
MARRIAGE AND PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING (BCO 6560)

Professor of Record:

Robert Jones, Th.D.

Primary Lecturer

Brad Hambrick, M.Div., Th.M.

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Wake Forest, NC

Office phone: 919.383.7100

e-mail: bhambrick@summitrdu.com

October 5-9, 2015

1:00 to 5:00 pm for lectures exclusive for undergraduate and grad credit students

6:30 to 9:00 pm for seminar presentation *with attendees from the public*

Spring 2015

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission.

Course Description (Catalog): *3 semester hours.*

A biblical model of marriage is developed, which serves as a foundation for understanding and counseling marriage problems and providing premarital counseling.

Course Objectives:

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission. This course supports our mission statement above by addressing our five core competencies in specific ways:

- **Spiritual Formation:** Understand and apply the gospel to your own relationships, not merely marriage.
- **Biblical Exposition:** Understand how to interpret and apply various biblical texts and theological themes to people amid their interpersonal struggles.
- **Theological Integration:** Understand and apply basic Christian doctrine in practical ways as married people.
- **Ministry Preparation:** Acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for ministry to engaged and married couples.
- **Critical Thinking and Communication:** Discern the weakness in secular psychologies and common, ineffective Christian approaches to marriage /marriage counseling and reframe them from a biblical perspective.

Students are expected to satisfactorily fulfill all of the following listed requirements. Since this is a three hour course, the professor expects the students to complete 2250 minutes of work in class and 4500 minutes of work outside of class. Reading and writing assignments for this course have been calculated with these requirements in mind.

To achieve this, we desire that through this course each student would...

1. Grasp more fully what God's Word says about marriage.
2. Know more clearly and carry out more faithfully God's will for you in the specific family role(s) he has given you, or may give you, as a husband, wife, single person, parent, son, or daughter.
3. Understand how a biblical approach to marital and premarital counseling differs from other approaches.
4. Minister more effectively to your friends and family members in their specific God-given family situations to help them follow Christ and to help Christ's church build stronger marriages and families.

Textbooks: Required

Brad Hambrick, *Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage* (Printed Notes)
 Brad Hambrick, (2014) *Chronically Self-Centered Spouse*. P&R
 Alexander Strauch (1999) *Men and Women: Equal Yet Different*. Lewis and Roth
 Steven R. Tracy (2005) *Mending the Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse*. Zondervan
 Ron Deal (2002) *The Smart Step-Family*. Bethany House

Textbooks: Recommended

Ken Sande (2002) *The Peacemaker for Families*. Focus on the Family.
 Winston Smith, (2010) *Marriage Matters*. New Growth Press

Course Requirements

A. This course will adhere to the seminary grading system: 95-100 A, 87-94 B, 77-86 C, 70-76 D

B. Completing the **assigned reading** will account for 10% of your course grade. When you turn in your two appendices assignments (see letter C below) please indicate what percentage of the seminar notebooks you have read.

C. After listening to the five seminars, write two 2-3 page single-spaced **appendices proposal** for one of the five seminar manuals. Identify an area of marital or pre-marital counseling that you believe was neglected in these materials. Your appendices should be written with the counselee as its primary audience. The tone of its content should be practical. These two papers will account for 10% each (20% total) of your course grade. Key components of this assignment should include:

- A clear target audience (Who within the larger experience of this emotion will benefit from this appendix? But this should be a group of people and not an individual person or case study.)
- A clear objective for the appendix (How should these individuals expect to benefit from your writing?)
- A clear process by which to benefit (What will the reader need to do in order to benefit from your writing?)

D. Assignments for reading are listed below. It is required that you read the assigned material and complete the writing assignment for each. Each of the 2 page papers will account for 5% of your course grade (20% total).

- Pre-Class Reading:
 - *Men and Women* – After reading this book write a two page critical assessment of the book answering the following questions: (1) when and how would you use this resource in marriage counseling or discipleship, (2) in your opinion, what are the strongest and weakest arguments Strauch makes in his book, (3) what are the unanswered question you have after reading this book.
 - *Smart Step-Family* After reading this book write a two page critical assessment of the book answering the following questions: (1) what unique challenges that face blended families did you gain a greater appreciation for, (2) assess the strengths and weaknesses of how Ron Deal handled the question of co-parenting when there are significantly different value systems involved, (3) on what basis do you or don't you believe that Ron Deal provided "biblical counseling" in this book.
- Post-Class Reading:
 - *Mending the Soul* -- After reading this book write a two page critical assessment of the book answering the following questions: (1) what were the key things you learned about the effects of abuse – chapters 5-7, (2) what were they key things you learned about recovery from the effects of abuse – chapters 8-10, and (3) on what basis do you or don't you believe that Steven Tracy provided "biblical counseling" in this book.

