

CP5214 Pastoral Care and Counseling

3 credits. Prerequisites: *none*.

👤 On Campus, Saskatoon 'A' Livestream 📺 Video on Demand



January 5-9, 2026

Module

Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm SK

Yajaira Gomez, M.Div, D.Min.

Yajaira.gomez@mcs.edu

www.lifegivingministries.ca

Please note: This module requires reading and presentation preparation before the module.

Course Goals

Course Description

This course examines the nature and function of the Church as it relates to the ministries of congregational care and counseling. It explores how care and counseling work together for healthy spiritual formation in the lives of individuals and in the body of believers. Principles and practices are related in a holistic manner to the caregiver, to the individuals under care, and to the overall wellness of the community of faith.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

Pastors will find themselves in the role of a counselor whether they feel competent or not. Counselling activity remains a part of the pastor's life regardless of how specialized the organized church and society at large become. Our people want real answers that are biblically sound and delivered competently.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *Spiritual Maturity* students will:

1. Prepare themselves for pastoral care by examining their own personal struggles and making decisions to move toward healing.
 - *Assessment:* Resolving Spiritual Conflicts Exercise

To demonstrate competency in *Ministry Development* students will:

2. Explain key issues in pastoral care and counselling.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Resolving Spiritual Conflicts Exercise; Interview Report
3. Practice with professionalism the foundational skills necessary for godly and competent pastoral care and counselling (i.e., assessing problems, empathizing, listening, referencing appropriate Scriptures, and prayer).
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Marital Care; Case Studies

4. Identify key scriptures that are beneficial for pastoral care and counselling in various situations.

- *Assessment:* Presentation; Marital Care; Interview Report; Case Studies

5. Plan for ad hoc pastoral care functions (e.g., marriage ceremonies, funerals, hospital visitation).

- *Assessment:* Marital Care; Grief and Loss Care Plan

Therefore, the following areas of competency development apply to this course:

- *Spiritual Maturity* is demonstrated by participating in and modeling a vibrant relationship with the triune God, practicing core spiritual disciplines, exercising spiritual gifts for the benefit of others, and remaining committed to lifelong spiritual formation, resulting in ever-increasing Christlikeness (see Learning Outcome #1).
- *Ministry Development* is demonstrated by a capacity for advancing ministries with an awareness and use of effective ministry models for engaging with and equipping others in worship, witness, discipleship, care, and service to the world (see Learning Outcomes #2-5).

Course Work

Required Readings

Anderson, Neil T. *The Steps to Freedom in Christ: A Biblical Guide to Help You Resolve Personal and Spiritual Conflicts and Become a Fruitful Disciple of Jesus*. Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2017. ISBN: 978-0764219429.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1038072219>

***NOTE:** This hands-on letter-sized guide (Appendix of *The Bondage Breaker*) provides a spiritual inventory designed to help readers identify and break free from condemning thoughts, compulsive behaviors, personal conflicts, and spiritual struggles. It aims to lead individuals out of any type of personal or spiritual bondage and into a daily experience of victory over sin and doubt, allowing them to reclaim the promise of freedom that Christ offers. I recommend having this as a go-to for pastoral ministry.

Benner, David G. *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structured Model*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003. ISBN: 978-0801026317.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/51804759>

Collins, Gary. *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Third edition. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007. ISBN: 978-1418503291.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/70258858>

***NOTE:** One chapter is required reading for your presentation (see Assignments #1 and #2).

****While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.**

Suggested Readings

Blackburn, Bill. "Pastors Who Counsel." In *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists and Pastors*, edited by Randolph K. Sanders. Second Edition. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013. Pages 368-381. ISBN: 9780830839940.
<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/902683792>.

McClintok, Karen A. *Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care: How to Respond When Things Fall Apart*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2022. ISBN: 978-1506480718.
<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1288318687>.

Waters, Sonia E. *Addiction and Pastoral Care*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019. ISBN: 9780802875686.
<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1084474781>

Course Assignments and Activities

1. Pre-Module Reading (formative).

In his text *Christian Counseling*, Gary Collins addresses many issues that people in our churches struggle with every day. You are to skim and choose one of the issues from Chapters 8 to 27 for your presentation (see Assignment #2 below). You can see the Table of Contents [here](#).

Sign up for your presentation topic using [this sign-up sheet](#). There is only one presentation per topic, so please sign up as soon as possible to secure your top choice for the presentation. When signing up, ensure your topic is different from the other topics already chosen.

To access your chapter, use the copy on reserve in the library or on the [DTL](#). Read your chapter before the module begins. You'll likely want to begin to prepare your presentation as well.

Additionally, in preparation for your Presentation, read the whole of the Benner textbook.

- **Due date:** January 4, 2026 at 11:59pm.

2. Presentation (25%).

In addition to completing assignment #1, prepare a 12 to 15-minute sermon or teaching lesson and present it to the class. Explain what the issue is and explain how to counsel someone through the issue, referring to key scriptures you may use to counsel someone through this issue. Use Benner's strategic pastoral counseling techniques for this presentation. The final 5 minutes of the presentation will involve you practicing your counselling skills on a fellow student, who will role-play that they are struggling with the chosen issue (e.g., A fellow student will pretend to struggle with anorexia and you must counsel them through this problem). Make sure to use key scriptures in this counselling role-play.

Submit a manuscript copy of your presentation (5-6 pages) and an outline of your presentation (1-2 pages) prior to presenting. Also, post your presentation outline under the Discussion "Presentation Outlines" on Populi for your classmates to see.

VOD students will submit a video recording of them presenting on a topic. Ideally, it will be an actual presentation to a group of people (e.g., to a youth group, to board members, to a Sunday school class, as a sermon). **VOD students** will also need to complete the role-playing exercise with a fellow VOD student. See above for more details. Schedule a Zoom call with a fellow VOD student and set the Zoom meeting to record. Submit both videos (the presentation video and the role-playing video) via the secure, private link provided by the professor (NOT on Populi). Immediately following the course end date, both the professor and the VOD students must permanently delete the role-playing videos from all devices.

- In addition to the above, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide (*manuscript*).
 - Engage the audience with the subject and speak clearly, make use of handouts, and use good eye contact with limited use of notes.
- **Related learning outcome(s):** #2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 12-15 minutes of presentation, 5 minutes of role-play + 5–6-page manuscript and 1–2-page outline.
- **Due date:** Presentations begin on January 7. VOD student videos are due January 9.

3. *Resolving Spiritual Conflicts Exercise (20%)*

Read the Anderson textbook. Prayerfully move through the steps Anderson outlines to resolve any spiritual conflicts in your own life. Write a report detailing your experience (1-2 pages).

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2.
- **Assignment length:** 2-3 pages.
- **Due date:** January 26, 2026 at 11:59pm.

4. *Marital Care (20%)*

A couple from your ministry context asks if you can marry them. The bride and groom are devout Christians. As a pastor, you must outline your approach to their marriage preparation and their wedding day. Include relevant class lectures, readings, and biblical references. Please submit a single document with clear sub-headings that addresses the following three sections.

- a) **Outline Pre-Care (30 marks):** Provide a detailed description of the pre-marital counseling topics and spiritual guidance you would provide to the couple. What biblical principles would you discuss, and how would you prepare them for a marriage covenant? This should be 2-3 pages.
 - b) **Detailed Ceremony Outline (40 marks):** Write a detailed ceremony outline from the processional to the recessional. Your outline should include the key elements as discussed in class lectures. This should be 2-3 pages.
 - c) **Outline Post-Care (30 marks):** Outline the pastoral follow-up you would provide to the couple in their first year of marriage. What resources or guidance would you offer to help them navigate their spiritual journey together? Include key scriptures you would discuss and why you picked those scriptures. This should be about 2 pages.
- Related learning outcome(s): #3, 4, 5.
 - **Assignment length:** 6-8 pages.
 - **Due date:** February 6, 2026 by 11:59pm

5. *Grief and Loss Care Plan (15%).*

Students will be required to:

