

*Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning*  
Erskine Theological Seminary

**PM 609 Pastoral Care Ministry**

Fall 2008

8:00 – 11:00 A.M. on Thursdays  
Beginning September 4, 2008  
Due West Campus

**Robby Bell, Ph.D.**

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**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to pastoral care with a focus on the problems usually experienced by Church leaders in the local congregation (death, aging, grief, sickness, family tensions, etc.). Areas examined include: personal and professional awareness and growth as a minister; historical and theological foundations of pastoral care and counseling; and various theories, models, and methods which inform the work of the pastoral caregiver. Goals of the course include personal growth and the development of a holistic approach to the pastoral care of persons. Middler; required, 3 credit hours.

**Course Objectives**

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary (ETS) is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church in faithfulness to the Bible, the Reformed tradition, and the standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church while showing respect for denominational diversity. Among the Seminary's goals are that graduates will be prepared to: understand and minister to people and communities through pastoral care and counseling; serve the Church with Christian character and integrity in their personal and professional lives; and, view their ministries in light of the Church's mission to worship, follow, bear witness to, and serve Jesus Christ. These areas are addressed in the Pastoral Care Ministry course.

At the conclusion of the course it is hoped that each student will have made progress in:

1. grasping a basic understanding of the history and nature of pastoral care;
2. developing and refining a Biblical philosophy of ministry consistent with one's theological commitments;

3. recognizing basic developmental issues in the human life-cycle as well as identifying and implementing appropriate Biblical/pastoral/theological responses to persons struggling with these issues;
4. improving one's listening skills;
5. describing and demonstrating basic skills needed for effective pastoral care as well as assessing one's current level of competency, and developing a plan for building one's skills; and,
6. gaining new insight into one's own spiritual-developmental journey, especially as it relates to one's self-care and caregiving in service to God.

**Required Texts** (*The Holy Bible is assumed as a required text in all classes*):

Required textbooks may be purchased at the Erskine Theological Seminary Virtual Bookstore, <http://www.ecampus.com/erskine>. Please note that the views expressed in the textbooks do not necessarily represent the views of the professor nor of Erskine Seminary. It is expected that even in places of disagreement with the textbook, one will reflect upon and think critically regarding one's own views, rather than simply dismissing views that may run counter to one's own.

Bolton, Robert. *People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts*. NY: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 1979. 301 pp.

Halaas, Gwen Wagstrom. *The Right Road: Life Choices for Clergy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004. 118 pp.

Hansen, David. *The Art of Pastoring: Ministry without All the Answers*. IL: Intervarsity Press, 1994. 180 pp.

Hightower, James E., Jr., ed. *Caring for People from Birth to Death*. NY: Haworth, 1999. 204 pp.

Recommended reading for nurture of the pastor's heart & soul: the Mitford novels by Jan Karon, and books by Philip Gulley.

**Course Requirements & Expectations**

**Attendance** – Your presence at, preparation for, and participation in all class sessions is assumed for a passing grade. Each student, therefore, is expected to arrive on time, including following class breaks, and to attend all class meetings for their duration. In the event that an absence is necessary—for whatever reason, including pastoral duties, work, or family responsibilities—the student is responsible for all assignments and all work done in class. Absences in excess of three (3) hours, may limit one's final grade to no higher than a "B." Absences in excess of seven (7) hours will likely result in receiving no credit for the course. Students who miss more than three hours of class are required to

do extra work and are expected to take the initiative to secure the additional assignments from the professor. Failure to complete extra work by the final day of class or the exam date will result in the reduction of one's final course grade by one full letter grade or more. Any student who misses seven or more cumulative hours of class should talk with the professor first and then contact the registrar, in writing, to withdraw from the course, rather than fail it.

