

# Curriculum Overview

Each unit of CPE consists of at least 400 hours of education and supervised clinical ministry. At least 100 of those hours consist of structured group and individual education. The remaining 300 hours consists of supervised clinical practice in ministry. The summer intensive program meets these requirements in a ten to eleven week period. The extended programs meets these requirements over a period of about 30 weeks. The residency program meets these requirements over a period of about fifteen weeks.

Within the context of specific unit themes, we present a core curriculum that addresses three areas of pastoral competency. Our methodology for teaching the core curriculum includes a variety of seminars and assignments. Students add a personalized aspect to the curriculum by developing their specific learning interests into an individual learning contract. A typical theme for a single CPE unit such as those offered in the full time summer program, and in the part time extended program, includes an introduction to CPE and pastoral ministry. Our year-long residency program, consisting of three consecutive CPE units, addresses the following themes:

- Unit 1 - orientation and pastoral theology
- Unit 2 - family systems and the behavioral sciences
- Unit 3 - integration

The thematic aspect of each unit is achieved by scheduling appropriate didactics and by assigning relevant reading, and by writing a 5-10 page paper addressing some aspect of the theme. Level II students may include special projects or development of a ministry specialty in their CPE experience.

Every CPE unit will address some issues in each of the three competency areas, but students should not expect any single unit to cover every issue in every competency area. The three competency areas are:

- Pastoral Formation
- Pastoral Competence
- Pastoral Reflection

The clinical nature of CPE means the practice of pastoral care is yet another crucial aspect of our core curriculum. It is in fact, an indispensable arena for experimenting with new ideas and identifying personally relevant learning issues. Because of this students are required to provide pastoral care as a part of their program. Students then have the opportunity to enrich their clinical learning by continuing to process their ministry experiences in the peer group, in individual supervision, and in various written assignments. The interpersonal nature of pastoral care means that various aspects of a student's history, personality, behavior, communication patterns, and even a student's response to the CPE program itself, become important elements in the curriculum too.

## Seminar Descriptions

### DIDACTIC SEMINARS

The goal of our didactic seminars is to present students with the conceptual knowledge that will enable an informed practice of pastoral care. Therefore, the topics chosen for the didactic schedule are drawn out of the objectives and outcomes of CPE as articulated in the ACPE-- Standards. The thematic focus of the didactic schedule for any given unit will be determined by the focus of the unit (e.g., pastoral theology, family systems and the behavioral sciences, and integration). The list below is an example of the kinds of topics that may be addressed.

Students are encouraged to make their interests known at the beginning of each unit, and to offer other suggestions.

**Table 1 Example Didactics**

The Clinical Method of Learning	Spiritual Direction	Coping with Conflict
Crisis ministry	Using Fables for Self Understanding	Conflict Management
Grief and loss	Myers Briggs Assessment	Systems theory
Decedent Care	Pastoral Authority, Power, and Individuality	Diversity issues in pastoral care
Perinatal Loss	Pastoral Assertiveness	Gender and Sexuality issues in ministry
End of Life Ministry Issues	Professional Accountability and Documentation	Multicultural Awareness
The nature and limits of confidentiality	Learning styles	Guided imagery Ministry
Consultation and Referrals	Theories of human development and psycho-therapy Counseling tools	to the: elderly mentally ill chemically dependent depressed to people with AIDS heart patients cancer patients
Models of Spiritual Assessment	Traumatic stress	
Models and Metaphors of Pastoral Care	Models of Stress Management	
Pastoral Roles	Change theory	
Comparative Pastoral Professions	Group process	Sexual Assault and Rape
Pastoral Care Theologies	Ministry ethics	Domestic Violence
Comparative Religions	Principles of Ethical Decision Making	The Problem of Suicide
Theologies of Suffering	Anger Management	Creative Thinking
Theodicy	Models of leadership	Administration
Hospice Ministry	Job Search Skills	Ministry Evaluation and Self Supervision
A Theology of Play	Current Issues in Healthcare	
Children and Grief		

## INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION

Individual supervision serves a variety of purposes. It offers a confidential forum where students can discuss issues that they may not be ready to deal with in their peer group. It is an opportunity to continue processing unresolved issues that arise in the peer group or in clinical material. It is a place to share feelings and thoughts on a variety of issues. It is an opportunity to use the student-supervisor relationship as a learning experience in itself.

Individual supervision is also a method of ensuring accountability in the institution. The student's supervisor is accountable to the hospital for the activities of the CPE students, and they are in turn accountable to their supervisor. Therefore, individual supervision will also be a time for reviewing how students are fulfilling both the expectations of the CPE program and the expectations of OhioHealth.

In general, individual supervision works best when students come to the session prepared to discuss issues of concern to them. While our supervisors tend to give priority to the student's agenda, our supervisors always reserve the right to address any significant educational or administrative issues not raised by the student. Supervision sessions will be held between student and a supervisor certified by the ACPE to conduct individual supervision, usually on a once-a-week basis. Some of the OhioHealth supervisors will ask you to prepare and submit written summaries of the individual supervisory sessions.

## VERBATIM SEMINAR

The purpose of the verbatim seminar is to provide a forum where the peer group members can learn from real ministry encounters and continue to increase the competency of their pastoral care practice. Normally the method of addressing this purpose will be for one student to present a verbatim for group reflection and critique. In special cases, the supervisor may approve the use of different clinical material and methods.

As clinical material is reviewed in this seminar, the peer group and the supervisor will help presenters engage their learning issues through the use of support, clarification, and challenge/confrontation. However, the seminar is intended to be a learning experience for everyone. Therefore, group support, clarification, and challenge/confrontation will be dynamic processes for the benefit of all. Students will facilitate their own learning in this seminar as they take the risks to openly share their questions, feelings, thoughts, actions, and faith, as they relate to specific ministry encounters. By taking these risks and by considering the group's feedback, students will learn to identify, assess, and respond to their own significant feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, as they affect real ministry with real people. At the same time, students will be learning to identify, assess, and respond to the significant feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of others. In all these ways group members sharpen their abilities to reflect on, evaluate, and continuously improve their ministry.

To further enhance and focus learning, students are encouraged to write and present verbatims that address some aspect of their learning goals. Students are also reminded that the most fruitful learning often comes from an examination of the encounters that were the most challenging. Presenting one's best work may be important to do from time to time, but a steady diet of that will tend to minimize learning.

## INTERPERSONAL GROUP

The purpose of the interpersonal group seminar is to provide an environment in which students can give and receive feedback about how their personalities and interpersonal behaviors are impacting others. This is important because every student of pastoral care will develop his/her own style of ministry, and that style will draw upon his/her unique personality, which will be expressed in his/her interpersonal behaviors. Consequently, the more accurately students of pastoral care understand the impact of their personality and interpersonal behaviors on others, the more intentional they can be about crafting an effective ministry.

Because of the nature of this seminar, its curriculum is comprised of the real life relationships of students. This includes relationships between peers, relationships between students and the supervisor, and relationships with patients, families, colleagues, and significant others. Thus, by its nature, this seminar is very personal, and that makes it essential for the group to function in an atmosphere of safety, confidentiality, honesty, trust, and care.

At times care and support will be expressed in the group through affirmation. At other times, care and support will be expressed through offering clarification and challenge. As all this happens, students will come to know themselves better and learn how to use themselves more effectively in ministry.