

## **Syllabus Shepherding God's People**

### **West Virginia South District Center for Ministry Formation**

**Location of the Course:**

3937 Teays Valley Rd.  
Hurricane, WV 5526

**Course Dates:**

Begins- January 9 (Monday)  
Ends - February 6 (Monday)

**Name of the Instructor:**

Rev. Charles V. "Sonny" Williams

**Instructor's Address, Telephone, and E-mail Address:**

Valapo@aol.com  
304-610-0199

### **Rationale**

This module introduces to the student the important task of Shepherding God's People in the context of the local church. Caring for people is a central part of the role for those who enter the ranks of ordained ministry. Jesus' words to Peter, "Take care of my sheep" (Jn 21:16), apply to all who are called to shepherd or pastor.

This module will help the student understand and practice the principles of Christian "care of souls" in a manner that is comprehensively faithful to the biblical faith and human existence. This "care of souls" is not the exclusive responsibility of the ordained clergy but includes the laity in the ministry of the whole church. This curriculum is intended to help the student apply caring principles to the context of any local church. Pastoral care and counseling need to fit with the other pastoral responsibilities of preaching, teaching, leading, equipping, administrating, and many other tasks. This module introduces the student to the many broad topics commonly associated with the title of pastoral care and counseling. Because of the time constraints of the course, the student is encouraged to begin a lifelong journey of discovery and learning to hone the skills needed to be an effective pastor.

### **Educational Assumptions**

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be

- invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.
3. Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the instructor and the reading assignments but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason that so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.
  4. Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

## **Outcome Statements**

This module contributes to the development of the following abilities as defined in the *U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development*.

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
- CP 5 Ability to provide oversight of one's ministry using management skills including servant leadership, conflict resolution and administration
- CP 8 Ability to develop team-building skills, identify and cultivate spiritual gifts, recruit volunteers, diagnose and intervene in problems
- CP 12 Ability to appropriately express pastoral care and concern for individuals and families in crises, passages, and the normal routines of life
- CP 13 Ability to offer spiritual counseling and to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister's ability
- CP 14 Ability to apply the knowledge of basic helping skills gained from historic Christian and appropriate contemporary models
- CP 17 Ability to lead the church in discipling and assimilating new converts into the church
- CH 1 Ability to apply basic understanding of ethical theories to teach and nurture ethical behavior in the Christian community
- CH 5 Ability to apply Christian ethics to the issues of integrity, specifically as they relate to ministers and laity for authentic Christian faithfulness and public witness
- CH 12 Ability to practice faithful stewardship of personal relations including gender relationships, marriage and family, personal finance, and professional conduct
- CH 13 Ability to describe and cultivate healthy interpersonal relationships through personal communication skills, conflict resolution skills, nurturing relational strategies for marriage, family and congregational interaction
- CH 14 Ability to maintain a healthy balance between family, church, and community commitments

### OUTCOME STATEMENTS

- Ability to nurture the whole person in Christian life and practice
- Ability to facilitate holistic care within the church
- Ability to equip the laity in ministry
- Ability to focus one's time and energy to empower the laity for effective service

- Ability to apply the knowledge of basic counseling techniques to be used within the larger context of pastoral ministry within the local church
- Ability to keep pastoral counseling in balance with other functions of ministry so as to maintain a healthy and growing church
- Ability to safeguard personal ethical integrity
- Ability to conduct one's personal life to build up the church, one's marriage and family, and oneself, in order to be faithful to the call to ministry

## Recommended Reading

There are recommended texts within certain class sessions to help the student be able to do additional reading or provide pastoral resources for the subject matter. If one will become a lifelong learner, it is important to collect as many resources as possible. These recommendations are only suggestions and do not imply that there are not other good materials available. New resources are being developed all the time in book and electronic form. The pastor needs to be a learner as well as a teacher and trainer.

## Course Requirements

1. **Class attendance, attention, and participation** are especially important. Students are responsible for all assignments and in-class work. Much of the work in this course is small-group work. Cooperative, small-group work cannot be made up. That makes attendance imperative. Even if one does extra reading or writing, the values of discussion, dialogue, and learning from each other are thwarted. If one or two lessons are missed, the learning leader will require extra work before completion can be acknowledged. If two or more classes are missed, the student will be required to repeat the whole module.

2. **Assignments**

**Journaling: The only ongoing assignment for this module is your journal. It is to be used regularly—at least five days each week.**

On at least one occasion during the term, the instructor will check the journals. In each lesson a journal assignment is included with suggestions for scriptures and topic ideas for reflection.

The journal should become the student's friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation.

The journal should become the student's friend and treasury of insights, devotions, and ideas. Here the integration of theory and practice occurs. The spiritual life nature of the journal helps guard against the course of study being merely academic as you are repeatedly called upon to apply the principles studied to your own heart and your own ministry situation. This is not a diary. It

is, rather, a guided journal or a focused journal in which the educational experience and its implications are selected for reflection and writing. The framers of this curriculum are concerned about the way students fall into learning “about” the Bible or “about” the spiritual life rather than learning—that is coming to know and internalize the Bible and spiritual principles. The journaling experience ensures that the “Be” component of “Be, Know, and Do” is present in the course of study. Be faithful with all journaling assignments.

