COU/PTH 670 — Counseling for Grief and Loss Block (Hybrid)  
Spring 2014  
Tuesday 6:00 – 9:00 pm

**Essential Information**
Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at [http://support.nts.edu](http://support.nts.edu).

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *Handbook for Inclusive Language*

**Instructor Information**
Professor: Judi Schwanz, Ph.D  
Email: jaschwanz@nts.edu  
Office: (816) 268-5491  
Office Hours: by appointment

**Catalog Description**
A study of the phenomena of transitions, loss and grief as they impact the individual and the church. This course includes the exploration of methods and means of ministering to the bereaved, and reflection on personal experiences of loss.

**Course Narrative & Rationale**
This course is designed to help the student understand the universal, multi-faceted human experience of loss and grief. Studies show that the majority of people turn to their spiritual leader *first* for help and counsel in times of tragedy and loss. Christian leaders in all areas of ministry have an incredible opportunity to participate with God in healing and helping a world full of hurting people.
Enhanced awareness of the pervasive nature of loss will lead to greater sensitivity and awareness for the spiritual helper. The pastor/counselor who understands the deep comfort found in the simple ministry of presence will be more likely to teach others how to provide care and extend ministry to the grieving.

Students will engage in reflective journaling, research and writing. Highly interactive class sessions will apply course materials to the variety of ministry settings in which students have served and/or currently serve, as well as to the student’s own personal experiences of loss.

**Degree Objectives**
The following M. Div. degree objectives are addressed in this course:
1. Mature knowledge of God and self, attained through practices of Christian formation and personal discipline
2. Cultivation of gifts, practical skills, and vocational identity as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through engagement in and reflection on the pastoral arts

**Course Outcomes**
Students in this course will have the opportunity to:
1. Explore their present feelings about loss, dying, death and grief. [Assignment #2]
2. Analyze grief as a stress in all life transitions and loss. [Assignments #1,2]
3. Understand the relationship between grief resolution and mental and spiritual health. [Assignments #1,2,3,4,5]
4. Reflect theologically on grief, loss and ministry to the bereaved. [Assignments #1,2,3,4]
5. Develop a personal pastoral approach to bereavement ministry. [Assignments #3,4,5]
6. Plan steps to establish a congregational ministry for those experiencing loss. [Assignments #3,4,5]

**Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies**
CP 14 – Ability to appropriately express pastoral care & concern for individuals & families in crises, passages, & the normal routines of life
CP 15 – Ability to offer spiritual counseling & to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister’s ability
CP 16 – Ability to apply the knowledge of basic counseling gained from historic Christian & appropriate contemporary models

**Required Texts & Course Materials**


**Recommended Texts & Course Materials**

Brooks, James L. *The Unbroken Circle: A Toolkit for Congregations Around Illness, End of Life and Grief* [Paperback]


**Course Outline**

I. Loss and Grief: an Introduction
   a. Compassion and Pastoral Care
   b. Varieties of Loss
   c. Tasks of Grief
   d. Where is God in suffering?

II. “Dying Well”
   a. Theological reflection on death
   b. End-of-life care
   c. Funerals and Rituals

III. Caring for the grievers
   a. Children and grief
   b. Congregational ministry

**Course Assignments & Requirements**

1. Reading assignments to be done in advance of the class session in which they are listed on the schedule. The reading is essential to class participation. [Course outcomes #2,3,4; CP 14, 15, 16]

2. Journal. Each student will maintain a journal in which he/she will reflect theologically and personally on the material in the textbooks and any additional materials read. Each week, the student will hand in a copy of that week’s journal entries. Grading will be on the basis of interaction with the material, not on specific content. Material will be kept in strict confidence and only read by the professor. [Course outcomes #1,2,3,4; CP 14]
3. Presentation. Each student will choose a particular type of loss to research and will prepare a class presentation. The 20-minute presentation is to include a description of the loss and its effects, a recommendation of pastoral and congregational response to the individual/family facing such a loss (including appropriate use of Scripture), and a list of resources. The student will prepare a one-page handout to be distributed to the class at the time of presentation. [Course outcomes #3,4,5,6; CP 14, 15]

4. Paper. The student will also prepare a 15-17 page paper to be handed in. A reference list reflecting a minimum of 200 pages of reading (in addition to course texts) on the given topic will be handed in along with the paper. The paper is due April 24. [Course outcomes #3,4,5,6; CP 16]

5. Take home final exam. The exam will be distributed April 24 and due on May 5 at the closing class session. [Course outcomes #3,5,6; CP 14, 15, 16]

**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face Class Sessions</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assignments and Learning Activities</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>147</strong></td>
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**Method for Submitting Assignments**

All assignments should be submitted through Moodle no later than 11:55 PM (Central Time) of the due date listed for the assignment. If the student’s weekly journal is completed in handwritten format, a photocopy may be submitted in class each week, (provided the handwriting is legible).

**Form and Style Expectations**

All papers shall be written using Turabian format for form and style. The weekly journals will not be subject to this expectation.

**Inclusive Language**

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom
discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

**Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams**

All written work is expected to be handed in by 23:55 (11:55 PM – Central Time) on the due date given. Late work will be marked down 10% for every week (or portion thereof) that it is late.

**Course Grading**

Class Participation – 10% of grade  
Journal – 30% of grade  
Presentation (including class handout) – 15% of grade  
Research Paper – 25% of grade  
Take-home final exam – 20% of grade

A = 93-100%  
B = 85-92%  
C = 77-84%  
D = 69-76%  
F = Below 69%

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

**Class Attendance**

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. Since the professor in each course is best acquainted with the importance of consistent attendance, he or she will determine the rules for attendance.

If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If a student is absent four or more weeks of the semester, the professor may automatically fail the student.
Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

**Audio and Video Recordings**

In order to foster a safe learning environment in which various viewpoints are respected, audio or video recordings or transcripts thereof by students is prohibited without the permission of the faculty member in charge of the course. If permission is granted, redistribution of these recordings or transcripts thereof outside the scope of the course is prohibited.

Students enrolling in videoconferencing courses or participating in certain synchronous Moodle activities should be aware that their images and voices will be transmitted digitally through the videoconferencing equipment and may be recorded. Continued enrollment in these courses constitutes willingness to participate in the class with these conditions. If you have privacy concerns, please discuss your enrollment with the Registrar.

**Course Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>B = Becvar</th>
<th>L = Long</th>
<th>G = Goldsmith</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>B ch. 1-2; weekly journal 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B ch. 3-5; Boss ch. 1-3; weekly journal 2</td>
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<td>Feb. 25</td>
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<td>B ch. 6-10; weekly journal 3</td>
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<td>March 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Boss ch. 4-5; weekly journal 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Boss, ch. 6-7; Long ch. 1-6; weekly journal 5</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>R &amp; R WEEK – NO CLASS</td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B ch 11-13; Long ch. 7 - appendix; weekly journal 6</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boss ch. 8- epil; weekly journal 7</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>G ch. 1-4; weekly journal 8</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>G ch. 5-8: weekly journal 9</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
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<td>Student presentations; take-home final handed out; research papers due</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
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<td>Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean’s Office)</td>
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<td>Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean’s Office)</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wrap-up session; final exam due</td>
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