

PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN FAMILY MINISTRIES (PD)

The Ruben M. Tanseco, S.J. Center for Family Ministries (RMT-CEFAM) at the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, offers a Professional Diploma in Family Ministries (PD), a 24-unit, non-degree program. If taken full-time, the program may be completed in one academic year.

The program is designed for:

- Those engaged in the pastoral care of couples and families - lay workers, priests, ministers, religious brothers and sisters.
- The religious and lay from various faith traditions who want to understand family life for personal growth and development.

There are two major components to the program:

- PASTORAL COUNSELING (healing dimension)
- SPIRITUALITY (growth dimension)

A holistic, psycho-spiritual approach characterizes the program, utilizing a content-and-process methodology.

The PASTORAL COUNSELING component of the program includes a study of individual and family psychodynamics and the sociocultural factors that influence these. Students undergo practicum training to hone basic skills necessary for pastoral counseling ministry with individuals, couples and families.

The program's SPIRITUALITY component includes a study of the scriptural-moral-doctrinal underpinnings of Christian family life and participation in a graduated, integrated series of growth programs in family spirituality.

The overall program aims to train persons to build up the Filipino family as a "domestic Church," a community of love, justice, freedom, and peace, both within the home and in its social role and responsibility to the nation and the world. The thrust of "service of the faith and the promotion of justice" permeates the program.

Requirements:

1. A college degree. The major courses of the program are at the graduate school level.
2. Transcript of record from the college or university attended, showing average or above average grades for the overall study program.
3. A completed application form accompanied by three letters of recommendation from the applicant's supervisor (the Superior, in the case of those in the professed ministries) and two from his/her associates in paid or volunteer work.
4. The course offerings are held in the afternoons and evenings. The spirituality growth programs and the other elective seminars are scheduled on staggered weekends. The counseling practicum work is undertaken and planned in consultation with the supervisor.

The PD program for SY 2025 – 2026 will feature hybrid classes.

Program of Studies:**Semester 1** (August - December)

Regular Courses	Units
Sp 89 / TMP 267 Pastoral Psychology and Counseling	3
Sp 93 / TMP 268.03 Marital/Premarital Dynamics and Counseling: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach	3
Sp 93.1 / TMP 268 Family Dynamics and Counseling Approaches	3
Sp 92.3 / TMP 269 Assessment and Initial Intervention of Individual and Relationship Disorders	3

	12

Non-credit Requirements:

Growth Group I – First Semester

Growth Group II – Second Semester

Semester 2 (January - May)

Regular Courses	Units
Sp 62.1 / TMP 231.05 Family Spirituality and Sexual Ethics	3
Sp 94 / TMP 268.04 Marital and Family Counseling Practicum	3
Sp 94.1 / TMP 268.09 Family Spirituality Practicum	3
Elective Course	3

	12
Elective Courses	Units
Sp 92 / TMP 268.08 Child and Adolescent Counseling	3
Sp 93.2 / TMP 268.06 Explorations in Individual and Family Resilience	3
Sp 95 / TMP 267.07 Pastoral Group Process and Counseling	3

Other courses/seminars will be offered from time to time. All the course and seminar offerings are under the auspices of the Loyola School of Theology.

For tuition and other fees, please call RMT-CEFAM at (632) 8426-4289 to 92.

Faculty:

Ma. Concepcion P. Arboleda, MA

Maria Cecilia G. Ascalon

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Ma. Elvira A. Macabuag, MA

Maria Gracia Bello-Marquez, MA

Elizabeth E. Rondain, MD

Myrna Joyce O. Sanchez, PhD, RGC

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Ma. Teresa G. Villasor, PhD, RGC, RPsy

Description of Required Courses

SEMESTER 1

Sp 89 / TMP 267 Pastoral Psychology and Counseling (3 units)

The course offers a basic understanding of psychological realities and an experience of the basic helping skills for individual, humanistic counseling to aid pastoral care in the Philippine context. The first part of the course deals with the theoretical underpinnings of human growth, development, and maturity, as well as relevant contextual and cultural factors.

