

PASTORAL COUNSELING (PACO)

PACO 500 Introduction to Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course provides an introduction to the foundational roles and responsibilities of pastoral counselors, emphasizing the provision of biblically grounded counseling within ministry-based contexts. Students will examine the integration of theological and psychological principles to counsel individuals through a range of life challenges and complexities.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 501 Foundational Doctrines for Pastoral Counselors 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course enables students to understand how theology shapes the counseling process. By examining key theological doctrines, students will build a solid foundation for effective counseling practices. Students will leave the course equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to facilitate meaningful change in the lives of those they counsel, grounded in a deep understanding of both theology and human experience.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 504 Multicultural Issues in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course explores the impact of culture, ethnicity, and diversity on pastoral counseling. Students will examine how cultural dynamics influence personal identity, communication, and family systems, equipping them to provide culturally sensitive and biblically grounded care. This course will introduce students to the skills necessary to counsel individuals and families from diverse backgrounds with compassion and wisdom.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 505 Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course introduces students to a solution-based model for short-term counseling that incorporates knowledge of and practice in facilitation skills, cognitive behavioral approaches, and biblical teaching.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 506 Integration of Psychology and Theology 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course introduces students to the process of pastoral counseling with a variety of religious clients who would define themselves as evangelical Christians. The course provides a systematic overview of Christian doctrines, a discussion of various theological viewpoints regarding those doctrines, and an examination of how psychological and theological concepts relate to each other.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 507 Theology and Spirituality in Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

An examination of the content, comprehensiveness, and validity of several counseling theories that have been developed by prominent Christian counselors.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 509 Spiritual Formation in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course will examine the relationship between pastoral counseling and spiritual formation. Special emphasis will be placed on analyzing formative processes employed throughout church history, identifying key techniques that have contributed to spiritual development in faith-based contexts.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 510 Human Suffering in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Prerequisite: PACO 500

This class will explore the pastoral, personal, and philosophical issues related to human suffering primarily related to the problem of evil.

This class will explore the intellectual realities of human suffering and God's goodness but will additionally explore best practices of pastoral counseling with those who are suffering, especially those who have experienced trauma and grief.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 597 Seminar 1-3 Credit Hour(s)

PACO 603 Premarital and Marital Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course introduces students to key factors that contribute to successful marital relationships. It covers biblical principles for marriage, as well as practical tools and strategies to enhance communication techniques, conflict resolution, and emotional health, to help couples build strong, lasting relationships.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 604 Crisis Intervention in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course introduces students to the theories and skills required to provide pastoral crisis intervention and counseling that will cultivate resiliency and promote spiritual growth. Students will learn to integrate theological principles with evidence-based crisis intervention techniques, focusing on offering compassionate, timely, and biblically grounded support.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 611 Counseling the Child and Their Families 3 Credit Hour(s)

The developmental and psychological needs and problems of children are examined through the analysis of personality types and family structure. Counseling techniques (e.g. play therapy) for children are also examined.

Offered: Online

PACO 615 Marriage and Family Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course introduces students to the dynamics of marriage and family relationships. Emphasis is on understanding the structure and function of marriage, the various aspects of the marital relationship, family systems, and ways the counselor may approach marriage and family counseling as a creative, preventative, and healing ministry.

Offered: Online

PACO 617 Theories and Techniques in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course equips students with a variety of assessments and resources designed to enhance self-awareness and effectiveness for aspiring pastoral counselors. By integrating theoretical foundations with biblical and theological principles and practical techniques, students will learn how to facilitate greater wellness in themselves and those they serve.

Offered: Resident and Online

PACO 618 Advanced Marriage and Family Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501 and PACO 615

This course is an exploration of selected major treatment approaches utilized in marital and family counseling. Development of practical skills, interventions, and techniques constitute the primary focus. (Formerly PACO 602).

Offered: Online

PACO 620 Counseling the Adolescent and Their Families 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course examines the transitions of adolescence emphasizing family, social, spiritual/moral, and physical issues. Counseling theories and practices for working with adolescents are explored. Opportunities for application of theory are provided.

Offered: Online

PACO 625 Healthy Sexuality 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course introduces students to a research informed biblical paradigm for healthy sexuality. It will increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding the broad range of issues in the field of counseling when addressing healthy sexuality.

Offered: Online

PACO 630 Gerontology and Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

This course introduces students to the issues and problems unique to the elderly in American society. Topics such as grief and loss, suffering, societal attitude, and family structure are examined.

Offered: Online

PACO 679 Pastoral Counseling Capstone 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501 and PACO 504 and PACO 509 and PACO 604 and PACO 615 and PACO 617

The Pastoral Counseling Capstone reinforces concepts taught throughout the MA in Pastoral Counseling Program. In the capstone, students are given the opportunity to apply what they have learned in the PACO program in tangible ways to prepare them for a variety of ministerial contexts.

Offered: Online

PACO 687 Counseling Women 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501

This course examines the most common problems women bring to counseling, including both developmental and situational crises. It explores biblical perspectives and the most effective treatments for these situations.

Offered: Online

PACO 695 Directed Research in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

Designed for the advanced student in good standing who has demonstrated an ability to work independently. The student will work with the instructor in developing a proposal for guided research in a specified area of counseling.

Offered: Resident

PACO 697 Seminar in Pastoral Counseling 3 Credit Hour(s)

An intensive study in a specific subject of counseling. This course allows variation in the approach and content of the regular curriculum and often will be used by visiting professors.

PACO 698 Practicum 3 Credit Hour(s)

Students will complete supervised counseling and counseling-related experiences in a professional setting. The primary focus is the development of counseling skills.

PACO 699 Pastoral Counseling Internship 3 Credit Hour(s)

Online Prerequisite: PACO 500 and PACO 501 and PACO 504 and PACO 509 and PACO 604 and PACO 615 and PACO 617

This internship course provides students with practical, hands-on experience within diverse ministry contexts. Under the guidance of a qualified supervisor, interns will engage in counseling practices, applying theological principles and psychological insights to support individuals as needed.

Offered: Online