- *Chronically Self-Centered Spouse* After reading this book write a two page critical assessment of the book answering the following questions: (1) when and how would you use this resource in marriage counseling or discipleship, (2) assess how faithful you believe the utilization of Matthew 7:1-6 is in this booklet, and (3) what do you anticipate would be your biggest challenge in counseling a couple that fits the descriptions in this booklet.

E. Based upon the lectures, reading, and personal reflections in this class write your **practical theology of marriage counseling** as a 7-10 page paper. This paper will count for 30% of your total course grade and should include answers to the following questions as five distinct headings in your paper:

1. In marriage counseling, who do you view as the counselee (the individuals or the couple)?
2. How does question #1 impact setting of counseling objectives and confidentiality?
3. What criteria do you look for to determine whether a couple is in a good place to see their desired change happen?
4. In what instances would you not do marriage counseling with a couple?
5. How would you counsel someone who did have biblical grounds for divorce and came to you for counseling support during the painful process of seeking a divorce?

F. **Class attendance** in class discussions is important in an intensive class format. If you must miss a class, you must send me a note regarding when and why, preferably before the event. **If you miss more than 1 class, you will fail the class.** Class attendance and participation will account for 20% of your course grade.

Schedule:

<i>Day of Class</i>	<i>Week Of</i>	<i>Tentative Agenda (subject to change)</i>	<i>Assignments, Reading Due</i>
Pre	Sept 14	On-Line Lecture from Robert Jones: “Lesson 3 Diagrams Used in Marriage Counseling”	
Pre	Sept 21	On-Line Lecture from Robert Jones: “Lesson 20A and 20B Undesired Singleness”	
Pre	Sept 28	Reading Two Books Writing Two Critical Assessment	Strauch Critical Assessment Deal Critical Assessment
1	Oct 5	Discuss Syllabus and Class Expectations Contrast Marriage Counseling with Individual Counseling When Not to do Marriage Counseling Managing the Goals / Perspectives of Two Counsees	
		Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Foundations Healthy Marital Expectation Marriage as Covenant Job Descriptions for a Christian Husband and Wife	Mentoring Notebook
2	Oct 6	Blended Families Counseling in the Context of His, Hers, and Ours	
		Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Communication Listening Day-to-Day Communication Conflict Resolution, Repentance, and Forgiveness	Mentoring Notebook
3	Oct 7	Broken Marriages Responding to Instances of Abuse or Chronic Neglect	
		Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Finances What is a Budget? Creating a Budget You Will Actually Use Approach to Debt and Savings	Mentoring Notebook
4	Oct 8	False Love: Caring for the Adulterer or Sexual Addiction in Marriage	
		Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Decision Making Wise Personal Decision Making Marital Decision Making through Consensus A Process for Headship-Submission Decision Making	Mentoring Notebook
5	Oct 9	True Betrayal: Caring for the Spouse Betrayed by Adultery or Sexual Addiction	
		Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Intimacy Appreciating our Differences Marriage in the Larger Love Story of the Gospel Becoming Excellent Lovers	Mentoring Notebook
Post	Oct 19	On-Line Lecture from Robert Jones: “Lesson 12 Parents and In-Laws”	
Post	Oct 26	On-Line Lecture from Robert Jones: “Lesson 13 Caring for Aging, Disabled, or Infirm Parents”	
Post	Nov 2	On-Line Lecture from Robert Jones: “Lesson 18A and 18B Divorce and Remarriage”	
Post	Nov 28	Practical Theology of Marriage Counseling Paper Final Two Critical Assessments	Hambrick Critical Assessment Tracy Critical Assessment

COURSE GRADING WEIGHT:

- Completing Assigned Reading – 10%
- Two Appendices Assignments – 20% (10% each)
- Critical Book Assessment – 20% (5% each)
- Practical Theology of Marriage Counseling – 30%
- Attendance – 20%

Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in an immediate failing grade on the assignment with no chance for resubmission. The professor does have the option either to allow the student to remain in and complete the course or to dismiss the student from the course completely. Regardless of the professor's ruling, all cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students Office and the appropriate Academic Dean(s) where further disciplinary action will be considered. At the very least, a permanent record of the infraction will be kept in the student's file. For further information regarding this policy, please refer to the 'Plagiarism & Cheating' section of the Student Handbook.