**Daily Work:** This module has regular homework assignments. It is called daily work because even though the class may only meet once a week, the student should be working on the module on a “daily” basis. Sometimes the homework assignments are quite heavy. The assignments are important. Even if homework is not discussed in class every session, the work is to be handed in. This gives the instructor regular information about the student’s progress in the course. The normal time for homework to be handed in is at the beginning of each class session. **All** assignments are to be completed.

**Community Research Notebook** is a major assignment that should be started at the beginning of the module because it will take a considerable amount of time to complete. The assignment requires the student to research, gather, and assemble information about the range of resources and services available in the community or region of the student’s choosing. The student is to select 12 of the 15 needs listed below and find resources for each need. This assignment is to be assembled in a loose-leaf notebook. One page should be given to each need selected, listing the community resources and services that could be used to meet that need. The student should attempt to gather as much information as is available. Face-to-face contact with agencies is strongly encouraged. Each page should contain the following entries:

- Name of the problem or need
- A brief paragraph defining the problem or issue
- An estimate of the incidence within one’s ministry area
- Listing of the agencies, resources, and organizations serving this issue (This listing should include specific names, addresses, phone numbers, charges.)
- A brief paragraph describing how one may be certified to receive services
- A final statement of possible theological/ethical problems for pastor

**Notebook pages** should be developed for 12 of the following selected issues:

1. Child abuse (sexual, physical, neglect)
2. Abuse (parental or spousal)
3. Alcohol or drug abuse
4. Physical or developmental disabilities
5. Food stamps or government food assistance
6. HIV/AIDS
7. Homelessness—shelter and food
8. Needy family—clothing and food distribution
9. Housing, low income
10. Transient housing, food, housing, and other assistance

11. Elderly Alzheimer’s disease care
12. Mental illness
13. Private psychological counseling (Christian or other)
14. Problem pregnancies
15. Hospice care for the terminally ill

**The notebook is due at Lesson 10, (January 30 ) Community Resources and Referrals**

## Course Outline and Schedule

The class will meet for 15 hours according to the following schedule:

Session Date	Session Time	
Jan 9	6-9 pm	1. Introduction to Shepherding God’s People
Jan 9	6-9 pm	2. The Pastor as Shepherd
Jan 9	6-9 pm	3. Pastoral Soul Care and Guidance
Jan 16	6-9 pm	4. Caring Through Small Groups
Jan 16	6-9 pm	5. Pastoral Care by the Laity
Jan 16	6-9 pm	6. Equipping and Empowering the Laity
Jan 23	6-9 pm	7. Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor—Our Model
Jan 23	6-9 pm	8. Short-term Counseling, Part 1
Jan 23	6-9 pm	9. Short-term Counseling, Part 2
Jan 30	6-9 pm	10. Community Resources and Referrals
Jan 30	6-9 pm	11. Pastoral Presence in Conflict
Jan 30	6-9 pm	12. Pastoral Presence in Crisis
Feb 6	6-9 pm	13. Pastoral Presence in Celebration
Feb 6	6-9 pm	14. Pastoral Presence to Comfort
Feb 6	6-9 pm	15. The Pastor’s Conduct
Feb 6	6-9 pm	16. The Pastor’s Personal Life

## Course Evaluation

The instructor, the course itself, and the student’s progress will be evaluated. These evaluations will be made in several ways.

The progress of students will be evaluated with an eye for enhancing the learning experience by:

1. Carefully observing the small-group work, noting the competence of reports, the balance of discussion, the quality of the relationships, the cooperation level, and the achievement of assigned tasks
2. Careful reading of homework assignments
3. Journal checks

12/19/2022

The evaluation of the course materials and the teacher will be evaluated by frequently asking and discussing the effectiveness and relevance of a certain method, experience, story, lecture, or other activity.

Some evaluation cannot be made during the class itself. Some objectives will not be measurable for years to come. If students encounter the transforming power of God at deeper levels than ever before, learn devotional skills and practice them with discipline, and incorporate the best of this course into their own ministries, the fruit of this educational endeavor could go on for a long time. In truth, that is what we expect.

### **Additional Information**

A reasonable effort to assist every student will be made. Any student who has handicaps, learning disabilities, or other conditions that make the achievement of the class requirements exceedingly difficult should make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to see what special arrangements can be made. Any student who is having trouble understanding the assignments, lectures, or other learning activities should talk to the instructor to see what can be done to help.

### **Instructor's Availability**

The instructor will make every effort to be available before and after class and beyond the classroom when possible.

### **Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration**

Participating in the course of study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each course, you will be required to listen to lectures, read several books, participate in discussions, write papers, and take exams. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The course work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritually formative work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head to your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work to faithfully spend time daily in your journal. Many people confess that this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

12/19/2022

Consider journaling as time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, an ah-ha that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet, family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with course material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems that we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your course work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration, weaving together faith development with learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

12/19/2022

**The following books are recommended and will be used during the course of study. These can be purchased at Amazon.com**

Required reading:

**Toler, Stan, *Practical Guide for Pastoral Ministry*, Wesleyan Publishing House; 2007**

Recommended reading:

**Galloway, Dale E. *Building Teams in Ministry*. Dale Galloway and Beeson Institute colleagues. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2000.**

**Howe, Leroy. *A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000.**

**Parrott, Les, III, and Leslie Parrott. *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: Seven Questions to Ask Before (and After) You Marry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.**

**Spaite, Daniel, with Debbie Salter Goodwin. *Time Bomb in the Church: Defusing Pastoral Burnout*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1999.**