

WSBM 302 SOLUTION-FOCUSED COUNSELLING

Dr. Ross Johnston
Fall 2021
October 5 – November 23
2 credit hours

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Tuesdays 7 – 9 PM
Hybrid Course
Room: 3040

WSBM exists to equip the People of God – head, heart and hands – with the Word of God, helping them know Jesus Christ personally and carry on his ministry.

I. Special Notes

Hybrid Course: This course is being offered in a hybrid format. Classes on **October 5** and **November 23** will be ***in-person*** (for students who receive the exemptions ahead of time from the instructor, a *live streaming* option will be made available). On *other* evenings, classes will be *online* via Zoom

Class recordings will be provided by WSBM for a limited time to your class only. If you do not wish for other students to see your video or hear your voice (whether live or on the recording), you can turn off your camera and/or mute your microphone. If you do not wish to share your real name, you can use a pseudonym, provided that your instructor can identify you ahead of time.

II. Course Description

Some counselling requires advanced mental health or medical training to deliver. Most Christian counselling, though, lies within the realm of pastoral caregivers — lay and pastors. In most cases, solutions lie within the counselees themselves. The goal is healthy change, sooner rather than later, by helping the counselee see and work on their desired solution, aware of God's activity already present in his or her life. The Holy Spirit transforms and empowers

individuals to change into the person God wants them to be (2 Cor. 5:17). When that is the desire of the person, they are aware of God's power at work in them. They can formulate the better situation they desire or the person they want to become, and biblically trained pastoral counsellors can help that desired future become present reality. Solution-focused pastoral counselling shifts the emphasis from the problem to the strengths, vision, and practical solutions that lie within the individual. This course will present an understanding of this counselling approach delineated by Dr. Charles Kollar. It will also give basic training in applying theory in practical, short-term sessions that help people get back on track in their marriage, family living and other aspects of living.

III. Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of the course, students should have...

- A thorough understanding of the theory and practice of the *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counselling* approach to counselling and how it differs from traditional problem-focused counselling.
- A basic ability in using this counselling approach in helping others in an informal or formal counselling setting.
- A further people-helping skill added to their personal repertoire of tools for caring for people.

IV. Required Text

- Charles Allen Kollar. *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counselling: An Effective Short-Term Approach for Getting People Back on Track* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, 1997) 224pp. [Note: Also available in Kindle & eBook formats].

V. Course Outline

- **Week 1:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 1 – Chapters 1 & 2; Class – “Personal Paradigms and Recognizing God’s Power at Work”
- **Week 2:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 1 – Chapters 3 & 4; Class – “The World of Mental Health and Our Underlying Presuppositions”
- **Week 3:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 1 – Chapters 5 & 6; Class – “Our Personal Constructs and the Role of God’s Grace in Counselling”
- **Week 4:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 1 – Chapters 7 & 8; Class – “Guiding Assumptions and Ethical Guidelines for Counselling”
- **Week 5:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 2 – Chapters 9 & 10; Class – “A Framework for Change and Attentive Listening”
- **Week 6:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 2 – Chapters 11 & 12; Class – “Track Options and Vision Clarification”
- **Week 7:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 2 – Chapters 13 & 14; Class – “Supportive Feedback and Guidance for Consolidating Change”
- **Week 8:** Pre-Class – Read Kollar, Part 2 – Chapters 15 & 16; Class – “An SFPC Case Example and Final Considerations”

VI. Course Requirements

1. **Reading:** (a) Read the entire text-book (224 pages). Two chapters a week will be required in advance of each class. (b) Additionally, read 75 pages from counselling book(s) and/or articles of your choice and give a 500-word report on this reading, answering the question: “The main thing I learned from this extra reading and how it differs from and/or complements Kollar’s *Solution-Focused Counselling* approach is ...”
2. **Term Paper:** Write a 2,000-3,000 word essay, 8 to 12 pages double-spaced, summarizing and evaluating Solution-Focused Pastoral Counselling. Your paper should evidence your understanding of the SFPC approach, both in theory and practice, how it differs from other traditional approaches and how you see it aligning more closely to God’s Word and the work of the Holy Spirit in people’s lives. Your paper will be strengthened by demonstrating how you anticipate incorporating this skill in your personal ministry and/or illustrating with examples (protecting identities, of course) of how you have already utilized these concepts in counselling others. Paper is due at course end (November 23, 2021) but may be submitted earlier.

VII. Academic Policies

1. Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all the scheduled classes. If, for some reason, students need to miss classes, they will need to contact the instructor ahead of time. Students will be required to catch up on missed classes by listening to the recording. Students are responsible to obtain any missing materials or notes from other students in the class. Arrangements must be made with the instructor prior to missing an exam.

2. Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to remember that they are in an academic classroom. It is inappropriate to engage in conversations with classmates during class. Cell phones must be turned off. iPods/Tablets/Smart phones are permitted if Bible software and word-processing programs are being used. Otherwise, please do not surf the net or check emails during class. Only students who have registered for a course are to be in attendance. The only exception is an "approved audit." If the class is conducted via Zoom, students should turn the video on unless there is a good reason not to.

3. Assignment Format (Citation & Style)

The default format for documentation of sources used and format of presentation for all the papers is *MLA Style*. The format guide is available at Willingdon.org/wsbn.

4. Extension Policy

The deadline for an assignment is considered to be part of the course requirements. Due to the additional workload for the instructor in grading late papers, and due to the school's intention to be fair to students who, often with considerable effort, submit their work on time, extensions for course work will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. A written request with reasons for extension should be directed to the instructor. If granted, the extension deadlines will be clearly established and will be final.

Extensions for course work are granted in cases where the student demonstrates there was an unforeseeable and unavoidable emergency. Emergencies considered as grounds for an extension typically include:

- Personal sickness or injury which prevents one from working
- Sickness, injury or death in the family which requires the student's attention
- Emotional or psychological crisis for which the student has sought professional help
- Unexpected increase in job responsibilities

5. Academic Integrity

All students at WSBM are expected to hold to *uncompromised* academic integrity.

Plagiarism, whether intended or accidental, is an academic offense. In academic work, students are certainly expected to refer to and evaluate other people's works. Plagiarism unfortunately occurs when students' assignments fail to give credit to those from whom the students got certain *ideas*. In other words, students submitted the idea of another without reference to him/her (effectively claiming the credit that is due someone else and getting a grade for someone else's effort).

Therefore, whether students (1) *directly quotes* a source (i.e., "word for word" in its entirety or in its part), or (2) *paraphrase in their own words* the idea of another, they must keep track and provide a *clear reference* to the original source that they are indebted to (e.g., via footnotes).

Again, whether it was intended or not, plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Students are therefore expected to develop and exercise *proper citation*, a skill that is truly critical in academic work (please refer to the format guide at Willingdon.org/wsbm).

Using unauthorized aids of any sort in exams or assignments, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized use of class recordings are all breaches of academic integrity.

The penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade either in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense.

6. Academic Standards

Students must achieve at least a 60% grade to successfully complete a course. In order to graduate with the Certificate, any course taken and not completed must be repeated. Registration policies and procedures apply.

Students may appeal to the instructor if a course is not successfully completed, and at the discretion of the instructor, students may be granted the opportunity to re-submit a particular assignment.

7. Report Cards

Report cards are issued (usually by email) in a reasonable amount of time following the completion of each course. Due to faculty schedules, there may be delays in the time frame for issuing grade reports.

Students are responsible to appeal any error in grades and to bring to the WSBM Administrative Assistant's attention within one month following the issued report card. Grade changes are allowable for computational recording errors and must be corrected no later than one month after the date the report card was issued.