

**Indiana Annual Conference  
Course of Study  
Fall 2022**

**Syllabus - COS 323 - Congregational Care**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course introduces students to practices of congregational care and the pastor's responsibility in caregiving.

Congregational care is ministry that relates to the psychological and theological needs of persons in faith communities. In this course, we will consider both theories of pastoral care and specific interventions for predictable human needs – individual and corporate. Contemporary understandings of pastoral care are rooted in biblical and cultural faith traditions that include the pastoral roles of wise guide, prophet and priest (Gerkin, 1997).

In addition to basic pastoral care and brief counseling for individuals, couples, families and communities, we will consider the ethical context of pastoral care, the healing functions of ritual, and theological responses to the question of theodicy: “Why do bad things happen to good people?”

Course participants will be asked to draw on their own experience in ministry and in life to role play pastoral care dialogues and to study specific cases. We will seek to balance the rich data contained in the “here and now” of pastoral interactions with the frameworks of faith, ethics and theological reflection that inform our pastoral service. We will also give attention to the pastor's own need for care in relation to the varied demands of care giving.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

This course introduces students to the practice of congregational care and the pastor's responsibility in caregiving. Upon completion of the course work students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate awareness of self as a caregiver.
2. Develop, implement, and manage appropriate types of care in varieties of settings, including congregations, hospitals, nursing facilities, prisons, homes, and the community at large.
3. Develop skills to address congregational care situations that include life-cycle transitions (premarital life, marriage and family life, divorce, remarriage, blended families, adoption), illness, aging, end of life challenges, dying, grief, bereavement, after-care, domestic violence, traumas, addiction, military moral injury and suicide. Cultivating wellness—spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical—will also be explored.
4. Develop and organize systems of caring ministries within the congregation
5. Discern and implement appropriate boundaries and confidentiality (knowing when and to whom to refer people, and when and when not to share information).
6. Reflect on and practice skills of sensitive caregiving, using role play and analysis of case studies.
7. Reflect theologically about congregational care experiences.

**COURSE MEETING DATES: (all times EST)**

Friday September 9, (7:00-9:00 PM),

Saturdays September 10, October 8, and November 12 (8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)

**COURSE LOCATION:**

University of Indianapolis

1400 E Hanna Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227

**INSTRUCTOR:**

Rev. Kimberly J. King, MDiv, MA, LMFT

Email: [pastorkimnindy@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkimnindy@gmail.com), Cell: 317-741-4125 (texting permitted)

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

1. Killen, Jr. (2005) *Pastoral care in the small membership church*. Nashville/Abingdon Press. (ISBN 0-687-34326-7)
2. Lebacqz & Driskill. (2010). *Ethics and spiritual care*. Nashville/Abingdon Press. (ISBN 978-068-707152)
3. Patton. (2005). *Pastoral care an essential guide*. Nashville/Abingdon Press. (ISBN 0-687-05322-6)
4. Peterson. (2008). *The indispensable guide to pastoral care*. Cleveland/The Pilgrim Press. (ISBN 13: 978-0-8298-1778-2)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. *Attendance & Class Participation:* (20% of total course grade) Students are expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit.
2. *Completion of Assignments:* (75% of total course grade) Students are expected to complete all assigned reading and written assignments as indicated in the syllabus.

In accordance with the General Administrative Policies of Course of Study for Licensed and Ordained Ministry and Advance Course of Study it is required that Course of Study courses be rigorous and theologically robust experiences. To that end, students shall complete significant reading and writing assignments. Students and faculty are required to read and work with the material in the assigned texts. It is expected that students complete assignments, papers and projects equivalent to 20 pages per course. The standard number of class hours for each of the basic courses is a minimum of twenty (20) hours.

**COURSE GRADES:**

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Point Value</i>
<b>Introduction Essay</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Visitation Reflection Paper</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Self-Care Rule</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Congregational Care Plan</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Role Plays</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Attendance/Class Participation</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY:**

	<b>DUE DATE</b>
<b>Introduction Essay</b>	<b>Sep 6, 2022</b>
<b>Pastoral Visit Reflection</b>	<b>Oct 4, 2022</b>
<b>Self-Care Rule</b>	<b>Nov 8, 2022</b>
<b>Congregational Care Plan</b>	<b>Nov 22, 2022</b>

**ROLE PLAYS:**

Most people learn by doing. A good way to train volunteers is to have them observe what you do. Do it with you. Then, do it alone. In that spirit, we will reenact care giving situations through role playing.

