

# Chaplaincy in the Community

## MS 3XC3

McMaster Divinity College  
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3 Units

MDC Summer School  
date – date  
Mon-11:00-4pm  
Tue - Thurs 9-4; Fri. 9-1

**Specializations:** Counselling and Spiritual Care, Pastoral Studies, Christian Worldview, Christianity and Culture.

### **Course Description:**

The role of Chaplain has increasing importance in contemporary western culture. In a society that recognizes the value of spirituality, but resists many traditional religious expressions, Chaplains are privileged to respond to the spiritual care needs of human beings who would otherwise remain isolated from this care. This course will explore the phenomena of Chaplaincy in contemporary society in an effort to help students meet the spiritual care needs of those in non-traditional (i.e. non-religious) settings. We will: (1) discover the biblical and theological foundations for the role of Chaplain; (2) consider how to meet spiritual care needs in non-religious contexts; and (3) pursue practices that will help sustain those who fill the role of Chaplain. Drawing on pastoral and spiritual theology, students will discover how to fulfill the vocation of chaplain with an ever-increasing competence and spiritual sensitivity. From sports teams to hospices to the military, Chaplains are an important part of holistic care today. Following the biblical and theological contours of chaplaincy, this course will root the work of the chaplain as an extension of the life and mission of the local church.

### **Course Objectives:**

#### **Knowing**

- To expand the students biblical, theological, and practical understanding of Chaplaincy.
- To discover skills, strategies, and theological perspectives that will aid students in providing effective spiritual care in non-religious contexts.
- To explore spiritual and theological resources which will help to root chaplaincy as an expression of the mission of the local church.

#### **Being**

- To help students discern their vocation, giftedness, and aptitude as it relates to vocation of Chaplaincy.
- To enable students to identify their “creative response” when confronted with situations of human brokenness and longing.

- To encourage students to root their vocation as chaplain in the life and mission of the local church.

### **Doing**

- To enable students to assess, plan, and deliver effective spiritual care in non-religious contexts.
- To help students to theological reflect on situations of care in order to better understand God, themselves, and those they are caring for.
- To guide students to spiritual practices that will sustain them through the joys and challenges found in the vocation of Chaplaincy.

### **Required Text Books:**

John Caperon, Andrew Todd and James Walters, eds. *A Christian Theology of Chaplaincy*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley, 2018.

Miranda Threlfall-Homes and Mark Newitt. *Being a Chaplain*. London: SPCK, 2011.

Victoria Slater. *Chaplaincy Ministry and the Mission of the Church*. London: SCM, 2015.

Henri Nouwen. *Peacework: Prayer, Resistance, Community*. Marynoll, NY: Orbis, 2005.

### **Recommended Text Books:**

Christopher Swift, Mark Cobb and Andrew Todd, eds. *A Handbook of Chaplaincy Studies: Understanding Spiritual Care in Public Places*. London: Burlington VT, 2015.

Phil C. Zylla. *The Roots of Sorrow: A Pastoral Theology of Suffering*. Waco TX, Baylor, 2012.

### **Additional Resources:**

A bibliography of relevant resources for this class will be distributed on the first day of class.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### **1. Creative Expression of Chaplaincy**

Craft your own, or select an existing, creative expression that resonates with your understanding of Chaplaincy in the community. A creative expression can be a song, painting, sculpture, short story, poem etc., so long as it expresses your theological vision of chaplaincy. You will be required to share your creative expression with our class and submit a 5 page reflection explaining how this item resonates with your theology of Chaplaincy in the community.

**Length: Varies but approx. 5 pages.**

**Weight: 20%**

**Due: Thursday Afternoon (presentation); Reflection first week after class**

## **2. Chaplaincy and the Mission of the Local Church**

Using the Slater text, evaluate how your vocation of chaplaincy can be rooted in the life and mission of your local church. Important elements to consider are: 1. How does your church understand chaplaincy and your involvement with it. 2. In what ways can your church support you as a chaplain. 3. What theological issues either inhibit or foster your vocation as chaplain rooted in the life and mission of your local church. For this assignment students will need to engage with the Slater text, display a thorough understanding of their local church and share their own hopes/disappointments with the relationship between chaplaincy and their local church.

**Length: 8-10 pages**

**Weight: 25%**

**Due: May 31, 2019**

## **3. Develop a Spiritual Care Assessment and Plan**

Using a published case study of your choosing, develop a spiritual care assessment and plan as if you were the Chaplain responding to the person at the centre of the case study. You will be required to clearly identify how you are assessing and planning to respond to the spiritual care needs of the person in question. This plan will include:

- a. Spiritual assessment ~ include spiritual intuition as well as formal assessments and techniques.
- b. Holistic care audit ~ what other resources are being drawn on to ensure all needs are being addressed in the care of this person.
- c. Spiritual care plan ~ how you will seek to meet the spiritual care needs of the person for the time they will be in your care.
- d. Charting ~ include at least one entry into the persons "chart" so that others on the care team will know about and understand the spiritual care you are offering.
- d. Spiritual practices ~ what spiritual practices you will use to support the person.
- e. Self-Reflection ~ how does the case impact you personally, theologically, spiritually?