- a) Review Dr. Tina Pitamber's guest lecture by sharing 6 to 8 key points that will be helpful in ministry as you care for those who grieve for the sick and dying (1-2 pages).
- b) Choose **one** of the following scenarios and complete the assignment:
 - a. Church Context - Write out a funeral plan. Explain what you will do from the moment you first hear about the death through to the burial and include a basic outline of the service you will deliver at the funeral (4 pages).
 - b. Christian Counselling Center Context – Write out a framework for 5 counselling sessions when a client presents for counselling due to the sudden death of their 10-year-old child. Include in detail a plan for each counselling session including exercises, homework, and a summary report of each counselling session (2-3 pages).
 - c. Chaplaincy, Hospice, or Palliative Care Context - Develop a comprehensive plan for supporting a family through end-of-life care and the death of their elderly parent with dementia. Include details of how you would support them while they care for their loved one, once the death occurs, and after-care support including involvement in the memorial service. Include a basic outline of the message you will share at the memorial service about their loved one (2-3 pages).

In addition to the above, students will follow these guidelines:

- Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide
- Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
- Refer to the “Funeral Planning Checklist” Lesson on Populi.
- Related learning outcome(s): #5.
- **Assignment length:** 6-7 pages.
- **Due date:** February 16, 2026 at 11:59pm.

6. *Interview Report (20%).*

Choose one pastor for an interview. The purpose of this assignment is to assess the work dynamics, counselling approaches, and community resources used by a pastoral care and counselling professional. The student will compare, contrast, and complement the dynamics, approaches, and resources discovered in the interview with those learned through the course material. See Guidelines for the interview in Appendix A.

- In addition to the above, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide
 - Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
 - Include basic details about the pastor in introduction (name, years in ministry).
- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #4.
- **Assignment length:** 8-10 pages.
- **Due date:** February 26, 2026 at 11:59pm.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have *the same* assignment due dates as in-class students.
- VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities. Students will watch the lectures according to the following schedule:
 - o Day 1 Lectures and Report due January 10, 2026
 - o Day 2 Lectures and Report due January 16, 2026
 - o Day 3 Lectures and Report due January 22, 2026
 - o Day 4 Lectures and Report due January 28, 2026
 - o Day 5 Lectures and Report due February 3, 2026
- According to the schedule above, VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explains at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are marked pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.
- The Late Assignment and Extension policy applies to all VOD Report submissions.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
1. Pre-Module Reading	20 hrs	January 4	N/A
2. Presentation	15 hrs	January 7ff	25%
3. Resolving Spiritual Conflicts Exercise	7 hrs	January 26	20%
4. Marital Care	16 hrs	February 6	20%
5. Grief and Loss Care Plan	16 hrs	February 16	15%
6. Interview Report	18 hrs	February 26	20%
Total =		~122 hrs	

All assignments are due at 11:59pm **SK time**, unless otherwise indicated.

Course Outline

Note: Although I have not specified definite times for Case Studies, students will be involved in a diversity of them throughout each day. The outline below is a simple guide for the week; however, I will make changes as necessary.

Day	Session/Activity	Description
Monday	First session	Syllabus & Expectations
	Break 1	Break 1

	Second session	Soul Care
	Lunch	Lunch
	Third session	Solution-Focused Pastoral Counselling
	Break 2	Break 2
	Fourth session	The Counselling Interview
Tuesday	First session	Weddings & Pre-Marital
	Break 1	Break 1
	Second session	Funerals & Care to the Grieving
	Lunch	Lunch
	Third session	Deliverance Ministry, House Visitations and House Cleaning
	Break 2	Break 2
	Fourth session	Marriages and Families, and LGBTQ+ dynamics
Wednesday	First session	Chronic Conditions
	Break 1	Break 1
	Second session	Abuse, Addictions, Anger, Depression
	Lunch	Lunch
	Chapel	Chapel (1pm-2:15pm SK)
	Break 2	Break 2
	Fourth session	Presentations (3)

Thursday	First session	Ethics and Scripture
	Break 1	Break 1
	Second session	Sexual Misconduct and Abuse of Power, Non-Sexual Multiple Relationships, Ethics in Couples Counselling
	Lunch	Lunch
	Third session	The Sexual Minority Counselee
	Break 2	Break 2
	Fourth session	Presentations
Friday	First session	Cultural Sensitivity & Care to Seniors
	Break 1	Break 1
	Second session	Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care
	Lunch	Lunch
	Third session	Presentations (3)
	Break 2	Break 2
	Fourth session	Presentation (1 if needed), Final Thoughts, and Course Evaluation

- Assignments will not be accepted after *March 2, 2026*.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the [Student Handbook](#).

