description of the pastoral care issue

b) pastoral needs and responses, including emotions of people experiencing this topic

c) analysis of how this issue is currently being addressed in your congregation/community, including any suggestions you have for improving this

d) ethical and boundary issues for pastoral caregivers in this context

e) a prayer you might use in a pastoral visit with someone who is undergoing this crisis

f) an example of how this issue could be addressed in a worship service. If you wanted to raise this issue in a sermon, what text might you use? How might you mention this generally in a congregational prayer (not related to a specific person)?

g) a research bibliography that includes at least 3 books and 4 articles

h) choose an article or chapter for the class to read on your topic. This should be scanned and emailed to the instructor one week before your seminar so that it can be uploaded to LEARN.

i) a two-page handout to share that will serve as a resource for students (includes bibliography)

j) prepare questions to engage the class about their own pastoral experiences with this topic, and lead the discussion.

#4. Prayer Assignments (10%)

Pastoral caregiving often involves praying with people. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage thoughtful praying. Four times during the semester you will receive a handout the week before with a number of prayers on a specific topic gleaned from various traditions. Read these prayers, paying attention to what aspects of this pastoral issue they are addressing, and how they do it. Then write your own short prayer. Students will submit their prayer to LEARN

before they come class, but they will bring a copy to share in class, to foster discussion about the different ways that we pray.

Due Date: January 23, Feb 13, 27, March 5

Length: less than 175 words

#5. Critical Book Review (30%)

Goal: To deepen knowledge in a specific area of pastoral care of your own choosing.

Due Date: April 9

Length: 750-1000 words

Read one of the books in this list and provide a brief synopsis of the book (250 words), a brief critical review (250 words) where you comment on its organization, its clarity and its ideas. Finally reflect on how relevant this book is to your ministry context, and whether it has deepened your understanding or practice (250-500 words). Instead of footnotes, you can use parentheses with a page number to document quotes.

Choose one of these books to review:

Boers, Arthur Paul. *Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior*, Herndon: Alban Institute, 1999.

Ekblad, Bob. *Reading the Bible with the Damned*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Fowler, Gene. *Caring through the Funeral: A Pastor's Guide*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004.

Hamman, Jaco J. *Becoming a Pastor: Forming Self and Soul for Ministry*, Revised Edition. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2014.

Howard Merritt, Carol. *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation*. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2007.

Ministry Among God's Queer Folk: LGBTQ Pastoral Care, edited by Bernard Schlager and David Kundtz. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading
1. Jan 9	What is Pastoral Care? <i>Goal: to explore the varieties of pastoral care in today's changing landscape, and its biblical roots</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 1-44.

Week	Topic	Reading
2. Jan 16	Identity and Pastoral Care <i>Goal: to explore the theological underpinnings of being a pastoral caregiver.</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 45-66, 81-90. Dykstra, "The Intimate Stranger," pp. 123-136.
3. Jan 23	Worship as Pastoral Care <i>Goal: to reflect on how worship functions as pastoral care in our lives.</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 93-126 Group A: Smith, "Worship in Times of Crisis", pp. 53-89. Group B: Ekblad, "Reading the Psalms", pp. 127-153.
4. Jan 30	Listening and Presence: The Key to Pastoral Care <i>Goal: to develop listening skills and foster empathy</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 127-148. Faber, "The Circus Clown," pp. 85-93. Savage, <i>Listening and Caring Skills</i> , pp. 11-27.
5. Feb 6	Contextual Pastoral Care: Knowing Yourself, Knowing Others <i>Goal: to establish self-reflection practices and to begin exploring pastoral care in diverse contexts</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 69-79. Savage, <i>Listening and Caring Skills</i> , pp. 29-48. Group A: Taylor, "Race, Ethnicity, and the Struggle for an Inclusive Church and Society," pp. 152-164. Group B: Schlager, "Coming Out," pp. 124-152.
6. Feb 13	Emotion: Not Just the Facts <i>Goal: to recognize emotion in those receiving care as well as the caregiver.</i>	Savage, <i>Listening and Caring Skills</i> , pp. 49-62. Liberty, "Grief and Loss: Dealing with Feelings," pp. 40-45. Meller, William H and Robert H. Albers. "Depression," pp. 11-32.
	Reading Week	
7. Feb 27	The Stories We Tell: Narrative Pastoral Care <i>Goal: to examine storytelling as a model of transformative pastoral care.</i>	Savage, <i>Listening and Caring Skills</i> , pp. 77-100. Group A: Scheib, "Reading Lifestories," pp. 101-118. Group B: Scheib, "Restorying in Transition and Travail," pp. 119-139.
8. Mar 5	Pastoral Care and Boundaries <i>Goal: to foster awareness of power and how it can be abused in pastoral care</i>	Boers, "Hazards, Hazards Everywhere," pp. 32-56. Group A: Lebacqz & Barton. "An Ethical Framework," pp. 113-132. Group B: McClintock, "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling," pp. 115-130.

