

BRIERCREST

CM/CO 720 Approaches in Supporting Clergy Well-being Winter 2024

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Course Dates: April 22 – June 21, 2024

Course Delivery Format: Online asynchronous and synchronous learning

Asynchronous learning on Canvas and/or small group work: weekly x 2 hrs (April 22 -June 21)

Synchronous Zoom classes: Friday, April 26, 1:00-5:00 pm (SK time)

Friday, May 10, 1:00-5:00 pm (SK time)

Friday, May 31, 1:00-5:00 pm (SK time)

Friday, June 14, 1:00-5:00 pm (SK time)

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the unique features of vocational and multi-vocational ministry and its impact on the spiritual, psychological, social, and physical well-being of the clergy person and their family members. This course will also consider how various caregivers, educators, and leaders can support and enhance clergy well-being, both before and after issues arise.

COURSE INTEGRATION

This course will focus on knowledge about clergy well-being, arising from fields such as psychology, sociology, and health, with integration of clergy theological and biblical understandings of ministry calling and service.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

Austin, T. S., & Comeau, K. R. (2022). *Caring for clergy: Understanding a disconnected network of providers*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Bloom, M. (2019). *Flourishing in ministry: How to cultivate clergy well-being*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Burns, B., Chapman, T., & Guthrie, D. (2012). *Resilient ministry: What pastors told us about surviving and thriving*. InterVarsity Press.

Chapman, M. & Watson, J. (2022). Chapter six: Calling in multivocational ministry. In D. Stephens (Ed.) *Bivocational and beyond: Educating for thriving multivocational ministry*. (pp. 95-110). Atla Open Press.

<https://books.atla.com/atlapress/catalog/view/82/196/829>

Clarke, M. (2022). The clergy resilience model: A tool for supporting clergy well-being. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*. (Available on Canvas)

Proeschold-Bell, R. J., & Byassee, J. (2018). *Faithful and fractured: Responding to the clergy health crisis*. Baker Books.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Easton, D. (2022). *Burnout and beyond: The dangers of depletion and the path to health*. Independently published.

Ferguson, T. W., & Packard, J. (2022). *Stuck: Why clergy are alienated from their calling, congregation, and career... and what to do about it*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers.

Harrison, D. (2016). *Moving on: Surviving the grief of forced termination*. A Book's Mind.

Olsen, D. C., & Devor, N. G. (2015). *Saying no to say yes: Everyday boundaries and pastoral excellence*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Packiam, G. (2022). *The resilient pastor: Leading your church in a rapidly changing world*. Baker Books.

Searby, M. (2015). *The resilient pastor: Ten principles for developing pastoral resilience*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Stone, C. (2014). *People-pleasing pastors: Avoiding the pitfalls of approval-motivated leadership*. InterVarsity Press.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's APA Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Understand the centrality of ministry calling and theological meaning-making for clergy
2. Grapple with unique ministry challenges and stressors and their impact, and the nuances of vocational and multi-vocational ministry
3. Discover a wholistic understanding of clergy well-being that includes spiritual, psychological, social, and physical dimensions
4. Consider the resources that support clergy well-being and aspects that clergy find satisfying
5. Explore various ways to enhance clergy well-being

COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

TOPIC	SUPPORTING REQUIRED TEXTS AND ASYNCHRONOUS READINGS
Centrality of clergy calling and theological meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarke, M. (2022). The clergy resilience model: A tool for supporting clergy well-being • Chapman, M. & Watson, J. (2022). Chapter six: Calling in multivocational ministry.
Ministry challenges: vocational and multi-vocational nuances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin, T. S., & Comeau, K. R. (2022). <i>Caring for clergy: Understanding a disconnected network of providers.</i> • Clarke, M., Walker, K., Spurr, S., & Squires, V. (2022). Role-related stress and adversity impacting Christian clergy resilience: A pan-Canadian study. • Malcolm, W., Coetzee, K., & Fisher, E. (2019). Measuring ministry-specific stress and satisfaction: The psychometric properties of the positive and negative aspects inventories. • Proeschold-Bell, R. J., & Byassee, J. (2018). <i>Faithful and fractured: Responding to the clergy health crisis.</i>
State of clergy well-being: Family and relational life Professional life - burnout Mental Health - Trauma Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin, T. S., & Comeau, K. R. (2022). <i>Caring for clergy: Understanding a disconnected network of providers.</i> • Burns, B., Chapman, T., & Guthrie, D. (2012). <i>Resilient ministry: What pastors told us about surviving and thriving.</i> • Proeschold-Bell, R. J., Eisenberg, A., Adams, C., Smith, B., Legrand, S., & Wilk, A. (2015). The glory of God is a human being fully alive: Predictors of positive versus negative mental health among clergy. • Proeschold-Bell, R. J., Miles, A., Toth, M., Adams, C., Smith, B. W., & Toole, D. (2013). Using effort-reward imbalance theory to understand high rates of depression and anxiety among clergy. • Tanner, M. N., Zvonkovic, A. M., & Adams, C. (2012). Forced termination of American clergy: Its effects and connection to negative well-being.
Supportive resources for clergy well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom, M. (2019). <i>Flourishing in ministry: How to cultivate clergy well-being.</i> • Burns, B., Chapman, T., & Guthrie, D. (2012). <i>Resilient ministry: What pastors told us about surviving and thriving.</i> InterVarsity Press. • Clarke, M., Walker, K., Spurr, S., & Squires, V. (2022). Clergy resilience: Accessing supportive resources to balance the impact of role-related stress and adversity.
Systemic stakeholders in clergy well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin, T. S., & Comeau, K. R. (2022). <i>Caring for clergy: Understanding a disconnected network of providers.</i> • Clarke, M. (2022). The clergy resilience model: A tool for supporting clergy well-being.

ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all written assignments to Canvas using APA formatting.

Pre-Course Assignments:

Reading reflection paper (3-4 pages). Reflecting on the required texts *Faithful and fractured* (Proeschold-Bell & Byassee) and *Caring for clergy* (Austin & Comeau) **and** your own experiences in the church respond to the following questions:

1. How does the sacredness of ministry work impact clergy and congregations both positively and negatively?

2. How can clergy care for their spiritual, psychological, social, and physical well-being? Who are the 'permission-givers'?
 3. What might a holistic and supportive system for clergy well-being look like? What roles do the following have in the system: clergy person, family, congregation, denomination, educational institutions, and caregivers like therapists, coaches, or spiritual directors?
- Due: April 20, 2024** **Value: 15%**

Mid-Course Assignments:

Reading reflection paper (3-4 pages). Reflecting on the required article *The clergy resilience model: A tool for supporting clergy well-being* by Clarke and your own theological perspectives and experiences respond to the following questions:

1. How does a clergy person's sense of ministry calling and theological meaning-making impact their well-being?
 2. How might tensions arise for clergy between theological values and supporting their well-being?
 3. How might the modern psychological concept of 'self-care' be understood theologically by clergy?
- Due: May 14, 2024** **Value: 15%**

Interview and report (2-3 pages). Exploring the question of "*how have you seen clergy well-being (spiritual, psychological, social, and physical) hindered/deterred and how have you seen it enhanced?*" select and conduct two one-hour interviews with two people from different categories below:

- Pastor
- Denominational leader
- Lay congregational leader
- Educator of clergy
- Caregiver to clergy, such as a therapist, coach, or spiritual director

Keeping your interviewees' identity confidential, write a report summarizing your interview findings and highlighting points of congruence and divergence in what the interviewees shared. These reports will be shared with the class and used for online discussion.

Due: June 3, 2024 **Value: 15%**

Post-Course Assignment:

FOR THOSE IN CO 720: Research Paper (12-14 pages). This paper will consist of three parts responding to the problem of "*how can clergy resilience and well-being best be supported*":

1. *Literature Review*: Review **all** of the required course texts and asynchronous readings and report on the following dimensions:
 - a. Challenges and stressors associated with clergy work
 - b. Negative impacts clergy encounter
 - c. Aspects that sustain clergy resilience and well-being
 - d. Recommendations for supporting clergy well-being
2. *Analysis*: For each of the above dimensions analyze the literature and report on common aspects and points of disagreement or departure between authors/readings.

3. *Discussion and recommendations:* Based on your review and analysis of the literature make your own recommendations as to how the various groupings can support clergy well-being:
 - a. Individual clergy/their family
 - b. Congregations
 - c. Denominations
 - d. Educational institutions
 - e. Caregivers to clergy

Due: July 2, 2024

Value: 55%

FOR THOSE IN CM 720: Literature analysis and personal well-being plan (12-14 pages). This paper will consist of three parts responding to the problem of "how can clergy resilience and well-being best be supported":

1. *Literature Review:* Review **all** of the required course texts and asynchronous readings and report on the following dimensions:
 - a. Challenges and stressors associated with clergy work
 - b. Negative impacts clergy encounter
 - c. Aspects that sustain clergy resilience and well-being
 - d. Recommendations for supporting clergy well-being
2. *Analysis:* For each of the above dimensions analyze the literature and report on common aspects and points of disagreement or departure between authors/readings.
3. *Personal plan for well-being:* Based on your review and analysis of the literature reflect on a plan for your own personal well-being in ministry.

Due: July 2, 2024

Value: 55%

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

Attendance Policy

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

Modular Courses

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Online Courses

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the

student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Semester-Based Courses

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

Course Schedules

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

As members of the Briercrest learning community, students have a responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity and honour. Students who cheat on exams, plagiarize, inappropriately collaborate, or use generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) without instructor authorization in the preparation and/or submission of their assignments violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary. Any such actions constitute a breach of academic honesty and will result in serious consequences, such as failure of an assignment, failure of a course, or expulsion from the seminary.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or involuntary, is the submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper documentation. All information, ideas and/or direct quotations taken from other primary or secondary sources must be documented appropriately. Students are responsible to ensure they are using their sources with transparency and honesty. For more details, consult the [Seminary Calendar](#). In addition to being familiar with these pages, instructors assume that you have completed the Briercrest Academic Integrity course on [Canvas](#) and understand the information contained in it.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition (mental or physical) who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should contact the ARC Coordinator in person (L234 in the Library), by phone (1-306-801-6159), or by email (arc@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a

qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.). It is recommended that students meet with their professors to discuss the requirements of their accommodations (i.e., how the student will receive lecture notes, or how the professor wants to receive extension requests).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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