CM202: Pastoral Care in Corrections

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Course Description

This course introduces the unique challenges and strategies involved in the pastoral care of incarcerated youth, men and women and corrections staff. Focus will be given to an introductory knowledge of the problems of human suffering, biblical foundations for care in ministry, core helping skills, as well as general counseling theories and techniques applicable to the correctional setting.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

A. Describe the challenges, issues and best practices of providing pastoral care within a correctional environment.

B. Develop and integrated approach to care and counseling which combines psychology, theology and spirituality within a correctional environment.

C. Develop core helping skills essential for effective pastoral care and counseling.

D. Explain how to apply various spiritual formation practices within counseling sessions.

E. Explore ethical issues and professional limitations of pastoral care and identify resources for collaborative care.

Course Text

Select a book (150+ pages) on a topic related to the course that you want to learn more about. Submit your title to the professor for approval.

Course Honesty

As students in the Correctional Ministries Institute, Wheaton College Billy Graham Center, we hold to high scholarly standards, a commitment to pursuing truth, a recognition that our actions affect others in the community and a desire to follow Jesus' example of integrity and truthfulness. Academic honesty is essential for establishing and maintaining the trust that is fundamental to the educational process.

Course Requirements

This course consists of two virtual meetings, readings, mentor meetings, lecture videos, quizzes, group discussions, and assignments. The information regarding these course components and expectations is as follows:

Virtual Meetings. The two virtual meetings are **Tuesday, January 5, 2027 at 7:00 pm (Central) and February 2, 2027 at 7:00 pm (Central).** Links and information will be emailed to you.

Readings. Reading assignments should be read in the module in which they are assigned. Each week read the book you selected.

Mentor Meetings. Meet with your mentor in-person or by phone two times to share what you are learning and hearing from God. This mentor does not have to have correctional ministry experience. Submit your Mentor Meetings Report Form by **Feb 28, 2027.**

Lecture/Videos. Each module will include lecture/videos from the instructor or field experts.

Quizzes. Each module includes a quiz (multiple-choice) over the readings and lectures for that module (open notes)

Discussion Forums. Discussion questions are provided in each module. The Discussion Forum for each week begins on Monday at 12:01 a.m. Central Standard Time (CST), and your first post is required by Wednesday each week. All posts must be submitted prior to the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. CST. You are required **to post an initial response and respond to two other posts** (total of 24 posts for the course)**.** The following rubrics will be used to assess your Discussion Forum posts and assign a grade.

Competency	Criteria Met	Criteria Not Met
Substantive Thoughts Expressed	Ideas and positions explained clearly. Refers back to course content when appropriate. Reply posts extends discussion.	Ideas are not clearly expressed. No reference to course content. Reply post (Yes, I agree) does not provide support for responses.
Length	Initial post is 100-150 words Reply posts are 50-60 words	Initial post less than 100 words Reply post less than 20 words
Completeness	Answers the question completely.	Some parts of the question are not addressed.

Discussion Grading Scale

Number of posts that meet the criteria will be counted.

A	22-24		A-	21		B+	20
B	19		B-	18		C+	17
C	16		C-	15		D+	14
D	13		D-	12		F	0-11

Assignments (For descriptions, see module they are due)

- **Theology of Suffering. Due Module 2**
- **Book Review. Due Module 7**
- **Pastoral Care Themes. Due Module 8**

Course Grading

All coursework must be completed and turned in to your online professor at the due date. Please note that it is at your online professor's discretion to penalize late work. Grades will be issued within two weeks of the end of the course.

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Discussion Forum and Virtual Meetings	30% of Course Grade
Assignment: Theology of Suffering	10% of Course Grade
Assignment: Book Review	15% of Course Grade
Assignment: Pastoral Care Themes	10% of Course Grade
Quizzes	25% of Course Grade
Mentor Meetings	10% of Course Grade

Grading scale will be as follows:

A	92-100		A-	90-91		B+	87-89
B	84-86		B-	80-81		C+	77-79
C	72-76		C-	70-71		D+	67-69
D	62-66		D-	60-61		F	0-59

Weekly Topics and Assignments

Module 1: Foundations for Pastoral Care — DUE: January 10

VIRTUAL MEETING

Tuesday, January 5th at 7:00 pm Central

1.0 Welcome and Syllabus, Mentor Report Form

LISTEN

1.1 Pastoral Identity and Clergy Confidentiality

1.2 Holistic Vision of Pastoral Ministry

1.3 Theological Foundations

READ

Syllabus

1.1 Pastoral Identity and Clergy Confidentiality

1.2 Holistic Vision of Pastoral Ministry

1.3 Theological Foundations

DISCUSS

What does the Bible say about pain and suffering? Its purpose? Our response?

QUIZ

Quiz 1 on readings and lectures (open notes)

ASSIGNMENT

Email book title to professor for approval for your Book Review

Module 2: Mental Health in Corrections and Behavior Change DUE: January 17

LISTEN

2.1 Mental Health in Corrections
2.2 Psychological Change and Societal Influence
2.3 Treatment Medication

READ

2.1 Mental Health in corrections
2.2 Psychological Change and Societal Influence
2.3 Treatment Medication
Read the book you selected

DISCUSS

What are your beliefs about the role of therapy and medications for treating mental illness? Provide support for your view.