Each role play will use three basic roles – care seeker(s), care giver(s) and observer(s). Care seekers and observers will receive a brief scenario which will prepare them for their role play. Care givers do their work “live”, while observed by the larger group in a “fish bowl.” Everyone is expected to take one turn as a care giver and a second turn in one of the other roles. Playing all roles is expected if time permits. Role plays will be allowed 15 minutes followed by 15 minutes of evaluation and discussion by all observers.

Role play scenarios will be distributed in class.

**September 9 & 10, 2022**

**SESSION ONE: Definitions, Identity, Presence, Voice**

**READING:**

- Killen, *Pastoral care in the small membership church*, Preface & pp. 1- 18
- Peterson, *The indispensable guide to pastoral care*, pp. 1 - 65
- Patton, *Pastoral care an essential guide*, pp. 1-48

**ASSIGNMENT: (Due prior to session one)**

Write a two (2) page double spaced (12 font) introduction of yourself as pastor, including your ministry experience, current ministry context (congregation size, demographics, description of the community in which you are situated including any history pertinent to caregiving, your pastoral care experience, pastoral care strengths, and areas of challenge. Also include areas of pastoral care of particular interest to you and include skills that you are hoping to improve by the time you finish this course.

**THIS PAPER IS DUE TO THE INSTRUCTOR ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 6, 2022.**

Please come prepared to participate in our class discussion which will include the following:

- **Introductions**
- **Syllabus review, Q & A**
- **Defining pastoral care**
- **Exploring pastoral identity**
- **Growing edges, skill development**

**October 8, 2022**

**SESSION TWO: Theology, Boundaries, Listening, Visitation**

**READING:**

- Killen, *Pastoral care in the small membership church*, Preface & pp. 19- 85
- Peterson, *The indispensable guide to pastoral care*, pp. 66 - 129
- Patton, *Pastoral care an essential guide*, pp. 49 – 118

**ASSIGNMENT: (Due prior to session two)**

Write a six (6) page double spaced (12 font) reflection paper where you examine a recent, or particularly salient, pastoral visit. Describe the visit providing some details (you of course should omit real names for confidentiality) of the visit. Examine your experience integrating your mental, emotional, and spiritual understanding. Analyze your experience using personal examples, including how you felt emotionally and spiritually. Explore what you learned from the visit and this reflection on the visit. Explain how this reflection will aid you in future visits. Connect your experience to the readings from Patton, Peterson and Killen and cite material from the reading that supports your analysis.

**THIS PAPER IS DUE TO THE INSTRUCTOR ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 4, 2022.**

Please come prepared to participate in our class discussion which will include the following:

- **Theology of Care**
- **Self-Awareness**
- **Boundaries**
- **Listening Skills**
- **Types of Care in Congregations**
- **Life-cycle Development**
- **Role Plays**
- **Self-Care**

**November 12, 2022**

**SESSION THREE: Ethics, Ritual, Care systems, Special situations**

**READING:**

- Lebacqz & Driskill, *Ethics and spiritual care*, Entire book

**ASSIGNMENT 1: (Due prior to session three)**

Write a six to eight (6-8) page double spaced (12 font) Self-Care Rule as described in the instructions included later in the syllabus.

**THIS PAPER IS DUE TO THE INSTRUCTOR ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 8, 2022.**

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**November 12, 2022 (cont.)**

**SESSION THREE: Ethics, Ritual, Care systems, Special situations**

**ASSIGNMENT 2: (Due after session three)**

Write a six (6) page to eight (8) page double spaced (12 font) Congregational Care Plan for your congregation. Include your own theology of care with supporting scripture. Consider what kind of care will be provided, when care will be provided and who will provide care. What will be considered an emergency? How will emergencies be handled? How will you follow-up with those to whom care has been given? When will you refer?

