INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING

June 25, 2018—July 12, 2018, Monday—Thursday 8:30 AM—11:45 AM

In this foundational course, we develop an understanding of critical dimensions of competent and compassionate pastoral care and counseling today. This course has four primary foci. First, we consider theoretical perspectives that may ground this large ministerial field. Second, we study concrete methods and skills for effective pastoral care. Third, we examine challenging realities to which all pastoral caregivers must respond at some point, including domestic violence, loss, and crisis. Finally, we consider the person of the pastoral caregiver, including the necessity of self-care in ministry and next steps in developing as a pastoral caregiver. Throughout the course, we explore pastoral care/counseling from contemporary theological, psychological, and cultural perspectives. We also consider the specific roles and possible strategies of the pastoral caregiver and the faith community in supporting individuals and communities as they harness strengths and resources to negotiate challenges and create or maintain stability and well-being.

This course includes lecture, readings, discussion, and exercises. Requirements for the course include attendance and participation (20%), pre-class assignment described below (20%), and three essays, one written at the end of each week (60%). Guidelines for the three essays are detailed in the course syllabus.

PRE-COURSE WORK

Read: Richardson Becoming a Healthier Pastor (pp vi-150).
Write: an essay (1200-1500 words) in which you respond to the following (If you quote directly from Richardson, please include appropriate page numbers):
1. What is Richardson’s essential thesis or primary argument in this book?
2. In your own words, describe what Richardson means by the terms family systems theory, unresolved emotional attachment, and differentiation of self. How does Richardson understand the potential relationship between a minister’s experience within her/his own family of origin and her/his work in ministry?
3. What do you consider the strengths and contributions of this text? What critique, if any, would you offer of it? What questions does the text raise for you that invite further reflection?

Please note that while Richardson addresses this work largely to ordained parish ministers of various denominations, we will consider his work as relevant to all pastoral caregivers and those in positions of ministerial leadership. Please bring a hard copy of your paper to the first class.

REQUIRED READING


Other assigned texts will be available on-line via the Boston College Canvas Course Management System.

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Dr. Kelley has many years of pastoral-clinical experience, including serving as a campus minister for 14 years at both Boston College and Emmanuel College in Boston. She holds a Ph.D. from Boston University in pastoral psychology. Dr. Kelley is a fellow and nationally certified pastoral counselor through the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. She is also a fellow in Thanatology: Death, Dying and Bereavement through the Association for Death Education and Counseling, the primary organization in the country for all bereavement researchers, educators, and clinicians. She is a pastoral formation guide with the Metropolitan Boston Association of the United Church of Christ and is the author of Grief: Contemporary Theory and the Practice of Ministry, published in 2010 by Augsburg Fortress Press.

EDUCATION
Ph.D., Boston University
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