### **Assignments –**

- All work submitted MUST be fresh, new work produced in the current semester, not re-cycled work or work submitted for another class or produced in whole or in part by another person.
- All assignments are due on the designated date. An absence does not negate this requirement unless prior arrangements have been made. Late work will be accepted after the assignment is due but will receive a minimum penalty of one letter grade per week.
- All make-up work is due by the last day of class or by the exam date (if an exam is scheduled).
- Written work should conform to Kate L. Turabian, *A Guide for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Essential guidelines to assist in formatting papers are available from the professor. Do NOT submit work in folders; simply supply a cover/title sheet (include your name!) and staple pages (numbered!) together.
- While the content of a paper is most important, do give careful attention to spelling, grammar, syntax, style, and form; these items are considered in grading.
- Proofread all papers before submission!!
- At the professor's invitation alone, permission **may** be granted for one below average paper (D+ or below) to be re-done one time to improve one's grade (final assignment grade determined by averaging the two assignment grades). This option does not exist for any papers turned in the final day of class.

**Seminary Policies** – Students should familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the current ETS Catalog & the Student Handbook. Policies of note include:

#### **Drop/Add/Withdrawal**

Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a **binding contract** and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of “F” for the course and full tuition charges will apply. **No exceptions will be made to this policy.**

#### **Incompletes**

The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.”

### **Language about God and Humanity**

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

### **Conduct in Theological Discussions**

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

### **Plagiarism**

Students guilty of plagiarism will receive a failing grade for the entire course with a notation of such in their permanent academic record. Other penalties deemed appropriate by the faculty include: suspension for one semester and loss of financial aid. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, please speak to me about it for further explanation prior to the submission of course assignments.

### **Chapel Attendance Policy**

All morning and afternoon on-campus classes (except for Friday and Saturday courses) carry a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the catalog or registration

booklet for the specifics of the chapel attendance policy. A fee is assessed for each chapel if you attend fewer chapels than is required; no exceptions.

### **Office Hours**

While I do keep regular office hours, my schedule may change due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise. Therefore, if you need to see me, I recommend that you schedule an appointment.

**Guidelines/Requirements for Assignments** (these guidelines are used in grading. The wise student will follow them carefully; the foolish will do the assignment without consulting them . . . and will suffer the consequences):

- 1) *Art of Pastoring* Essay. Before beginning to read, ask God to show you at least one important insight or learning from each chapter that He would have you know, understand, and use in your life and ministry. Then, after carefully and prayerfully reading Hansen's text, write a brief, single-spaced (5-8 page) essay in which you succinctly state the single most important insight **derived from the book** that God brought to your attention in each chapter of the book, beginning with the "Introduction," and also briefly explain what makes that particular insight important for/to you (i.e., answer the question: "So what?"). The descriptions are to be brief and to the point, yet must demonstrate clearly **why** that particular learning is important to you. The language of personal pronouns (i.e., I, me, my, etc.) is to be used in your essay since you will be discussing your life and ministry; avoid writing pedantically. Arrange your discussion using the chapter titles or numbers as subheadings. **BEWARE: Do not string a number of quotes together or simply summarize the chapters. If you do so, you will receive a failing grade on the assignment with no opportunity to re-do the assignment!!** Those who wish to offer a critique of the book itself may do so in an optional, "no-credit" addendum to the essay.
  
- 2) *The Right Road* Essay. Before beginning to read, ask God to show you at least one important insight or learning from each chapter that He would have you know, understand, and use in your life and ministry. Then, after carefully and prayerfully reading Halaas' text, write a brief (1-2 page), single-spaced essay in which you succinctly describe in a paragraph per insight the most important insight that you gained from the **three most helpful chapters**, that God brought to your attention in the book. After stating the insight gleaned, also briefly explain **why** that particular insight is important to you. The descriptions are to be brief and to the point, yet must demonstrate clearly **why** the noted insights are important to you, and what difference these insights will make in your immediate or future life and ministry. In other words, once you identify an insight, answer the "so what?" question. The language of personal pronouns (i.e., I, me, my, etc.) is to be used in your essay since you will be discussing your life and ministry; avoid writing pedantically. Arrange your discussion citing the particular chapter from which the insights come;

double-space between paragraphs. **Do not string a number of quotes together or simply summarize the chapters.**

