

Wesley Theological Seminary  
Doctor of Ministry Program

**Course: DM-S613 - Traversing Life's Transitions**

**Date:** May 16-20, 2016

**Faculty:** Roslyn A. Karaban, Ph.D.

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**Course Description:**

This course is intended to explore issues of life and major life transitions through the framework of pastoral care, grieving, discernment, crisis, worship and preaching and the lenses of each student and his/her communities (context). The focus will be on helping individuals and communities of faith in transitions, losses and decision-making by first looking at how we ourselves have traversed transitions in our own lives. Course goals will be accomplished through readings, film clips, lectures, case study presentations and role plays/reenactments.

**Course Goals:**

At the end of the course students will have:

- Gained an understanding of how they have handled their own life transitions
- Increased their understanding on helping others through transitions
- Learned a multi-faceted approach for ministering through transitions
- Applied their learning to a specific community of faith

**Required Texts:**

Chittister, Joan D. *Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope*. Grand Rapids, MI.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003.

Jeter, Joseph R., Jr. *Crisis Preaching: Personal & Public*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.

Karaban, Roslyn A. *Responding to God's Call: A Survival Guide*. San Jose: Resource Publications, Inc., 1998. (This book is out of print and will be mailed to you by the professor when you sign up for the course – no charge to student.)

Karaban, Roslyn A. *Crisis Caring: A guide for Ministering to People in Crisis*. San Jose: Resource Publications, Inc., 2005.

Ramsay, Nancy J., ed. *Pastoral Care and Counseling: Redefining the Paradigms*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2004.

### **Course Requirements:**

- 1. Reading and Preparation for Class.** Participants are expected to prepare for class by reading and reflecting on the required readings for each session.
- 2. Attendance and active class participation.** Participants are expected to attend each class and to actively participate in class discussions, and to listen and respond respectfully to others.
- 3. Pre-Class Assignments.** Participants are required to read all 5 books prior to class and to submit a journal reflection of each book before the first day of class. These will not be graded but will start us all off on common ground and the same foundation.

In addition, each student is to prepare a case study (format and description sent with course outline and examples given in Karaban *Crisis Caring* book) to be presented in class. The case study should be a situation in which the student is the minister/counselor to an individual, group or community. The situation should involve one of the themes of the class– loss, discernment, crisis, or transition. (3-5 pages)

#### **4. In-Class Assignments:**

Each student will present his/her case in class in a chosen time slot on Wednesday or Thursday.

#### **5. Post-Class Assignment (Due July 5, 2016)**

Re-write and expand your case incorporating feedback from the class and the professor. Add some of the following elements:

Response to 5 questions (provided by professor)

Expanded section on Understanding the Situation in a Broader Context

Verbatim section with Analysis of Skills

Expanded Theological Reflection Section – add a Sermon, Prayers, Personal Psalm, Worship service, or Church Program

### **Evaluation:**

- **In-Class Presentation** – 30%
- **Seminar Participation** -20%
- **Follow-up paper to In-Class Case Study Presentation** – 50%

## Course Outline

### Monday, May 16, 2016

Morning Session: 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

- Opening Prayer
- Introductions
- Guided Reflection/activity
- Outline of Course Beginning the Conversation – Case Study/Story

Lunch: 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm

Afternoon Session 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

- Pastoral Care and Counseling – Lecture and Conversation (Ramsay)
- Journal conversation

### Tuesday, May 17, 2016

Morning Session: 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

- Transition: Loss and Crisis (Karaban, Chittister)  
Lecture, Discussion, and film clips

Lunch: 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm

Afternoon Session: 1:00pm to 5:00 pm

- Discernment, Worship and Preaching (Karaban, Jeter)  
Lecture and Discussion

Wednesday, May 18 and Thursday, May 19 – Morning and afternoon Sessions

- Presentations of Case studies – one hour time blocks

Friday, May 20

Morning and afternoon sessions:

- Putting it All Together  
Role Plays and Re-enactments of Cases  
Evaluations