The second part of the course will tackle the principles of a humanistic-psycho-spiritual approach to individual pastoral counseling, focusing on basic helping skills. The course ends with the meta-personal (societal) dimensions of pastoral care from a psycho-spiritual viewpoint.

A content-and-process methodology will be used. The course incorporates the practice of basic helping skills and listening techniques in group activities, which are processed and facilitated by trained counselors.

Sp 93 / TMP 268.03 Marital/Premarital Dynamics and Counseling: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach (3 units)

The course begins with an assessment of marriage readiness using premarital assessment tools. It then delves into psycho-educational counseling. The curriculum also explores the sources and patterns of interactional conflicts among both premarital and married couples, focusing on biological, psycho-emotional, socio-cultural, sexual, and spiritual aspects. Additionally, it discusses the sources and patterns of interactional growth, highlighting the psycho-spiritual experience of genuine love.

The course wraps up with an overview of several fundamental operational models for marital counseling. A content-and-process methodology is applied throughout. Training includes on-site role-play sessions, conducted by trained counselors, allowing students to practice using premarital assessment tools and counseling techniques. These practice sessions will be held on-site.

**Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling) is a prerequisite or corequisite of this course*

Sp 93.1 / TMP 268 Family Dynamics and Counseling Approaches (3 units)

The course introduces students to a psycho-spiritual approach to helping families challenged by the issues of adjusting to change brought about by normative developmental transitions and situational crises. Using the basic framework of family systems theory, the course surveys the major therapeutic methods of assessment and intervention as applied in the Philippine context.

Various learning approaches are directed at training students to become sensitive to the sociocultural influences on family dynamics and to adopt multiple perspectives in identifying pastoral opportunities and resources for caring and growth. Particular emphasis will be given to applying learning to the trainee's own family, seen as a foundational task in the development of the person of the pastoral family counselor.

**Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling) is a prerequisite or corequisite of this course.*

Sp 92.3 / TMP 269 Assessment and Initial Intervention of Individual and Relationship Disorders (3 units)

This course introduces pastoral counseling students to more common problems in the Philippine clinical and counseling settings. These are presented according to diagnostic criteria, followed by a discussion of the unique contributions of culture, society, and family systems, which shape personal and community attitudes, beliefs, and values toward mental health. It then teaches assessment methods and initial intervention techniques, focusing on the pastoral counselor's role. Lectures serve as a springboard for research, reflection, and discussion.

This course uses a seminar format to introduce students to the mental health and relationship problems that have arisen or have become exacerbated by the multiple stressors in the aftermath of the global pandemic. Mental health caregivers need to understand the presentation and dynamics of pandemic-related mental health issues because they are not immune to the long-term impact the crisis continues to have on our communities.

The course will consider the influence of culture and society on family systems and other social networks and the formation of values, beliefs, and attitudes that influence these systems. Course modules will discuss first-line assessment methods and initial interventions and assign learning tasks to allow students to practice applying these in representative case situations. Students will develop proposals for projects to strengthen mental health care services in their communities.

**Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling) is a prerequisite or corequisite of this course.*

SEMESTER 2

Sp 62.1 / TMP 231.05 Family Spirituality and Sexual Ethics (3 units)

This course reflects on marriage and family. It will explore its scriptural, doctrinal, and sociological underpinnings, focusing on some issues confronting contemporary marriage and family as a social and ecclesiological unit.

The students are expected to articulate their own theology of marriage and family, given their context of pastoral ministry with families. It helps the students to do an exploration of sexuality and sexual ethics for pastoral ministers.

Its primary goal is to deepen one's understanding of human sexuality, which will serve as a compendium for helpers in the context of the helping ministry. It is not meant to replace a more in-depth study of Moral Theology that focuses on approaches, methods, and relevant Church teachings. Rather, the course aims to develop a deeper appreciation of one's sexuality and understanding of its implications when handling sexual issues in counseling or any helping ministry.