- 3) Clergy Sexual Ethics Report. One brief report will be prepared on **clergy sexual ethics/misconduct/boundaries**. It is assumed that you will choose an article that genuinely contributes to your understanding and practice of ministry as it relates to the topic. This assignment requires that you:
- (a) peruse the scholarly, research-oriented, professional pastoral care, ministry, or health-care journals such as: *Journal of Pastoral Care*, *J. of Biblical Counseling*, *Christian Counseling Today*, *J. of Religion & Health*, *J. of Psychology & Christianity*, *Pastoral Psychology*, *J. of Psychology and Theology*, *J. of Pastoral Counseling*, *J. of Christian Education*, *Death Studies*, *Death Education*, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *J. of Ministry in Addiction & Recovery*, *J. of Health Care Chaplaincy*, *J. of Religious Gerontology*, and *J. of Religion in Disability & Rehabilitation*. NOTE: The Erskine Library has some, but not all, of these journals. Most journals not in the McCain Library holdings can be secured through the InterLibrary Loan services (see Sara Morrison, McCain Library (toll free) 1-877-876-4348, ext. 747; or email: [morrison@erskine.edu](mailto:morrison@erskine.edu)). NOTE: DO NOT SIMPLY REQUEST THAT THE LIBRARY SEND YOU A COPY OF AN ARTICLE OF THEIR CHOOSING FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. It is expected that you will do the research necessary to discover a suitable article. Use of magazines or unapproved sources may result in failure.
  - (b) find an article of at least five (5) pages of text that addresses the issue;
  - (c) photocopy the entire article and attach it to your report once completed;
  - (d) after carefully reading the article, write a 3–5 page, double-spaced paper reporting: (i.) bibliographical information (10 pts.); (ii.) one paragraph accurate summary of the article’s focus—in your own words (20 pts.); and, (iii.) 3-5 pages describing how both your understanding and practice of pastoral care ministry is shaped by the article (40 pts.). It is assumed that you will choose an article that genuinely contributes to your understanding and practice of ministry. Clearly state implications for your ministry. If you are not currently in a ministry setting, write from the perspective of your anticipated role in ministry. This assignment requires that you master the content of the article, reflect critically upon it as it pertains to you, and THEN write an essay in which you develop implications/applications for yourself and your ministry. This is NOT a "book/article review"; the focus is upon assimilation and application of the article. Summarizations of the article alone are NOT acceptable and are not eligible for re-submission.
- 4) Communication Skills Learning Contract, Journal, & Report. Each student will develop a learning contract and will maintain a weekly journal (x 4 weeks) to track

one's progress in the use of communication skills and to increase one's reflective skills, self-supervision, and ministry and relational effectiveness. See the guidelines at the end of the syllabus.

- 5) Theology of Ministry Paper. Write a one to two page, single-spaced paper in which you describe the core Biblical or theological foundation upon which your particular calling to Christian ministry is based and shaped. Using clear, precise, and succinct language, you should give a sound Biblical/theological basis for your ministry and show, by the development of clear implications of the chosen text(s)/doctrine(s), how that basis shapes your ministry. In other words, what is the Biblical or theological core that drives your ministry or service? What distinguishes the nature your call to ministry from that of others? **Note: For all students who began seminary in the Fall of 2002 or afterwards, this is also a Professional Assessment Portfolio component (and graduation) requirement. You are responsible for submitting a "clean, corrected, approved" copy of your paper to the Student Service's Office for inclusion in your PA portfolio. Failure to do so could delay your graduation. You should also keep a back-up copy in your possession.**
  
- 6) Discussion of *Caring for People from Birth to Death*. In preparation for either class or on-line discussion and/or individual interviews by the professor, be prepared to address each of the following areas: (1) drawing from the text, including chapter seven, state: (a) what you find most challenging from a ministry perspective about each era & chapter seven (35 pts.); (b) why that aspect is challenging to you personally (20 pts.); and, (2) what has changed or is being reconsidered in your theology of ministry to persons as a result of the readings in Hightower. (20 pts.).
  
