

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PTH/PCP520 Contemporary Family Ministry
Sept. 12-13/Oct. 10-11/Nov. 7-8
Fridays 1:30 -5:00 PM, 6:00-9:30 PM
Saturdays 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, 1:00-5:00 PM

Melody D. Palm, Psy. D.
E-mail: mpalm@agts.edu
Phone: 268-1071
Counseling Office: 268-1085

Fall 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents an integrated view of contemporary family life based on current social-research, clinical insights and biblical truths. Its objective is to enable the minister, chaplain and family life educator to appropriately conceptualize family relationships and relational problems and to employ effective psychoeducational and intervention strategies. Essential components of marriage and family counseling and parenting skills are highlighted.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Articulate a theology of marriage, and family relations including marital roles and parenting strategies.
2. To gain insights into the impact of contemporary culture on the family and family ministry for good and for ill, as well as the nature of family development, dynamics, and systems.
3. Utilize systems and family life cycle theory in understanding marriage and family issues in context.
4. To articulate the needs of and risks for those in ministry and Christian families in general.
5. Explain techniques and interventions that may be employed to address specific marriage and family issues.
6. Develop an approach for conducting pre-marital, marital and re-marital counseling.
7. Assist families to develop positive parenting/discipline strategies for children and teens.
8. Describe what builds up or erodes marital relationships and ways to initiate positive change in troublesome marital and family relationships.
9. To realize the urgent need for advocates for families within the Christian community and explore issues and possibilities in church-based ministries with

- families, including philosophies and models of family ministry and their practical implications.
10. Drawing on all that has been learned in this course and on the cumulative readings, create a family ministry model which demonstrates how the church as the family of God might look.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Balswick, J.O. & Balswick, J.K. (2007). *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Family*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics. ISBN: 97801032493

Kimmel, T. (2005). *Grace Based Parenting*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group. ISBN: 0849905486

Weaver, A.J., Revilla, L.A., & Koenig, H.G. (2002). *Counseling Families across the Stages of Life*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. ISBN: 9780687084159

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL RESOURCE BOOKS

Fosarelli, P.D. (2003). *Family Ministry Desk Reference: Holistic Responses to Contemporary Challenges*. Louisville KN: Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN: 066422668

Gangel, K.O. & Wilhoit. (1996). *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Family Life Education: A Complete Resource on Family Life Issues in the Local Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. ISBN: 0801022479.

Kearney, R.T. (2001). *Caring for Sexually Abused Children: A Handbook for Families & Churches*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. ISBN: 139780830822461

Rassieur, C. L. (2005). *I have a Plan: A Pastor's Guide to Counseling Troubled Marriages*. Louisville KN: Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN: 066422767

BASIC OUTLINE

At the beginning of each weekend session, professor will give an in class exam over the required readings in *The Family* by Balswick & Balswick. Exam will be scored in class and used as a teaching tool and for discussion purposes.

September 12th & 13th

Before Coming to Class:

- Read Part 1 & Part 2 in *The Family* by Balswick & Balswick; (pp.1-100)

- Read Part I, Introduction in Counseling Families across the Stages of Life. (pp.11-48)

Focus During Class:

- Exam Balswick & Balswick, Part 1 & 2
 - Theological & Social Perspectives on Family Life
 - Marriage: The Foundation of Family Life
 - Clergy, Faith and Family Issues
 - What Makes a Family Strong?
 - Diversity in American Families.
 - Couples Counseling and Dealing with Couples in Crisis

Following Weekend Class:

- Read Grace Based Parenting, write critique and began assessment of two church family life ministries.

October 10th & 11th

CHAPEL: October 10th, 1:30 – 2:45

WORK DUE: Book Critique on *Grace Based Parenting*.

Before Coming to Class:

- Read Part 3, 4 & 5 in The Family by Balswick & Balswick; (pp.101-268)
- Read cases 1-10 in Counseling Families across the Stages of Life. (pp.49-134)

Focus During Class:

- Exam Balswick & Balswick, Part 3, 4, & 5
 - The Expansion of Family Life: Parenting and Beyond
 - Gender and Sexuality: Identity in Family Life
 - Communication: The Heart of Family Life
 - Case Studies Early & Middle Years
 - Family Life Education & Psychoeducational Programs
 - Grace Based Parenting

Following Weekend Class:

- Complete Research Project Part I & II

November 7th & 8th

WORK DUE: Research Project Part I

Before Coming to Class:

- Read Part 6 & 7 in The Family by Balswick & Balswick; (pp.269-368)

- Read Cases 11-20 in *Counseling Families Across the Stages of Life*. (pp. 135-238)

Focus During Class:

- Exam Balswick & Balswick, Part 6 & 7
 - The Social Dynamics of Family Life
 - Family Life in Postmodern Society
 - Case Studies Later Years
 - Case Studies Family Issues
 - Dealing with Special Family Issues
 - Effective Family Life Ministry Models.

Following Weekend Class:

- Complete Research Project Part II
- Research Project Part II is Due: **Monday December 1st at 1:00 PM.** Submit a hard copy to Norma Simmons, faculty secretary.

METHODOLOGY

Multiple methods will be employed to conduct the class. These methods are designed to enhance and facilitate the learning process. They include but are not limited to: lecture, video presentations, group activities and class discussions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION: Attend each class meeting and participate in class discussions. Your involvement will enhance your success in the class.
2. REQUIRED READINGS: Students are expected to read all assigned readings. This will include *all* of the books listed as required texts.
3. TESTS: Students will demonstrate mastery of course content by completing three midcourse exams. Anything in the required texts or what is covered class lectures and discussions is potential test material (the final will not be a comprehensive exam). Instructor reserves the right to make the exams take home, essay, or “in class.”
4. BOOK CRITIQUE: Read ,review and critique *Grace Based Parenting*. Student should summarize the key points of this paradigm and interact with the content and author’s premise. Standard APA or Turabian style is required. Length of the paper 2-3 pages. **Due: Friday October 10th at 1:30 PM.**
5. RESEARCH PROJECT Part I: Analyze and evaluate two churches’ “family ministry” structures. One of them may be your home church. First, talk with a staff person from each church in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, and

overall effectiveness in this regard. Then interview two families from each church. If possible, interview families of different ethnic backgrounds and economic situations. Have them identify ways in which the church is meeting their family needs—needs for community, nurture, etc. Write your analysis and evaluation based on your findings; make “recommendations” to the governing boards. 4-6 pp. **Due: November 7th, at 1:30 PM**

6. RESEARCH PROJECT Part II: Develop a full-blown family ministry model. Drawing on all that has been learned in this course and on the cumulative readings, dream about how the church as the family of God might look. (Suggestion: Use videos, “Ordinary People,” “Autumn Sonata,” “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” “Bastard out of Carolina,” or “The Other Sister,” (Dr. Palm will make a list of other movies available) as a case study to help you think through needs you may want your model to address.) Create a 30 minute Power Point Presentation of this model to be given during a potential job interview for a Family Life Education Pastor. Final grade will be giving based on the strengths, weaknesses and presentation of your model. **Due: Monday December 1st at 1:00 PM.**

GRADING PROCEDURES

Student evaluation will be based on the total points received from attendance/ participation, tests, book critique and research paper. Grades will be assigned according to the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary schedule.

Book Critique	10% of final grade
Examinations	30% of final grade
Research Project Part I	30% of final grade
Research Project Part II	30% of final grade

Papers not submitted by the assigned date will be accepted but deducted one letter grade per day late.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A bibliography will be handed out in class along with recommended videos on family issues to use as case studies.

Syllabus prepared by Melody D. Palm, July, 2008