Week	Topic	Reading
9. Mar 12	Pastoral Care in Context <i>Goal: to explore the importance of compassion and humility in the variety of human experiences</i>	Savage, <i>Listening and Caring Skills</i> , pp. 117-139. Group A: Calder, "'God Has Chosen this for You' - 'Really?'," pp. 5-19. Group B: McCloughry & Morris, "From Care to Friendship," pp. 83-93.
10. Mar 19	Pastoral Care in Congregations <i>Goal: to explore the diversity of pastoral care approaches</i> <i>Student Presentations</i>	Merritt, "Fostering Intergenerational Relationships," pp. 19-38. & student assigned readings
11. Mar 26	Pastoral Care and a Theology of Hope <i>Goal: to articulate the theological assumptions of effective pastoral care</i> <i>Student Presentations</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 187-192. & student assigned readings
12. Apr 2	Nurturing Spirituality <i>Goal: to develop ways of talking about spirituality</i> <i>Student Presentations</i>	Baab, <i>Nurturing Hope</i> , pp. 149-186. & student assigned readings

UWaterloo Policies

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Arts: [Academic Integrity website](#) University of Waterloo: [Academic Integrity Office](#)

Notes

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, with readiness to discuss them. If you are unable to make the class, please let the instructor know by email if you will be absent. If you miss three classes, even for unavoidable reasons, an alternative assignment may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor to make up for the missed class time.

Format, Citations, and Plagiarism

Please double-space your work and submit it as a Word Document (not a pdf). All assignments will be submitted through LEARN. 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.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot to produce your work is not permitted in this class. Unauthorized use in this course, such as using GenAI to complete a course assessment is considered a violation of [Policy 71](#) (plagiarism or unauthorized aids or assistance). Work produced with the assistance of AI tools does not represent the author's original work and is therefore in violation of the fundamental values of academic integrity. If the use of GenAI is suspected, you may be asked for proof that the submitted material is your original work. You should keep your rough notes, including research notes, brainstorming, and drafting notes. You may be asked to submit these notes along with earlier drafts of their work, either through saved drafts or saved versions of a document. Through this process, if you have not sufficiently supported your work, academic misconduct allegations may be brought to the Dean.

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. A 5% deduction will be levied for every day an assignment is overdue.

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 outside the classroom without the express permission of the person who told the story.

Self-Care

Pastoral care involves interacting with people in the stressful and disturbing times of their lives. We will be discussing these various contexts for pastoral care, and at times role playing. Depending on your history, this may cause emotional stress or emotional discomfort. For self-care purposes you may excuse yourself from a discussion.

The Land on Which We Meet:

We acknowledge that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University are situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers (six miles) on each side of the Grand River. In our words and in our actions we will strive to live in right relationship with our Indigenous neighbours. Specifically, in this theological course we will keep the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #60 in mind: *TRC Call to Action #60: We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and*

legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

Other sources of information for students:

Mental Health Services aim is to provide holistic programming and services to help you lead a healthy and balanced life. We strive to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds. Students suffering from problems with anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsession or compulsions, relationship difficulties, severe winter blues, etc., may make an appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within two days of initial contact with one of our medical doctors. All contacts are completely confidential. Phone 519-888-4567 ext. 32655.

For students with learning differences: The [AccessAbility Services \(AAS\)](#) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Counselling Services: Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs, ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

The Writing Centre: Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre