



Birmingham Theological Seminary
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
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Developing a Biblical Counseling Model for Chaplaincy Syllabus

Semester: Asynchronous

Course: DM4695 – Developing a Biblical Counseling Model for Chaplaincy

Day & Time: Asynchronous

Room: Asynchronous

Professor: Jason Hill, DMin.

Credits: 2

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Course Note: Chaplains provide confidential counseling to individuals, couples, and families, assisting them in finding help, healing, and hope for life's struggles. A strong knowledge of common counseling theories, modalities, and presenting problems are necessary to assist chaplains in the development of a biblical counseling model that will be most effective in their ministry context.

Course Description: This course compares popular counseling theories & models used in the chaplaincy with the biblical counseling model. This course prepares chaplains to develop a personal model of biblical counseling for use in their ministry context. Participants will consider key concepts and techniques in the practice of biblical counseling to enhance their ability to provide effective counseling to those they serve.

Course Objectives:

- Cognitive (Content)
 - Summarize popular approaches and models of pastoral counseling
 - Examine counseling models through a gospel-centric biblical anthropology
 - Evaluate the impact of biblical counseling on common counseling issues
- Affective/Motivational (Character)
 - Gain a deeper understanding of counseling models used within the chaplaincy
 - Increase confidence in personal biblical counseling capabilities
 - To be motivated to engage others in effective biblical counseling
- Volitional/Application (Competencies)
 - Gain competency to counsel others to spiritual growth through difficult times
 - Develop a personal model of biblical counseling
 - Design a model for leading effective biblical counseling sessions

Required Texts:

Adkins, Marshall. Irreconcilable Differences: Emotionally Focused Therapy and Human Anthropology. *Journal of Biblical Soul Care*, vol. 6 (1), 9-29, 2022. (PDF Provided)

DeKruyf, Lorriane. An Introduction to Narrative Therapy. *Digital Commons, George Fox University Graduate School of Counseling*, 2008.

Greggo, Stephen, P. & Sisemore, Timothy, A. *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2012.

Hodges, Charles, D. *The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference, 2nd Ed.* Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2023.

Huie, Eliza. *Trauma Aware*. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2025.

Jones, Robert, D., Kellen, Kristin, L. & Green, Rob. *The Gospel for Disordered Lives: An Introduction to Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*. Brentwood: B&H Academic, 2021.

Kellemen, Bob. *Consider Your Counsel: Addressing Ten Mistakes in our Biblical Counseling*. Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2021.

Mehl, Scott. The CBT Therapist in Us All: A Biblical Evaluation of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. *ACBC Essays*, vol. 1, 29-42, 2017. (PDF provided)

Palmer, Keith. Christian Psychology: An Introduction & Biblical Analysis. *ACBC Essays*, vol. 1, 2017.

Whitman, Lauren. *A Biblical Counseling Process: Guidance for the Beginning, Middle, and End*. Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2021.

Recommended Texts:

Emlet, Michael. *Descriptions and Prescriptions: A Biblical Perspective on Psychiatric Diagnoses and Medications*. Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2017.

Hussing, Joseph. *Learning to Listen: Essential Skills for every Counselor*. Greensboro: New Growth Press, 2025.

Johnson, Eric, L. *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*. Lisle: IVP Academic, 2010.

Lambert, Heath. *A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.

Kelleman, Bob. *Equipping Biblical Counselors: A Guide to Discipling Believers for One Another Ministry*. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2022.

Midgley, Steve. *Understanding Trauma: A Biblical Introduction for Church Care*. Charlotte: The Good Book Company, 2025.

Scott, Stuart & Lambert, Heath. *Counseling the Hard Cases: True Stories Illustrating the Sufficiency of God's Resources in Scripture*. Brentwood: B&H Academic, 2015.

Welch, Edward, T. *Blame it on the Brain: Distinguishing Chemical Imbalances, Brain Disorders, and Disobedience*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2024.

Course Requirements and Assessments: (Read the detailed assignment instructions for each requirement)

Discussion Forums (30% - 3@10% each): The student will participate in three asynchronous discussion forums and be required to post an initial 350-word minimum response to each discussion prompt and two 250-word minimum responses to two posts by fellow students. (Initial posts due Thursday of weeks 1, 5 and 7. Two responses due on Saturday of weeks 1, 5 and 7)

Analysis & Application Papers: (20%) The student will provide two 5–7-page papers that critique and apply counseling models to address common diagnoses found in chaplaincy contexts. (Due at the end of weeks 4 and 6)

Developmental Assignments (20%): The student will design a personal model of biblical counseling (Due at the end of week 2) and a personal model for effective biblical counseling session (Due at the end of week 3)

Final Assignment (Counseling Sessions) (30%): The student will write a detailed case study of five biblical counseling sessions using their developed biblical counseling model. (Due at the end of week 8)

Discussion Forums	30%
Analysis & Application Papers	20%
Developmental Assignments	20%
Final Assignment	30%

BTS Format, Style, and Writing Standards:

All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to be #12 font Times New Roman and Double-Spaced. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. Please see the BTS Turabian Style Guide for more information on turning in papers and assignments.

The BTS Turabian Style Guide and other resources are available on the BTS Writing Center webpage: <https://www.btswritingcenter.net/>

In addition, the Writing Center runs 2-3 Writing Workshops every semester. They are very helpful and highly recommended.

BTS Plagiarism / Generative AI Policy

In addition to the BTS plagiarism policy, BTS is implementing a new Generative AI policy. Unless clearly directed by the instructor, the students should submit their own work, independent of artificial intelligence tools. Use of generative AI to write papers or to write significant portions of assignments is considered an ethical violation of our Student Code of Conduct and to be a violation of general academic integrity, which could result in a zero on the assignment and/or a lowered letter grade for the course by the professor. If determined to be an egregious violation, it could lead to further sanctions administered through the Academic Committee, including expulsion from BTS.

Course Schedule:

Week	Reading & Study	Assignments	Points
1	<p>Biblical Assessment of Counseling Models</p> <p>Chapters 3-7 in <i>Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches</i> (pp.63-180 – 117 pages) Palmer, Keith. <i>Christian Psychology: An Introduction & Biblical Analysis. ACBC Essays</i>, vol. 1, 49-54, 2017.</p> <p>Power Point Presentation</p>	Discussion Forum 1	10
2	<p>The Biblical Counseling Model</p> <p>Whitman, Lauren. <i>A Biblical Counseling Process: Guidance for the Beginning, Middle, and End.</i> (112 pages)</p>	Developmental Assignment 1: Develop a personal model of biblical counseling	10
3	<p>Leading Effective Counseling Sessions</p> <p>Chapters 12-16 (pp.145-210 – 65 pages) in <i>The Gospel for Disordered Lives: An Introduction to Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling.</i> Kellemen, Bob. <i>Consider Your Counsel: Addressing Ten Mistakes in our Biblical Counseling.</i> (96 pages)</p>	Developmental Assignment 2: Develop a counseling session model	10
4	<p>Trauma Therapies & Biblical Counseling</p> <p>Chapter 1-8 (pp.23-185 – 162 pages) in Huie, Eliza. <i>Trauma Aware.</i> Power Point Presentation: Biblical Assessment of Trauma Therapies (CPT, Exposure Therapy, & EMDR)</p>	Analysis & Application Paper 1: Trauma Therapy	10
5	<p>Marriage & Family Therapy & Biblical Counseling</p>	Discussion Forum 2	10

	Adkins, Marshall. <i>Irreconcilable Differences: Emotionally Focused Therapy and Human Anthropology</i> . (21 pages) Chapter 7 in <i>Consider Your Counsel: Addressing Ten Mistakes in our Biblical Counseling</i> . Power Point Presentation: Biblical Assessment of Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy		
6	Cognitive Therapies & Biblical Counseling Chapters 1-3 & 5 (pp.7-50 & pp.65-102 – 80 pages) in <i>The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference</i> Mehl, Scott. <i>The CBT Therapist in Us All: A Biblical Evaluation of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</i> . (PDF provided) (13 pages) Power Point Presentation: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy & Acceptance & Commitment Therapy	Analysis & Application Paper 2: Anxiety, Depression & Your Biblical Counseling Model	10
7	Postmodern Therapies & Biblical Counseling Solution Focused Brief Therapy Overview (PDF provided) (18 pages) DeKruyf, Lorraine. <i>An Introduction to Narrative Therapy</i> (17 pages) Scripture as Intervention worksheet Power Point Presentation: A Biblical Assessment of Solution Focused & Narrative Therapies	Discussion Forum 3	10
8	Applying the Biblical Counseling Model Review course readings & resources as needed	Final Assignment: 5-Session case study using your personal biblical counseling model	30

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor beforehand. Students may miss up to three classes with impunity.

[NOTE: Standard BTS Attendance Policy is that students may not miss any more than three classes without a course penalty. Given the reality of distance-based students and video conference options, if students **clearly identify at the beginning of the semester that they will primarily be asynchronous students (depending on the digital recording of class because of a conflict with their schedule)**, then the student may attend without incurring a penalty for their “absences,” providing they are turning in all their work on time. Please see the BTS Faculty Handbook for more information on

synchronous and asynchronous video conference students and policies and the commitments a faculty member agrees to when they teach a video conference or a live hybrid class]

Class Policies and Procedures:

- BTS highly recommends using handwritten note taking methods in class and keeping computer usage to a minimum.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.
- All assignments must be submitted by email by 11:59 (CDT/CST) on the due date.
- Late assignments will incur a -3 point deduction per weekday after the due date, except in cases of emergency communicated to the professor.
- Missed tests/exams may only be made up with an excused absence, preferably in advance of class. Excused absence tests/exams must be made up before the final day of the semester.

Video Conference Policies and Procedures:

- Please utilize the BTS “Best VC (Video Conference) Practices” information for the course.
- Laptops/Desktops are the preferred method of attending a video conference course. Information will be shared on the screen, so phones will be less useful.
- In Video Conference, it is preferable for the student to keep their video on (when possible) so that students and faculty may engage with one another. Extended periods of dark screen will result in follow-up and potential removal from class.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.

Course Bibliography / Extended Bibliography

Briere, John, N. & Scott, Catherine. *Principles of Trauma Therapy: A Guide to Symptoms, Evaluation, and Treatment*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2015.

Johnson, Eric, L. *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*. Lisle: IVP Academic, 2010.

Johnson, Susan. *Attachment Theory in Practice: Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) with Individuals, Couples, and Families*. New York City: Guilford Press, 2019.

Kollar, Charles, Allen. *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling: An Effective Short-Term Approach for Getting People Back on Track*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Knabb, Joshua, J. *Faith-Based ACT for Christian Clients: An Integrative Treatment Approach*. New York City: Routledge, 2016.

McMinn, Mark. *Cognitive Therapy Techniques in Christian Counseling*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2008.

van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York City: Penguin Books, 2014.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Multiple errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation per page	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent

<p>Person and format are proper for assignment</p> <p>Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument</p> <p>Paper completely conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i></p>	<p>Person and format are inconsistent</p> <p>Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking</p> <p>Paper generally conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i></p>	<p>Person and format are not appropriate</p> <p>Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding</p> <p>Paper somewhat conforms to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i></p>	<p>Person and format are totally inappropriate</p> <p>Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error</p> <p>Paper does not conform to <i>Turabian's Manual for Writers</i></p>
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BTS Outcomes Evaluation

Please rank each outcome on a scale of 1-5

1: this outcome is not covered in this class

2: this outcome is only touched on in this class

3: this outcome is discussed in conjunction with class material

4: this outcome lightly assessed as part of course assessment (one assignment)

5: this outcome is fully integrated into the assessment of this course (multiple assignments)

1. Scripture: Students will effectively articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth, engaged with learning biblical knowledge and reformed principles of the supremacy of Scripture as God's word.
2. Reformed Theology: Students will be able to engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology.
3. Local Church: Students will be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church
4. Wisdom: Students will grow in character; increasing in their demonstration of wisdom and its fruits.
5. Discipleship: Students will be able to understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
6. Communication: Students will grow in the efficacy of their communication (articulation, teaching/speaking, and preaching—respective to various departments) both in content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.
7. Worldview: Students will demonstrate a growing ability to apply God's word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
8. Leadership: Students will grow in their understanding of godly leadership and ability to lead others in service of the local church.

Outcome	Rank	Rationale (one sentence)
Scripture	5	Scripture is the foundation for evaluating secular counseling models and developing a biblical counseling framework.
Reformed Theology	4	Reformed theological principles undergird the course's approach to counseling, though assessed primarily in application rather than systematic review.
Local Church	3	While the focus is chaplaincy, application to ministry contexts (including church) is discussed but not central to assignments.
Wisdom	4	Students must demonstrate character and discernment in developing a counseling model, assessed in assignments and case studies.
Discipleship	5	The nature and role of biblical counseling as extraordinary discipleship is central to course content and assessment.
Communication	4	Students practice articulating counseling models and techniques, though not as extensively as in preaching/teaching courses.

Worldview	3	Application of biblical principles to chaplaincy settings is discussed and sometimes assessed, but not the primary focus.
Leadership	3	The course addresses leadership implicitly through counseling practice and ministry responsibility, but leadership development is not directly assessed.