- 7) Final Exam. A cumulative exam covering class lectures and Bolton, parts III & IV, will be given during the scheduled examination time.

**Course Grading** - Preparation, presence, and participation are assumed for a passing grade. Additionally, the final grade will be calculated on the seminary scale as follows:

Each of the five written assignments and final exam: 15% each  
*Caring for People from Birth to Death* Report: 10%.

**Class Topics** – class materials will be available through <http://eden.erskine.edu/moodle>. You will be provided a password in the first class.

#### UNIT I - INTRODUCTION: THE PASTORAL CAREGIVER

Purpose and Biblical foundations of PCM  
 Images of & Metaphors for the Pastoral Caregiver  
 Historical foundations of PCM  
 Defining Pastoral Care & Counseling (PC & C)  
 Essential characteristics of the Pastoral Caregiver

Lecture: The Wounded Healer & Movie ("Saving Grace" - 1985)

## UNIT II - PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY ISSUES

Personal Relationships & Communication Skills; Develop Learning Contract  
 Developmental Perspective: Life-Cycle Theory & Family Systems Theory  
 Pastoral Issues in the Life Cycle: Implications for Ministry  
 PCM with Children  
 Grief Ministry  
 Crisis Intervention  
 Suicide: SADPARSONS  
 Major Depression  
 Alzheimers, Strokes, AIDS, Palliative Care, Etc.  
 Spouse and Sexual Abuse (Video)  
 Hospital, Prison, & Business/Industrial Ministry  
 Sexuality & Ministry (Video)  
 Ethics & Legal Issues in Ministry  
 Lay Caregiving Ministries: Stephen Ministries  
 Counseling with Individuals, Couples, & Families; Premarital Counseling  
 Course Evaluations

### **Class Assignment Schedule – ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE AS FOLLOWS:**

Sept. 4 - Class begins

Sept. 11 - Read Hansen, Introduction & Chapters 1-3

Sept. 18 - Read Hansen, Chs 4-7

Sept. 25 - Read Hansen, Chapters 8-12; **MEET IN BOWIE ARTS CENTER for class: "Saving Grace" movie/video**

Oct. 2 - **Hansen Essay Due**; Read Bolton, Parts I & II, and pp. 275-79 carefully; memorize Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)

Oct. 9 - Begin Hightower, ed. reading; BEGIN Communication Journal!!

NOTE: Be aware that "fudged" journals seldom receive passing marks, plus you only cheat yourself out of the opportunity to improve your pastoral effectiveness!!

Oct. 16 - Complete reading of Hightower, ed.

Oct. 23 - **Caring for People (Hightower, ed.) Oral Report or Quiz**

Oct. 30 - Read Bolton, Part III.

Nov. 6 - **Communication Journal & Final Report Due**

Nov. 13 – **Clergy Sexual Ethics Report Due**

Nov. 20 - Read Bolton, Part IV; **Theology of Ministry Paper Due**

*Nov. 27 - Thanksgiving Break - NO CLASS*

Dec. 4 - **Halaas Essay Due**

Dec. 11, or as scheduled by Registrar's Office - Final Exam

### **Study Guide for Bolton Parts III & IV**

Read all of Robert Bolton, *People Skills*, pages 115-279, paying particular attention to the following portions found therein:

- 1) Submissive-Assertive-Aggressive Behaviors
- 2) Formula for & examples of the “Three-Part Assertion Message”
- 3) The Six-Step Assertion Process
- 4) The Benefits of Conflict
- 5) Dealing with the Emotions in Conflict
- 6) The Conflict Resolution Method (3 steps)
- 7) Six Steps of the Problem-Solving Method
- 8) Three Essentials of Effective Communication
- 9) The Apathy-Empathy-Sympathy Continuum

## PM 609 - Communication Skills Project Guidelines

After carefully reading and studying Bolton, *People Skills*, pages xiii-113, 275-279, decide which **one** of the twelve barriers (category does not matter) described on page 17 and listed below upon which you are going to work to diminish or extinguish.