**THIS PAPER IS DUE TO THE INSTRUCTOR ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 22, 2022.**

Please come prepared to participate in our class discussion which will include the following:

- **Pastoral ethics**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Special pastoral care situations**
- **Cultural considerations – Diversity, Gender**
- **The role of ritual in care**
- **Creating a system of care – Building Teams**
- **Role Plays**

## Writing a Self-Care Rule

### **1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)**

***<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.***

A Rule of Life is an intentional pattern of spiritual disciplines that provides structure and direction for growth in holiness. A Rule establishes a rhythm for life which is helpful for spiritual formation, reflects a love for God and shows respect for how God has made us. The disciplines that we build into our rhythm of life help us to shed the “old self” and allow our “new self” in Christ to be formed. Spiritual disciplines are means of grace by which God can nourish us.

A Self-Care Rule is an intentional pattern of physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual disciplines that provide structure, direction and accountability for taking care of yourself so that you can be fully available to live out your calling. Ultimately a Rule should help you to create space to spend more time honoring the body, mind, psyche, and soul God has given you.

If a Self-Care Rule becomes a legalistic way of earning points with God or impressing others, it should be scrapped. If the traditional, ancient term “rule” concerns you because it sounds legalistic, think of “rule” as a “rhythm of life” or as a “Curriculum in Christlikeness” (Dallas Willard), or as a “Game Plan for Morphing” (John Ortberg).

To be life-giving, a Rule must be realistic! It is not an ideal toward which you are striving to soar. Instead, your initial Rule should be a minimum standard for your life that you do not want to drop below. It's a realistic level of engaging in disciplines for which you can honestly and truly be held accountable.

Rules will vary widely, depending on the character and life situation of a person. Not only will people choose different disciplines, how the disciplines are practiced will also vary. Although every believer should pray, for example, the frequency or length or kind of prayer will differ.

The Rule that you write should include three things. *First*, introduce your “Rule” with a self- assessment. A clear self-assessment will include an introduction that briefly describe your current situation in life—family responsibilities, work schedule, and other life circumstances. You should also reflect on personal strengths and weaknesses. Are you blessed, for example, with a love for fitness, or high emotional intelligence, a desire to read every day from multiple disciplinary areas, or a compassionate heart? What are your most difficult challenges? Include assessments of emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual components of your life.

*Second*, describe the way in which you will practice specific disciplines. Your Rule should include an explanation of why your choices not only fit your situation in life but also how they address areas where you especially need discipline and growth. In other words, describe how your Rule helps you conform to the image of Christ for the sake of others. Always remember this goal as you develop your Rule.

*Third*, who will you be in relationship with to help you remain accountable to your Rule?

Keep in mind that this Rule is a way for you to participate in the kind of self-care that will reduce the chances of clergy burn-out and increase the impact of your ministry.

## Reference Texts

- Capps, Donald. (2005). *Fragile connections memoirs of mental illness for pastoral care professionals*. St. Louis/Chalice Press.
- Cooper-White, Pamela. (2004). *Shared wisdom: Use of self in pastoral care and counseling*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Cooper-White, Pamela. (1995). *The cry of Tamar: Violence against women and the church's response*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.
- Couture, Pamela. (2000). *Seeing children, seeing God: A practical theology of children and poverty*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Essex, Barbara. (2005) *Krazy kinfolk: exploring dysfunctional families of the Bible*. Cleveland/Pilgrim Press.
- Gottman, Johh, et al. (1976). *A couple's guide to communication*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Hightower, James, (Ed.). (1999). *Caring for people from birth through death*. New York: Haworth.
- May, G. (1988). *Addiction and grace: Love and spirituality in the healing of addictions*. San Francisco: Harper
- Mitchell & Anderson. (1983). *All our losses/All our griefs: Resources for pastoral care*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Richardson. R. (2005). *Becoming a healthier pastor: Family systems theory and the pastor's own family*. Minneapolis: Fortress. •
- Savage. (1996). *Listening and Caring skills in Ministry: A guide for pastors, counselors and small groups*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Shore-Goss, et al. (2013). *Queering Christianity finding a place at the table for lgbtqi Christians*. Santa Barbara: Praeger
- Swinton, John. (2012). *Dementia living in the memories of god*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.
- Wimberly. (1997). *Recalling our own stories: spiritual renewal for religious caregivers*. San Francisco/Jossey-Bass.