

ST5350 Theological Foundations for Counseling

Autumn 2021, Orlando, Florida

2 Credit Hours

December 7-10

Details

1. Class Times: Tuesday-Friday (8:30am-4pm)
2. Instructor: Dr. Mark I. McDowell
3. Contact: mmcdowell@rts.edu
4. Office Hours: Feel free to contact me regarding anything in class and beyond. If you would like to make an appointment, please email my executive assistant, Grace Ann Finley (gfinley@rts.edu)

Course Description (2 Credits)

This is the first of five courses exploring the relation of psychology and counseling to biblical and theological studies. This course focuses on the relation of Scripture to psychological studies and counseling, on Scripture as the central text of the Christian counselor, and on Scriptural texts of central importance to Christian counselors.

Course Objectives & Course Outcomes

After successful completion of the course, students will demonstrate ability to:

1. Contrast the major approaches evangelical Christians take to psychology and counseling
2. Identify some of the challenges of a Christian approach to counseling in the contemporary world due to worldview differences
3. Articulate a biblical framework for understanding the Christian life and counseling process.
4. Understand key Scriptural themes and passages relevant to Christian counseling
5. Develop a holistic framework for counseling in Christian and public health settings consistent with the Reformed faith

Course Requirements & Assignments

1. Reading (20%): Students are expected to complete all assigned reading. Please consult the Lecture Schedule.

2. Two Psychology Summary (25%): Intellectual contexts have consequences. Two psychologies can be found in the history of the West. The Christian version begins in the texts of the Bible and continues to the present. Modern psychology began in the late 1800's and now dominates the Western intellectual world. Each is based on a distinct worldview. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of both of these two psychologies using one page for each.
 - a. Your summary paper should be 2 pages long, giving an overview of both outlooks and include your own reflections in a concluding paragraph or two.
3. Paper (45%): Comparing evangelical counseling positions. Compare and contrast the three most viable positions evangelicals have taken regarding psychology and counseling (biblical counseling, Christian psychology, and integration) regarding such matters as the role of the Bible and creation grace in the human sciences; the use of the Bible and theology in counseling; the influence of secularism in contemporary psychology and counseling; participation in contemporary psychology, counseling, and public mental health; and the counseling in the church.
 - a. Your paper should be 8-9 pages long, giving 2-3 pages (roughly) to your analysis of each position, and offer a concluding section in which you assess and offer your preferred position.
 - b. For sources, you should consult the following documents and interact with them:
 - i. ACBC, Annual Covenant of ACBC (Association of Certified Biblical Counselors) <https://biblicalcounseling.com/certification/covenant/>
 - ii. Arms, D., (2008) [Book Review: Foundations for Soul Care | Institute for Nouthetic Studies | Blog – Biblical Counseling](#). Retrieved online 5/17/2021
 - iii. Johnson, E. L., *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010)
 - iv. Johnson, E. L. (2011). The three faces of integration. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 30 (4), 339-355.

Reading

Required Texts:

1. Eric Johnson, *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2007)
2. Eric Johnson, ed. *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2010)

3. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 5th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2009)

Lecture Outline & Reading Schedule

Lectures	Date	Topic	Reading Due
1	12/7/21 AM	Biblical and Theological Foundations for Psychology and Counseling	<i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 1, 6 <i>Sire, The Universe Next Door</i> , 1-3
2	12/7/21 PM	The Secular Revolution and Modern Psychology	<i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 2,4, 7 <i>Sire, The Universe Next Door</i> , 4-7
3	12/8/21 AM	Approaches to Psychology and Counseling	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 3, 5 <i>Sire, The Universe Next Door</i> , 8-11
4	12/8/21 PM	The Meaningfulness of Human Beings	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 8-11
5	12/9/21 AM	The Divine Call to Inwardness	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 13
6	12/9/21 PM	Inwardness: Self-Examination and Barriers	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 14-15
7	12/10/21 AM	Inwardness: Internalization; and Outwardness	<i>Foundations</i> Ch. 16-17
8	12/10/21 PM	Counseling Modalities	<i>Foundations</i> , Ch. 18

Policies and Important Information

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you require a special adaptation or **APA-Style.** All written work must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style, 6th edition. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

Disability Accommodation Policy. If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students

that verifies your disabled status. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides MAC students with access to the PsycARTICLES Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following instructions emailed to you (including a username and password).

Submission of work. All assignments should be submitted via Canvas. Items are due by midnight of the due date. Late work will be accepted up to two weeks late, but will be docked one letter grade.

Attendance/Participation Grade. Regular attendance is expected and required. Excessive and unexcused absences (more than 3 lectures) will result in the loss of points equal to one letter grade per absence.

Plagiarism: intentional and unintentional plagiarism will lead to a failing grade for the course

RTS Grading Scale

A (97-100)
A- (94-96)
B+ (91-93)
B (88-90)
B- (86-87)
C+ (83-85)
C (80-82)
C- (78-79)
D+ (75-77)
D (72-74)
D- (70-71)
F (Below 70)

Grading

Participation:	10%
Reading:	20%
Psychology View Summary:	25%
Paper:	45%

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST5350 Theological Foundations for Counseling
 Professor: Mark McDowell
 Campus: Orlando
 Date: Fall 2021

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<u>Rubric</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None 	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	The presentation and papers help students build a biblical & theological foundation for counseling.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	Class discussions help students apply a biblical & theological framework to counseling scenarios.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Lectures and readings help students reflect on theological methodology from a specifically Reformed framework.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The inwardness assignment requires students to reflect on their relationship with God, self, and others.
Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	All assignments strengthen the student's ability to conceptualize counseling from a biblical & theological framework.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the	Strong	All assignments strengthen the students ability to engage

	Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)		scriptural and secular resources from a Christian and Reformed worldview.
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Minimal	Assignments help prompt clarity about the task of counseling.