Course Description: Integrative Courses

This course is the first of a series of three one-hour courses designed to prepare Masters level therapists to relate biblical faith to therapeutic practice. This first course addresses the theological basis for an integrative use of theological and psychological material, fundamental stances of various Christian traditions regarding the relationship of Christianity and culture, and considers the implications of the transition from pre- to post-modern epistemologies (supernaturalism, empiricism, corporate subjectivism) as they relate to psychology and theology.

The second course pays special attention to a biblical understanding of mankind and to a framework for understanding the life situation of fallen humanity between the first and second coming of Christ. The place of the family and of marriage and the church as a therapeutic community receive attention. The latter part of the second course examines crucial passages in Romans and Ephesians regarding the process and goals of change in Christian life.

The third course involves the advanced student in a research project examining the present state of psychological and theological learning in a given area and relating that to therapeutic practice.

The three parts of the integrative series, in conjunction with class discussion in regular FT courses and the courses offered by the biblical studies and the history-theology divisions are designed to prepare students to function as Christian therapists.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the first integrative course students will have a deeper grasp on

- the relation of theology and psychology, of general and special revelation
- the stances of various major Christian traditions regarding the relation of Christianity and culture
- the intellectual frameworks within which psychology has developed and currently functions.

Course Process:

Meetings 1 and 2 will examine the relation of Scripture, theology and psychology with an eye to the relation of special revelation, general revelation and common grace. Students will read the four articles by Welsh/Powlison and Hurley/Berry in JPC, Winter, 1997.

Meeting 3 and 4 will examine the relationship of Christianity and culture in major Christian traditions and the philosophical transitions from pre-modern to modern to post-modern epistemology.

Assignments

1. Paper: Interviews about theology and psychology  Nov. 4, 2005 (20%)

Meet with a minister of a church representing a different tradition or different religion entirely (such as Jewish or Islamic) than your own. Ask them to explain to you their understanding of the relationship of revelation (OT, NT, Koran), the community’s theology and counseling and of the use of revelation and psychological information when counseling. Write a paper of less than 10 pages presenting the view of your interviewee and evaluating the view in relation to the lecture and reading materials presented in this course. Classify your interviewee in terms of Niebuhr’s categories. Include a section at the end explaining your own conclusions regarding the subject.

To spare pastors multiple interviews, please write the name and church of the pastor you will interview on the list available in the MFT office. Check the list before calling a pastor. If his/her name is on the list, do not call. Note as well that this assignment has been carried out in previous years, so it is well to ask the pastor if he has done it before.
If he has, another would be preferable, unless he particularly wants to participate again. Frequent participation will slowly modify pastor’s views.

2. Paper: Comparing positions (50%) Nov. 18, 2005

The relation of faith and learning has been a subject of discussion for a very long time. The respective roles of psychology (learning) and faith with respect to how to live life and how to change are the subjects of much debate in the evangelical world. Many perceive psychology as a secular substitute for sanctification and psychological theories as substitutes for biblical instruction. Others see them as essentially separate. A variety of organizations of counselors exist, secular, sacred, religious and non-religious. For this assignment, each student should pick two contrasting positions as represented by associations or individuals. The student should then review literature by the selected representatives and prepare a paper presenting, comparing, contrasting and critiquing the respective positions in relation to one another and to the readings of this course.

Due date: Hand your paper in at the MFT office by 4:00 PM, Nov. 18, 2004. Include on the cover the due date and time, the actual date and time it is handed in, and the difference, clearly indicating whether the paper is before or after the deadline.

3. Intellectual history/Worldview Exam: October 31, 2005 8-11 AM (30%)

Worldviews have consequences. Jim Sire looks at a variety of worldviews from a Christian perspective. Working in study groups, students will become familiar with the basic worldviews presented by Sire and with the flow of intellectual history presented in class by Dr. Hurley. The exam will ask students to demonstrate an ability to identify worldviews from statements, to compare worldviews and to discuss the implications of those worldviews. Students are urged to prepare for the exam by developing brief summaries/outlines of Sire’s worldviews based on his chapter outlines and by discussing them to become familiar with them.

Readings

2) Annual Covenant of Nouthetic Counselors
6) Passantino, B. and G., Psychology and the church (Four parts), Available online at equip.org/free/DP220-1.htm
8) Sire, James (1997), The Universe Next Door, IVP
Course Schedule:

8/29/05  **Theology and psychology as sciences under revelation:**  
          **Exegetical issues**  
          Readings: All save Sire; especially Hurley/Berry/Powlison/Welsh

9/12/05  **Theology and psychology as sciences under revelation:**  
          **Theological issues**  
          Readings: All save Sire; especially Hurley/Berry/Powlison/Welsh

10/17/05  **Christ and culture**  
          Sire/Class notes

10/24/05  **Philosophical transitions**

10/31/05  **Final exam:**  **811:00**

11/04/05  **Interview paper due**

11/18/05  **Comparison paper due**