Please ensure the case study is included in your submitted material, but not a part of your overall page requirement.

**Length: Varies but in the area of 6-8 pages (1-2pages for context, 4-5 of material, 2-3 for reflection).**

**Weight: 25%**

**Due: June 7, 2019**

## **4. Specialization Assignment**

Each student will complete one of the following assignments in the area of their specialization. All assignments must show interaction and integration of the course text books, lectures, and themes as well as engage in additional research (minimum of five quality sources beyond course

materials).

### **Counselling and Spiritual Care Specialization**

Compose a paper on the delivery of spiritual care in a non-religious context. Starting with a verbatim, write a paper on the challenge involved in meeting the spiritual care needs of a non-religious person(s). Identify what therapeutic, theological, or spiritual approaches you feel are appropriate for meeting the spiritual needs of this person(s). Reflect on the challenges and opportunities that come from such an encounter. More precisely reflect on the appropriateness of using prayer, scripture, and sharing the hope of the Gospel in such a context. When and how would you draw on these Christian spiritual elements in this Chaplaincy relationship?

**Length: 10-12 pages**

**Weight: 30%**

**Due: June 14, 2019**

### **Pastoral Studies Specialization**

Write a sermon on Chaplaincy and the Mission of the Church. In an effort to show the broader church community the importance of chaplaincy in the community, develop a sermon that sketches the vision of spiritual care delivered to non-religious people. This sermon should touch on the biblical, theological, spiritual, and practical dimensions that go into offering Chaplaincy in the community. The sermon will need to display careful exegesis as well as creative integration of course materials.

**Length: 10-12 pages**

**Weight: 30%**

**Due: June 14, 2019**

### **Christian Worldview Specialization**

Write a 2500 word article on a “Theology of Chaplaincy for the Church Today.” Your article will aim for a general but informed audience like *Leadership* magazine or *Christianity Today*. Your article will alert readers to the importance of chaplaincy in the church today. It will articulate your theology of chaplaincy showing its biblical and theological resonance. Your article will seek to guide the discipline of chaplaincy by suggesting how your theology of chaplaincy will strengthen this movement. Finally, it will show how chaplaincy and the local church should work together as an expression of mission.

**Length: 10-12 pages**

**Weight: 30%**

**Due: June 14, 2019**

### **Christianity & Culture Specialization**

Write a paper on the relationship of Christian Spirituality and Chaplaincy. Spirituality and spiritual care are becoming common words used in healthcare and other institutional settings. Write a paper that examines the relationship between Christian spirituality and this “non-religious” understanding of spirituality. Where are the resonances and where are the dissonances between the two? What does a Christian Chaplain need to know in order to navigate these tensions faithfully? How might your research help them to do so?

**Length: 10-12 pages**

**Weight: 30%**

**Due: June 14, 2019**

**Course Outline:**

Monday 1-4:	Chaplaincy and the Contemporary Context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities and Challenges</li></ul> What do Chaplains do?
Tuesday 9-12:	Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Christian Spirituality, The Spiritual Needs of Human Beings, Contemporary Spirituality</li><li>• The Playground of Chaplaincy</li></ul>
Tuesday 1-4:	Chaplaincy Case Study/Group Work Exploring Types of Chaplaincy
Wednesday: 9-12	A Biblical Theology of Chaplaincy Chaplaincy and Communion: The <i>Missio Dei</i> , the Local Church, & the Vocation of Chaplaincy
Wednesday: 1-4	Chaplaincy as Spiritual Care Giving Compassion Fatigue: Caring for Self and Others
Thursday: 9-12	The Art of Spiritual Assessment The Spiritual Practices of Chaplaincy: Prayer, Solitude, Community
Thursday: 1-4	Class Sharing “Creative Response” Expressions Chaplaincy ‘rounds’
Friday: 9-12	Chaplains Round Table Discussion The Vocation of Chaplain: Calling, Church, Community

**Additional Notes:**

**Academic Dishonesty** – Academic dishonesty is a serious offence in the academic world that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the McMaster Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty located at <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

**Inclusive Language** ~ McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

**Sexual Harassment** ~ Sexual harassment is a violation of the integrity of persons in the form of unsolicited, unwelcome, verbal or physical behavior, which discriminates on the basis of gender about a person's body, attire, gender, marital status or economic status. Among faculty, staff, and students, sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

**Disclaimer** ~ This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up until the first day of class.

**Style** ~ All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

**Late Penalties** ~ Assignments should be double-spaced and handed in on time and in good order. All late assignments may be docked at the rate of 2% for each day (including weekends) late. Assignments can be submitted in hard copy or electronically in a word document.