

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

PACO 835

PREMARITAL AND MARITAL ISSUES IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an in-depth study of premarital counseling as well as marital distress and dissolution, marriage theory, intervention strategies, and factors central to marital renewal, stability, growth, and health.

RATIONALE

As a basis for their work, pastors and counselors should have a thorough understanding of premarital and marital counseling theories and their relevance for guiding the therapeutic process. In addition to understanding core theoretical principles, pastors and counselors need to appreciate contributions from various theoretical approaches to the actual practice of counseling. This understanding serves to heighten counselor effectiveness in formulating effective treatment strategies and in aiding in the delivery of powerful interventions in an efficient and timely manner.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Office

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Explain the contemporary issues addressed within marriage.
- B. Analyze major theoretical models in marital therapy and how they relate to pastoral counseling.
- C. Appraise pastoral counseling and its applicability in the context of marriage.

- D. Construct a program for pastoral counseling that reinforces the biblical framework for marriage.
- E. Analyze the nature and characteristics of dysfunctional marriages.
- F. Assess the impact a dysfunctional marriage has on its members and society in general.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations/notes

B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

C. Discussion Board Forums

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student will complete 2 discussion forums related to topics referenced in the texts providing opportunities for exploration, evaluation, and further development of key concepts related to the course material. Each discussion board thread must be at least 400 words and each reply must be at least 150 words. This assignment meets learning outcomes A, B, C, D, E, & F.

D. Reading Reflection Blogs

The Reading Reflection Blogs will assist students in identifying major and significant thematic elements from the reading, and help to formulate a response to the reading with understanding and/or questions. The collected material from all blog posts will enhance the understanding and application of information/knowledge for the entire class. This assignment meets learning outcomes A, B, C, E, and F.

E. **Initial Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling:**

The Initial Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling assignment will assist the student to conceptualize and identify elements of an understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling within a pastoral environment at the beginning of the course. This assignment is used as a comparison for the Informed Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling assignment. The assignment must be at least 5 pages and follow current APA format. This assignment meets learning outcomes A, C, E, and F.

F. **Informed Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling:**

The Informed Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling assignment will assist students to conceptualize, compose, and express an understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling within a pastoral ministry environment at the conclusion of the course informed by the materials and assignments of the course content. This assignment is used as a comparison to the Initial Understanding of Pre-Marital and Marital Counseling assignment. The paper must be at least 10 pages, follow current APA format, and reference the course texts, course material,

and at least 5 other supporting sources. This assignment meets learning outcomes A, B, C, D, E, & F.

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (2 at 125 pts ea)	250
Reading Reflection Blogs (7 at 75 pts ea)	525
Initial Understanding of Pre-Marital & Marital Counseling	75
Informed Understanding of Pre-Marital & Marital Counseling	150
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 940–1010 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
 C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
 D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

C. Tests/Exams

1. For timed tests/exams students are required to complete the exam within the assigned time. For students who exceed this time limit a penalty of 1 point may be deducted for each minute they exceed the assigned time limit.
2. Students must take the exam during the assigned module/week. Late submissions will be penalized at 5% per day, cumulative, with no test/exam being accepted seven (7) days after the original due date without written approval from the professor. Whenever possible, this approval must be sought prior to the test/exam due date.

E. Dual Relationship

The faculty is responsible to interact with counseling students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty is responsible to avoid dual relationships with students such as entering a student-counselor or student-pastor relationship. Thus, the faculty does not provide personal counseling addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student is in need of personal or professional counseling, then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor in their community.

F. Limits of Confidentiality

In the event of a student’s disclosure, either verbally or in writing, of threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator, or supervisor will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the

appropriate program chair or online dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

G. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PACO 835

Textbooks: Clinton & Trent, *The Quick Reference Guide to Marriage & Family Counseling* (2009).
 Henry et al., *The Christian Therapist's Notebook* (2007).
 Parrott, *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts*. (2015).
 Waite, *The Case for Marriage* (2000).
 Worthington, *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling* (2005).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Waite: chs. 1–3 Parrott: “Before You Begin” Parrott: Questions 1 & 2 Henry et al.: #19 “Complete or Incomplete”	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions	10 0
2	Waite: chs. 4–6 Parrott: Questions 3 & 4 Henry et al.: #20 “The Beauty of a Butterfly”	Reading Reflection Blog Initial Understanding of Pre-marital and Marital Counseling	75 75
3	Waite: chs. 7–10 Parrott: Questions 5 & 6 Henry et al.: #21 “Love Is...”	Reading Reflection Blog DB Forum 1 - Thread	75 75
4	Waite: chs. 11–14 Parrott: Question 7 Henry et al.: #22 “A New Beginning...”	Reading Reflection Blog DB Forum 1 - Replies	75 50
5	Worthington: chs. 1–4 Clinton & Trent: pp. 35–42, 115–121, 221–228 Henry et al.: #23 “Nothing Like the Brady Bunch”	Reading Reflection Blog DB Forum 2 - Thread	75 75
6	Worthington: chs. 5–8 Clinton & Trent: pp. 122–127, 163–181 Henry et al.: #24 “Control”	Reading Reflection Blog DB Forum 2 - Replies	75 50
7	Worthington: chs. 9–12 Henry et al.: #25 “Parenting After Divorce”	Reading Reflection Blog Informed Understanding of Pre-marital and Marital Counseling	75 150

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
8	Worthington: chs. 13–16 Henry et al.: #26 “The Broken Bough”	Reading Reflection Blog	75
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.