QUIZ

Quiz 2 on readings and lectures (open notes)

ASSIGNMENT

Theology of Suffering Paper. The Scriptures are filled with the reality of suffering. They even suggest that those who follow God are to expect suffering as a result of pursuing Christ-likeness. What place does suffering have in the purposes of God? How should believers view suffering? How would you care for a suffering person who is an unbeliever? A believer? (2-3 pages). Do not quote Scripture but provide references for support.

Module 3: Christian Counseling as Ministry DUE: January 24

LISTEN

3.1 Lay Counseling
3.2 Creating the Culture
3.3 When to Advocate

READ

3.1 Lay Counseling
3.2 Creating the Culture
3.3 When to Advocate
Read the book you selected

DISCUSS

If you are counseling in the community, there is a strong likelihood that clients who come to you will either be Christian or open to Christian principles. In the prison setting you may be the only person available to provide counseling. You may be approached by individuals who are of different faiths or may even have had negative experiences with Christians. What are some

strategies for effective counseling with those who fall into this category?

QUIZ

Quiz 3 on readings and lectures (open notes)

Module 4: Common Encounters — DUE: January 31

LISTEN

4.1 Change and Resistance to Change
4.2 Common Interventions
4.3 Core Counseling Skills
4.4 Using Prayer and Scripture

READ

4.1 Change and Resistance to Change
4.2 Common Interventions
4.3 Core Counseling Skills
4.4 Using Prayer and Scripture
Read the book you selected

DISCUSS

What are ways you have experienced or used prayer and Scripture in a counseling session?

QUIZ

Quiz 4 readings and lectures (open notes)

Module 5: Biblical Counseling and Spiritual Issues — DUE: February 7

VIRTUAL MEETING

Tuesday, February 2nd at 7:00 pm Central

LISTEN

5.1 Common Human Emotions and Self-esteem
5.2 Sin and Confession
5.3 Spiritual Deliverance

READ

5.1 Common Human Emotions and Self-esteem
5.2 Sin and Confession
5.3 Spiritual Deliverance
Read the book you selected

QUIZ

Quiz 5 readings and lectures (open notes)

Module 6: Types of Christian Counseling — DUE: February 14

LISTEN

6.1 Group Facilitation
6.2 Pastoral Care with Corrections Staff
6.3 Grief, Crisis and Trauma

READ

6.1 Group Facilitation

6.2 Pastoral Care with Corrections Staff
6.3 Grief, Crisis and Trauma
6.3a Grief Care
6.3b Grief Letter
Read the book you selected
Resources: 6.1a Group Facilitation Forms; 6.1b Principles of Group Behavior
DISCUSS
To what extent should ministry to staff be proactive? Should the Chaplain approach and offer these services, or wait until approached by a staff member? If there are serious concerns with the mental or emotional health of staff, is there an obligation for security reasons to alert facility leadership or should it be kept strictly confidential?
QUIZ
Quiz 6 readings and lectures (open notes)

Module 7: Addictions, Recovery, and Therapies DUE: February 21

LISTEN
7.1 Addictions and Recovery
7.2 Cognitive Behavior Therapy
7.3 Christian Cognitive and Strength-Based Therapy
READ
7.1 Addictions and Recovery
7.2 Cognitive Behavior Therapy
7.3 Christian Cognitive and Strength-Based Therapy
SUBMIT ASSIGNMENT: ***Book Review***
DISCUSS *In the discussion forum, describe what the book was about. What you liked about the book. What you learned and how to implement in your ministry. Rate the book on a scale of 1-5 and why. (Would you recommend it or not)*
QUIZ
Quiz 7 readings and lectures (open notes)

Module 8: Ethical Issues and Self-Care DUE: February 28

LISTEN
8.1 Diversity
8.2 Legal Issues
8.3 Secondary Trauma
READ
8.1 Diversity
8.2 Legal Issues
8.3 Secondary Trauma
Resource: 8.3a Strategies for Self-care
DISCUSS
Your facility policy requires that you provide "equitable" opportunities for worship and study for all faiths wanting time and space in the Chapel or meeting area. How do you accomplish this

when the Muslim group wants to pray five times a day as prescribed by their faith and there is no way you can provide that much time to every group.? What resources do you have to help you solve this problem? Is there a difference between "equal" and "equitable"?

QUIZ

Quiz 8 readings and lectures (open notes)

ASSIGNMENT

Pastoral Themes Paper. Develop a list of three (3) pastoral themes (ie. depression, anxiety, anger, loneliness, betrayal, homosexuality, transgender, terminal illness, denial, sexual addiction/pornography, grief, spiritual crisis, etc.) you have observed to be primary issues which the incarcerated struggle with. For each of the themes: a) identify key points; b) what the Bible teaches or key Scriptures; c) recommendations for helping people in this area; and d) recommended resources. (3 pages)

MENTOR MEETING REPORT

Submit your mentor meeting report through the online course.