**Introduction:** This course introduces students to spiritual, theological and psychological perspectives on health and sickness. Health care professionals play a critical role in the life of our entire society, and a theological and spiritual vision of health/sickness can greatly enrich their professional practices, personal sense of vocation, and capacity to provide leadership, guidance and support in diverse family, spiritual/religious, and community settings. The vision provided by this course will of necessity be interdisciplinary, incorporating awareness of medical knowledge, skills of counseling and care, and psychological, spiritual and religious insights. Topics will include definitions of health and sickness, the concept of Sabbath, and both biblical and family systems theory perspectives. The class will explore all these themes from a variety of perspectives, making use of a respectful and collaborative process that will emphasize the expertise and the developing voices of all the students.

**Course Outcomes:** Students will be able to
1. Articulate definitions of “health” and “sickness” in a theologically informed manner.
2. Understand and describe the importance of sabbath in the spiritual life, and identify ways in which sabbath is integrated into their own lives, both personally and professionally.
3. Present their family of origin “genogram” and describe Murray Bowen’s concept of “differentiation” and its importance for psychosocial and spiritual health.
4. Understand theodicy as a theological and spiritual concern, discuss it from a biblical perspective, and share how all this relates to professional work in the health care field.
5. Describe accredited Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and its relevance for all health care professionals, especially those in the hospital environment.
6. Discuss the relevance of forgiveness for the health care professional.
7. Share their life journey in a brief written form that adequately integrates many of the themes of this class.
8. Final Paper or Project (see below for full description)

Please Note: A guide that correlates outcomes (above) and course requirements (below) to the BTS Faculty Outcomes Assessment process (as guided by the Association of Theological Schools) will be made available and discussed in class.

**Course Requirements:** Please submit all written course requirements electronically via Email attachment in Word documents to rbaard@bts.edu
1. Active engagement with all readings and full participation with discussions in class. (30%)

2. Seven page (double space) integrative essay describing your own life journey. Due one week from last class session. (September 3, 2011) (30%)

3. Final Paper: 15 - 20 pages doubles spaced with proper footnotes or endnotes and bibliography (absolutely no more than 20 pages). (October 7, 2011 at Noon) (40%)

Options and Guide for Final Paper:

Option #1: A research paper on any aspect of your ministry related to health care issues that you wish to pursue at a deeper level. Your research should include significant reading beyond the requirements of the course syllabus. The instructor must approve your topic in advance, and the topic should be defined in such a way that is it is manageable for the time you have to research and write and still remain within the 15-20-page limit.

Option #2: Instead of a research paper, submit a Final Project expressing key theme(s) of the class which is a creative work of art of some type: Poetry/Painting/Song/ Drama
This work of art must be submitted along with an “artist’s statement” (5-7 pages) which interprets your creative work to a wider audience e.g. peers in the classroom, and/or other interested persons in the BTS seminary community. At your option, this could include a presentation to the wider community later in the fall semester.

Papers or Projects (with artist’s statement) are due on or before Friday, October 7, 2011 at Noon. Please submit all papers and statements via Email attachment in a Word document to rbaard@bts.edu

PLAGIARISM: You are reminded that using others’ words or ideas without attribution and citation constitutes plagiarism, an act of intellectual dishonesty that may result in failing the course. See the Student Guide for a complete description of plagiarism.

Required Readings:


**Grading for the Course:** For all M.Div. and M.A. students a letter grade will be given, unless a request is made in writing to the instructor for Pass/Fail grading on the first day of class.

Please also note:
A grade of Incomplete will be given only in unusual circumstances, e.g., illness, death in the family, change in job responsibilities. Procedures outlined in the BTS Student Guide must be followed in order to request an Incomplete Contract. Completion of the course requirements does not assure you of an A in the course. The quality of your work will determine the quality of your grade.

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**Class Calendar:**

**Day I: Friday 8/19** (Read for class *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives Ch 1 –Rest, Ch 3 – Time, Ch 4 -Happiness *)

Opening Prayer by Professor
-Introduction to this Course – Beginning definitions of “health” and “sickness”
-Overview of Syllabus and Course Requirements
-Sharing of Students Concerns and Interests in the Course
-Building the Classroom Covenant, Sign ups for daily opening prayers

Lunch (12 Noon - 1pm You are encouraged - though not required - to bring a lunch and share informally each day with your colleagues in the class during this time.)

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**Theme: “Sabbath in Relationship to Health and Sickness”**
Presentation on the theme of Sabbath and Sabbath practices
- Discussion on theme
-Work in Triads – Sabbath Practices
-Writing and Sharing a Sabbath Covenant

**Day II: Saturday 8/20** (Read for class *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*)
Opening Prayer__________

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**Theme: “Health and Sickness and Forgiveness”**
-View DVD *The Power of Forgiveness* (Martin Doblmeir producer/director Journey Films, 2007)
-Reflections and Discussion: The nature of forgiveness, its relationship to health and sickness, and its relevance for the health care professional.

Lunch (12 Noon - 1pm)
- Forgiveness exercises: individual and triad groups
- Large group reflections: theological and spiritual
- Forgiving the unforgivable and its relationship to health
- Discussion of "Life Journey Integrative Essay" Assignment (Due September 3)

**Day III: Thursday 8/25** (Read for class *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor’s Own Family*)
Opening Prayer __________

*Theme: “Health and Sickness – A Systems Perspective”*
- Family of Origin Work – Introduction and Genogram Exercise
- Work in Triads: Sharing family of origin journeys; discussion of differentiation from the perspective of family systems theorist Murray Bowen

Lunch (12 Noon - 1pm)

- Film and Discussion: *Wit* (directed by Mike Nicols, starring Emma Thompson)
- Systemic, theological and spiritual reflections on the film

**Day IV: Friday 8/26** (Read for class *Job, plus 3 assigned gospel stories from NRSV text*)
Opening Prayer __________

*Theme: “Health and Sickness in Biblical Perspective”*
- Perspectives from the Old Testament – Deuteronomy, Job
- Discussion: Why *do* bad things happen to good people? (theodicy).
- 11:00a.m. Library Research Presentation by Laurie McQuarrie, BTS Librarian

Lunch (12 Noon - 1pm)

- New Testament Perspectives: Three gospel stories of healing
- Work in triads – roles plays of gospel stories
- Systemic, theological and spiritual reflections

**Day V: Saturday 8/27**
Opening Prayer __________

*Theme: “The Hospital Environment and Case Studies”*
- Presentation and Discussion – Hospital Chaplaincy, the Contemporary Hospital Environment and Health and Sickness, Clinical Pastoral Education

Lunch 12 Noon – 1p.m.

- Case Studies for Group Discussion
- Wrap up: Review and discussion of major themes of the class.
- Due: One paragraph proposal summary of Final Paper or Project – discuss in small groups for feedback and guidance
- Tying up “loose ends” including course evaluation, group closure.

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**Recommended Readings:**


Deadly Sins and Saving Virtues by Donald Capps. (Fortress Press, 1987) ISBN 1-5791-0247-6 $20.00


Cura Vitae: Illness and the Healing of Life by Daniel Louw  (Luxverbi-BM, 2005) ISBN 0-07963-0647-8 (currently out of print) @$100
Your Brain Goes to Church: Neuroscience and Congregational Life by Bob Sitze (The Alban Institute, 2005) ISBN 1-5669-9299-0 $18.00


(Note: All retail book prices are taken from Amazon.com)