PURPOSE:

This course focuses on understanding diverse clients from different theoretical perspectives and utilizing various strategies and techniques to help bring about change with those in our care. An overarching goal of the course is to foster the development of attitudes and knowledge necessary to become a reflective practitioner serving a pluralistic and postmodern society. Our theoretical (and personal) assumptions about people and their motives influence how we see the strengths and weaknesses of our clients, the style of therapeutic relationship we develop, the kind of therapeutic goals we set, how we attempt to intervene to meet these goals, and how we evaluate this process. As a result, it is especially important to develop a strong, useful theoretical viewpoint -- both for your own work as well as to understand the work of other practitioners.

Furthermore, this course is designed to help you begin thinking about specific approaches to treating a variety of clients. The field of pastoral care and counseling is rapidly moving toward a theory of differential treatment. Rather than determining what is the best theory of counseling and psychotherapy, we are increasingly focusing on what treatment, applied by whom, is most effective for this individual, couple, or family with this particular presenting issue(s) and specific set of circumstances. As a result we must learn a variety of treatment modalities, some of which may be less familiar to us though no less important. We must also learn to hear and respect a multiplicity of worldviews, even those that differ significantly from our own.

OBJECTIVES:

1) Acquire a knowledge of various counseling theories, and effective intervention strategies based on each of the theories.
3) Develop an understanding how to apply theoretical approaches to case-study material and counseling interventions.
5) Develop a working theoretical framework, identifying the core theories that inform one’s present approach to pastoral care and counseling.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Bingaman, Kirk. 2015. When Acceptance is the Road to Growth and Healing: Incorporating the Third Wave of Cognitive Therapies into Pastoral Care and Counseling, journal of Pastoral Psychology. (Article will be available in Blackboard)
ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Self-motivation and self-discipline will be important components of this online distance learning course, manifested in timely engagement with all assignments: audio presentations, PowerPoint slides, required readings, discussion forums, film clips, case studies, and written assignments. If you have questions and/or concerns at any time during the semester, please do not hesitate to contact me by email and/or cell phone.

2. Each week in the Discussion Board of the Blackboard web site, students will be posting weekly reflections on selected topics. Your reflections may take the form of a

   (a) Question: As you reflect on the topic, does a question come to mind? Something that is provocative and/or confusing? Something that needs clarification?
   (b) Comment on the Content: Apply a portion of the course material to the topic in order to assess its relevance. What makes the material persuasive/not persuasive?
   (c) Subjective Reaction: What was your emotional, spiritual, and/or visceral experience of the course material? Did it evoke a positive/negative experience? Please note: 150-250 words.

3. Each week students will submit online responses to the postings of other students. Each response will be 75-100 words, and will consist of thoughtful and constructive feedback, pro and con. PLEASE NOTE: Timely responses each week are expected in the discussion forums. Tardiness in posting responses will substantially lower one’s grade for the course, so please plan accordingly.

4. There will be four quizzes that will focus on the various theories of counseling presented in the four modules. The quizzes, which will be helpful preparation for students planning to take the Mental Health Counseling licensure exam, will consist of fill-in-the-blank responses and brief written answers.

5. A 3-Page Paper (double-spaced) discussing the so-called third wave of cognitive therapies, how these acceptance- and mindfulness-based approaches differ from more traditional cognitive therapy, and how they might inform your work with clients or congregants.

6. A final paper (6-8 pages, double-spaced) that articulates your theoretical framework as a caregiver and applies this framework to the case of someone in your care. For example, what specific theories of counseling have and/or will inform your work as a pastoral practitioner? What are the strengths AND weaknesses of these theories? Finally, how will the theories you selected inform your work and interventions with your client or
congregant? Please note that students are expected to articulate a differential theoretical framework, i.e. “eclectic”, that reflects the incorporation of more than one explanation of human behavior and personality.

**SCHEDULE:**

**Module 1: Depth Psychology and a Focus on Past/Present Experience**

August 28:  
- Introduction to the Course
- Nothing More Practical than a Good Theory
- Psychoanalysis & Psychoanalytic Theories
- *Gladding*: Chapters 1 & 2

September 4:  
- Adlerian Therapy & Existential Therapy
- Carl Rogers & Person-Centered Therapy
- *Gladding*: Chapters 3-5

**Module 2: The Cognitive Revolution**

September 11:  
- Gestalt Therapy & Reality Therapy
- A Word about Jungian Therapy
- *Gladding*: Chapters 6-7

September 18:  
- Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, & REBT
- *Gladding*: 8-10

**Module 3: The Turn Toward Family Systems**

September 25:  
- Transactional Analysis, Feminist Therapy, & Solution-Focused Therapy
- The Third Wave of Cognitive Therapies: Acceptance- and Mindfulness-Based Approaches
- *Gladding*: Chapters 11, 12, & 15
- *Bingaman*: Journal Article

October 2:  
- Bowenian Family Systems Therapy & Strategic Family Therapy
- Ethical & Legal Aspects of Counseling
- *Gladding*: Chapters 13, 14, & 16

**Module 4: Systems Theory Applied to the Congregational “Family”**

October 9:  
- Family Systems Theory Applied to Faith Communities
- *Friedman*: Chapters 1-6
EVALUATION:

Students will be evaluated based on evidence of mastery at three levels of performance: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. The three levels of mastery will correspond, respectively, to letter grades of B-/B, B+/A-, and A.

TECHNOLOGY HELP:

For technical support with the Blackboard course management system, you will need to email blackboard@fordham.edu or call 718.817.2289. For questions about your username and password, you will need to email helpdesk@fordham.edu or call 718.817.3999 (on campus) or 877.366.HELP (off campus).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

It is assumed that all students are familiar with the Graduate School of Religion & Religious Education’s policy on academic integrity. Any instances of academic dishonesty cannot be tolerated and will be brought to the attention of the dean and assistant dean. Plagiarism of any kind, including quotations from the Internet without supplying proper bibliographic data, is unacceptable, as is working collaboratively on written assignments (papers, quizzes, etc.). Note: When in doubt about issues of academic integrity, please contact me first with your questions before submitting any written work.