

**THEO5956 Special Topics on Pastoral Studies and Counseling I:
On Christian Faith and Depression**
2022-2023 Second Term

Lecturer: Dr. Natalie Hiu-Kwan CHAN
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Time: Mon 7:00pm-9:30pm
Venue: CKB UG04

1. Course Description:

Mental health in theological perspectives is a relatively new theological area. This course explores different theological interpretations of depression and their corresponding pastoral counselling/ care practice orientations. Themes related to depression such as suffering and suicide will also be discussed. This course gives an overview of various disciplinary accounts of depression and discusses how the growing domination of biological explanations of depression can be problematic. The course also discusses the importance of addressing the first-person experiential dimensions and thickening the descriptions of depression in the both theoretical and practical contexts. In order to facilitate students to integrate their pastoral care practice with theories of depression, students will reflect on their personal/ pastoral experience with people living with depression. This course thus aims at equipping students with more theological resources to engage with Christians who struggle with depression on personal and communal levels.

2. Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to

1. Acquire an understanding of depression not limited to biological accounts.
2. Obtain a basic knowledge of some theological interpretations of depression and their corresponding pastoral care practice orientations.
3. Heighten their sensitivity to first-person experiential dimensions and narratives of depression and their constitutive nature to understanding of depression.
4. Reflectively learn the importance of exercising theological restraint in assigning meaning to experiences of depression.
5. Develop some languages to speak about the experiences of depression when ministering persons living with depression.
6. Be able to in offer some theological resources in ministering persons living with depression.

3. Class Calendar

Topics	Suggested Readings
Introduction How to understand depression? Biological accounts of depression Depression as a constellation of symptoms Psychological accounts of depression Social-constructionist approaches to depression	Swinton (2015); Coblenz (2022, ch.4); Scrutton (2020); Scrutton (2017) Lewis (2012, ch. 2) DSM-5; APA, 2013 Freud (1917); Beck (1979, ch. 4) Cvetkovich (2012); Church (2004, ch. 27)
Depression and Suffering On Suicide	Coblenz (2020); Kilby and Davies (2020) Antus (2020); Hecht (2013)
Depression and Hope Brief Pastoral Counselling	Stone (1998a) Stone (1998b)
Sin accounts of depression Nouthetic Movement of Counselling	Scrutton (2015); Webb (2017, ch.6) Adams (1986, ch.33); Murray (2010, ch.2)
Depression and Dark Night of the Soul	Turner (1995, ch.10); Scrutton (2015)
Depression as Orientation, Disorientation and Reorientation Radical Friendship	Swinton (2020, chs. 4 to 5) Swinton (2000, chs 1 and 8)
Depression as Wilderness Discipleship alongside Depressive Sufferers	Coblenz (2022, chs. 5 to 7) Coblenz (2022, ch.8)
Depression as Relational Disconnection Living Trinitarian Faith	(Chan forthcoming; 2021)
Guest Lecture by a Pastoral Counsellor (to be confirmed)	
Student Presentation	
Conclusion Reimagining Healing	Swinton (2020, Conclusion)

4. Assessment (Further details will be announced at the first two lectures.)

1. Class Participation (10%)
2. Book Review (30%)
Choose one book from the reference list of this course outline and write a critical book review of no more than 2000 words in English or 2500 characters in Chinese.
3. Term Paper (60%) [Term Paper (50%)+ Student Presentation (10%)]
 1. Give a presentation that will lead to/ based on your term paper.
 2. Write a term paper of no more than 4000 words in English or 5000 characters in Chinese on one of the following topics:
 - (i). Theory-Practice Integration:
Based on at least one interview with a Christian living with depression, analyse the empirical case with the concepts, theories or/and theological perspectives learnt in this course.

(ii). Contextualisation:

Critically discuss a pastoral care/counselling practice approach (you learnt in this course/ you learnt by reading any books in the reference list) to minister to Christians living with depression in Chinese church setting.

(iii). Any topics related to Christian faith and depression. Please discuss with me beforehand.

5. Academic Honesty

- Students should pay serious attention to the policy and regulations of the University on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. For details, please refer to Honesty in Academic Works: A Guide for Students and Teachers 《學術著作誠信：給學生及老師的指引》
<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>.
- Besides submitting the assignments to Blackboard Learn, students should at the same time submit a copy of each assignment to VeriGuide (https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.aspx) for plagiarism checking. VeriGuide will issue a statement (in the form of a receipt), on which the student declares that they are aware of the policies, regulations, guidelines, and procedures on academic honesty.
- Please upload a scanned copy of the signed receipt to Blackboard Learn. (DO NOT send it through email.) In case this cannot be done, please mail/deliver the signed receipt to the teacher's office (Address: The Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong) or put it in his mailbox on LG of Yung Chi Tung Building. An assignment without the signed receipt will not be graded.

6. References

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