Prayerfully choose one barrier that truly is a problem or a challenge for you (if you have trouble identifying one, ask your spouse or a trusted friend what you need to work on).

### Barriers:

Criticizing  
 Name-calling  
 Diagnosing  
 Praising Manipulatively  
 Ordering  
 Threatening  
 Moralizing  
 Excessive/ Inappropriate Questioning  
 Advising  
 Diverting  
 Logical Argument  
 Reassuring  
 (also Interrupting)

Next, prayerfully choose two listening skills from the list of twelve specific skills given on page 33 and listed below. The two skills you choose cannot be in the same skill cluster (the clusters are: attending, following, and reflecting).

### Listening Skills:

<u><b>Attending Skills Cluster:</b></u>	<u><b>Following Skills Cluster:</b></u>	<u><b>Reflecting Skills Cluster:</b></u>
Posture of Involvement	Door Openers	Paraphrasing
Appropriate Body Motion	Minimal Encouragers	Reflecting Feelings
Eye Contact	Infrequent Questions	Reflecting Meanings
Nondistracting Environment	Attentive Silence	Summative Reflection
-or Choose from SOLER		

Once you have identified one block and two specific skills that you will work on over four consecutive weeks, you have completed your "Communication Skills Learning Contract." You will work on these three items over the entire course of the assignment.

### Communication Journal

During the four consecutive weeks of your project to improve your listening skills, you will focus prayerfully and intensely upon the barrier and skills identified in your learning contract (above). The journal requires that at least once a week, you record your progress, or lack thereof, with each of the three items (one barrier, two skills). Write a minimum of one paragraph for each separate item each week for four weeks (hence, the minimum is: one paragraph per item per week = 3 paragraphs x 4 weeks = 12 paragraphs or separate entries). A sample journal page for one week should look like the following:

WEEK ONE - [provide dates]
<u>Barrier [identify]</u> : In a paragraph, describe how you got along this week in extinguishing or reducing your use of this particular <u>barrier</u> (from your contract). In what kinds of situations do you find yourself most likely to attempt to use this barrier? What issues of self-awareness are you discovering? What effect do you notice when you use/don't use this barrier? Give an example.
<u>Skill #1 [identify]</u> : Describe in a paragraph how you got along this week in using or implementing this particular <u>skill</u> (from your contract). What issues of self-awareness are you discovering? What effect do you notice when you use/don't use this skill? For example . . .
<u>Skill #2 [identify]</u> : Ditto above for skill #2.

Your entries should answer the question, “How did I get along this week with this particular barrier/skill, in a variety of settings?” Be sure to reflect upon the entire spectrum of your experiences; i.e., include evaluation of your work in family, career, ministry, and general public contexts. Also be certain that you reflect specifically enough about your experiences so that your learning experiences and insights gleaned in the course of implementing the skills/reducing the barrier are evident. Be sure to include specific examples to substantiate or demonstrate your claims. **DO NOT, HOWEVER, USE ONLY ONE RELATIONSHIP OR SINGLE ENCOUNTER FOR THE ENTIRE WEEKLY JOURNAL ENTRY.** Journals may be hand-written provided they are legible to the professor.

### Communication Report

Then, after reading over your four-week journal, write a one-page, single-spaced report in which you reflect upon the experience of working on the barrier and skills. State: (1) the barrier and skills on which you contracted to focus; (2) what you learned about listening during the course of this exercise; (3) how your listening skills impact your family, personal, professional, and ministry relationships; and, (4) your evaluation of the value of this exercise for your personal and professional growth and development. Turn in a copy of your journal & final report together.

**END OF SYLLABUS**