



# Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

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PTH 670 — Counseling for Grief and Loss  
(Block) Spring 2012

Monday 9:00 am – 12:35 pm **OR** Tuesday 6:00 – 9:00 pm

## ***Essential Information***

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *Handbook for Inclusive Language*

## ***Instructor Information***

Professor: Judi Schwanz, Ph.D.

Email: [jaschwanz@nts.edu](mailto:jaschwanz@nts.edu)

Office: (816) 268-5491

Office Hours: by appointment

## ***Catalog Description***

A study of the phenomena of transitions, loss and grief as they impact the individual and the church. This course includes the exploration of methods and means of ministering to the bereaved, and reflection on personal experiences of loss.

## ***Course Narrative & Rationale***

This course is designed to help the student understand the universal, multi-faceted human experience of loss and grief. Studies show that the majority of people turn to their spiritual leader *first* for help and counsel in times of tragedy and loss. Christian leaders in all areas of ministry have an incredible opportunity to participate with God in healing and helping a world full of hurting people.

Enhanced awareness of the pervasive nature of loss will lead to greater sensitivity and awareness for the spiritual helper. The pastor/counselor who understands the deep comfort

found in the simple ministry of presence will be more likely to teach others how to provide care and extend ministry to the grieving.

## ***Degree Objectives***

The following M. Div. degree objectives are addressed in this course:

1. Mature knowledge of God and self, attained through practices of Christian formation and personal discipline
2. Cultivation of gifts, practical skills, and vocational identity as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through engagement in and reflection on the pastoral arts

## ***Course Outcomes***

Students in this course will have the opportunity to:

1. Explore their present feelings about loss, dying, death and grief. [Assignment #2]
2. Analyze grief as a stress in all life transitions and loss. [Assignments #1,2]
3. Understand the relationship between grief resolution and mental and spiritual health. [Assignments #1,2,3,4,5]
4. Reflect theologically on grief, loss and ministry to the bereaved. [Assignments #1,2,3,4]
5. Develop a personal pastoral approach to bereavement ministry. [Assignments #3,4,5]
6. Plan steps to establish a congregational ministry for those experiencing loss. [Assignments #3,4,5]

## ***Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies***

CP 14 – Ability to appropriately express pastoral care & concern for individuals & families in crises, passages, & the normal routines of life

CP 15 – Ability to offer spiritual counseling & to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister's ability

CP 16 – Ability to apply the knowledge of basic counseling gained from historic Christian & appropriate contemporary models

## ***Required Texts & Course Materials***

Becvar, Dorothy S. *In the Presence of Grief: Helping Family Members Resolve Death, Dying, and Bereavement Issues*. New York: Guilford Press, 2001.

Boss, Pauline. *Loss, Trauma, and Resilience: Therapeutic Work with Ambiguous Loss*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006.

Long, Thomas. *Accompany Them With Singing: The Christian Funeral*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009.

## ***Recommended Texts & Course Materials***

Smith, Harold Ivan. *When Your People are Grieving: Leading in Times of Loss*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2001.

## **Course Outline**

- I. Loss and Grief: an Introduction
  - a. Compassion and Pastoral Care
  - b. Varieties of Loss
  - c. Tasks of Grief
  - d. Where is God in suffering?
- II. "Dying Well"
  - a. End-of-life care
  - b. Funerals and Rituals
- III. Caring for the grievers
  - a. Children and grief
  - b. Congregational ministry

## **Course Assignments & Requirements**

1. Reading assignments to be done in advance of the class session in which they are listed on the schedule. The reading is essential to class participation. [Course outcomes #2,3,4]
2. Journal. Each student will maintain a journal in which he/she will **reflect theologically and personally** on the material in the textbooks and any additional materials read. Each week, the student will hand in a copy of that week's journal entries. Grading will be on the basis of interaction with the material, not on specific content. Material will be kept in strict confidence and only read by the professor. [Course outcomes #1,2,3,4]
3. Presentation. Each student will choose a particular type of loss to research and will prepare a class presentation. The 20-minute presentation is to include a description of the loss and its effects, a recommendation of pastoral and congregational response to the individual/family facing such a loss (including appropriate use of Scripture), and a list of resources. The student will prepare a one-page handout to be distributed to the class at the time of presentation. [Course outcomes #3,4,5,6]
4. Paper. The student will also prepare a 15-17 page paper to be handed in. A reference list reflecting a **minimum of 400 pages of reading** (in addition to course texts) on the given topic will be handed in along with the paper. The paper is due April 24. [Course outcomes #3,4,5,6]
5. Take home final exam. The exam will be distributed April 24 and due on May 5 at the closing class session. [Course outcomes #3,5,6]

## **Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

	Hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions	39

Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	0
Reading	45
Writing	52
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	5
Exams & Quizzes	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147</b>

### ***Method for Submitting Assignments***

All assignments should be submitted through Moodle no later than 11:55 PM (Central Time) of the due date listed for the assignment. If the student’s weekly journal is completed in handwritten format, a photocopy may be submitted in class each week, (provided the handwriting is legible).

### ***Form and Style Expectations***

All papers shall be written using Turabian format for form and style. The weekly journals will not be subject to this expectation.

### ***Inclusive Language***

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

### ***Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams***

All written work is expected to be handed in by 23:55 (11:55 PM – Central Time) on the due date given. Late work will be marked down 10% for every week (or portion thereof) that it is late.

### ***Course Grading***

- Class Participation – 10% of grade
- Journal – 30% of grade
- Presentation (including class handout) – 15% of grade
- Research Paper – 25% of grade
- Take-home final exam – 20% of grade

- A = 93-100%
- B = 85-92%
- C = 77-84%
- D = 69-76%
- F = Below 69%

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

## ***Class Attendance***

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. Given the participatory nature of this course, class participation is part of the course grade, and will be impacted accordingly by absences.

If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If a student is absent four or more weeks of the semester, the professor may automatically fail the student.

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

## ***Course Calendar***

Date	Week	Assignment:      B = Becvar   L = Long
Feb. 6/7	1	
Feb. 13/14	2	B ch. 1-2; weekly journal 1
Feb. 20/21	3	B ch. 3-4; Boss ch. 1-3; weekly journal 2
Feb. 27/28	4	B ch. 6-10; weekly journal 3
Mar. 5/6	5	Boss ch. 4-5; weekly journal 4
Mar. 12/13	6	B ch. 5; weekly journal 5
Mar. 19/20	7	R & R WEEK – NO CLASS
Mar. 26/27	8	Boss, ch. 6-7; Long ch. 1-6; weekly journal 6

April 2/3	9	B ch 11-13; Long ch. 7- appendix; weekly journal 7
April 9/10	10	B ch 11-13; weekly journal 8
April 16/17	11	Boss ch. 9- epil.; weekly journal 9
April 23/24	12	Student presentations; take-home final handed out; research papers due
April 1/ May 1	13	Student presentations Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean's Office)
May 7/8	14	Wrap-up session; final exam due