Sp 94 / TMP 268.04 Marital/Family Counseling Practicum (3 units)

[In-person Course]

The course features a practicum in pastoral counseling with clients experiencing problems in their couple and/or family relationships. Students conduct a required number of hours of face-to-face counseling with such clients under the supervision of the professor, who will assist them in case conceptualization, planning, and treatment implementation.

Case conferences, role-play case simulations, and demonstration films augment students' development as effective pastoral couple and family counselors.

**Required Counseling Hours: 30 hours*

[Online Course]

The course is designed to give students supervised practice experience in pastoral counseling for clients with problems in their couple and/or family relationships. Students learn practical interventions from major evidence-based approaches in couple and family counseling and apply these in one-on-one and conjoint sessions in both simulated and actual counseling sessions under the guidance of their professors and supervisors. Case conferences help students sharpen their case formulation and planning skills. Ongoing reflection on their role as a pastoral person focuses students on working within a psycho-spiritual orientation helps clients maintain integrity, develop agency, and seek meaning as they struggle with and work through life's challenges.

**Prerequisites of Sp 94 / TMP 268.04 are:*

Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling)

Sp 92.3 / TMP 269 (Assessment and Initial Interventions of Individual and Relationship Disorders)

Sp 93 / TMP 268.03 (Marital/ Premarital Dynamics and Counseling: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach)

Sp 93.1 / TMP 268 (Family Dynamics and Counseling Approaches)

Sp 94.1 / TMP 268.09 Family Spirituality Practicum (3 units)

This course is designed to empower families to flourish across all dimensions of their relationships: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal (meta-personal). Adopting a holistic approach, the program integrates the psycho-emotional, cultural, socio-political, and spiritual aspects of family life.

Participants will engage in immersive experiences through established growth programs, including the Ignatian Spiritual Deepening Weekend Retreat, the Marriage Encounter Weekend, and the Family Congress or its equivalent. In addition, participants will attend lectures addressing a broad spectrum of social, political, economic, and environmental issues relevant to the national context.

The course culminates in a practical demonstration of learning, wherein participants develop and facilitate modules—either in full or in part—tailored to the various subsystems of the family across different socio-economic backgrounds.

Description of Elective Courses

Sp 92 / TMP 268.08 Special Topics in Marital and Family Counseling: Child and Adolescent Counseling (3 units)

This course will review the different development theories related to counseling and clinical work with children and adolescents. In the process, the interplay of the biological, social, cognitive, and environmental factors that may cause or influence the severity of the emotional, behavioral, and adjustment problems of children will be explored.

Counseling and clinical procedures, treatment methods, and counseling approaches and techniques for specific cases such as children of separated parents, adopted children, sibling rivalry, abused and traumatized children, etc., will be the main topics of the course. Structured experiential activities, small group sharing, role-playing, reflections on one's childhood and adolescent experiences, and lecturettes are some of the learning approaches used in teaching the course.

**Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling) is a prerequisite of this course.*

Sp 93.2 / TMP 268.06 Explorations in Individual and Family Resilience (3 units)

Adversities (trials, sufferings) have a way of crippling or paralyzing people's responses. On the other hand, like some crises, adversities can break or allow us to have a breakthrough. This course draws from the strengths, hopes, and stirrings of the Spirit within all of us. Some stories of healing and resilience, drawn from various sources, will be explored.

A theory of change on why people are motivated to bounce back from adversities will be presented. Some helping or facilitating skills (STAR Model) for resilience will be presented in some classes.

Sp 95 / TMP 267.07 Pastoral Group Process and Counseling (3 units)

The course will give opportunity for students to (a) review and survey the different theories in group counseling (like Person-Centered, Psychoanalytic, Gestalt, Hypnotherapy, etc.); (b) experience these theories in a small growth group in class, and (c) facilitate a small pastoral growth group outside class. The students will learn how to use the Structured Learning Experiences (SLE) and Process-Observation-Analysis (POA) that are essential in facilitating groups.

Priority will be given to students already involved with a group in their parish/church, work, or civic organization. Maximum number of students: 12

**Sp 89 / TMP 267 (Pastoral Psychology and Counseling), or its equivalent, is a course prerequisite*