Horizon has a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in

a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Student Handbook](#).

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon is committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institution, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Horizon's Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu. All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the [Student Handbook](#).

Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.

- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Interview of a Pastor, Christian Counsellor, or Hospital Chaplain - Re: Pastoral Counselling

Goal

- To personalize your awareness of the role of Counseling in Pastoral Ministry

Assignment

- Interview one Pastor, Christian Counsellor, or hospital chaplain and submit a written report

Guidelines

- Follow these guidelines carefully:
 1. Prepare your questions and your method for note-taking in advance (e.g., clipboard to take written notes during interviews, audio recorder, do not take video).
 2. Select ONE pastor, Christian Counsellor, or Hospital Chaplain who has been in vocational ministry for at least 8 to 10 years.
 3. Check with class members to see if others are planning to interview the same pastoral care professional.
 - If so, do your best to set up just one interview that all students can attend at the same time.
 4. Arrange for appointments to interview each of the pastoral care professionals.
 - Ask for 40 to 50 minutes of their time.
 - Email the pastoral care professional your list of questions in advance so they can mentally prepare for the session and more actively participate in the structured flow of your questions.
 5. Use your time effectively to maximize the information you can get from the interviews.
 - Watch the clock to ensure that you get through your list of questions.
 6. Make good notes (or audio for later transcribing) for use in writing your report.

Suggestions for Questions

Use all of the following questions but also be free to add more of your own questions as well:

1. How many years have you been a pastor/counsellor/chaplain?
2. How important is it for a pastor/counsellor/chaplain to be available for pastoral counseling?
3. How much counseling do you do as a pastor/counsellor/chaplain, and what kinds of counseling are the most common that you do?
4. In what ways has the counseling side of your ministry changed over the years? (e.g., increased, decreased, different needs, etc.)
5. What do you consider to be the core or essential skills that a pastor/counsellor/chaplain needs in order to counsel effectively?

6. To what extent do you feel that you are adequately trained (have the skills) to do counseling as a pastor/counsellor/chaplain?
 - For what specific areas do you feel adequate? Inadequate?
7. How would you describe your model(s) or approaches to methods of pastoral counseling?
 - Are there any specific secular and/or Christian counseling approaches that appeal to you?
 - In what ways do you use your Christian resources (e.g., the Word, prayer, etc.)?
8. How long is a typical counseling session?
9. How do you structure a typical counseling session?
 - What do you do?
 - How firm and/or fluid is the flow of your typical sessions?
10. To what extent do you give counselees 'homework' to do between sessions?
 - If so, what kind of homework?
11. How long (number of sessions) do you typically spend with the same person(s)?
 - What is the maximum number of sessions?
12. Can you speak to the issues of boundaries and potential dangers in pastoral counseling?
13. How and when do you decide to refer someone to other more specialized help?
14. Is there anything else you would like to share to help me (us) to understand the role of counseling in your ministry?
15. What are some key scriptures that you use in pastoral care and counselling?
16. What type of documentation do you keep for your pastoral counselling work?
17. Where/how do you store this?
18. What referral resources do you use in the community when providing pastoral care and counsel?
19. How do you work with a circle of care to support someone in the issues they are facing (for example: Christian counsellor in the community, marriage therapist, doctor, psychiatrist, addictions counsellor, probation officer)?

Written Report

- From your interview notes, prepare a written report that summarizes what you have learned about the role of counseling in this pastoral care professional's ministry.
- Also include some summative commentary about what your interviews (and subsequent reflection) have taught you about pastoral counseling beyond the specific details of the pastor.
- List key scriptures that the pastor/counsellor/chaplain would use in counselling and pastoral care and in what settings.