



McMaster Divinity College

MS 3XF3 – PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Kelvin F. Mutter, DTh
mutterk@mcmaster.ca

May 13 – August 2, 2024
Online/Asynchronous Course

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended to contribute to the ethical development of persons pastors, spiritual care workers (chaplains), and professional counsellors. This course is designed to offer participants a foundational knowledge of the field of professional ethics, the process of ethical decisional making and, hence, to contribute to the student's overall ethical development. This course will provide students with opportunities to explore the nature of professional and pastoral relationships and integrate their own personal values into their understanding of ethics. The student will read resources from the field of professional ethics, reflect on specific codes of ethics (e.g., CRPO, CASC/ACSS, code of ethics denominational or other professional code of ethics) and reflect on relevant legislation. Through reflection on pertinent case examples students will develop ethical reasoning skills to help them make informed decisions with respect to the interests of clients, families, agencies, and others. Students are expected to reflect on their own personal and professional experience.

NOTE: This course is designed to meet the professional certification and registration requirements for the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC), the College of Regulated Psychotherapists of Ontario, etc.

SPECIALIZATIONS: Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS), Christian Worldview (CW), and Pastoral Studies (PS).

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Through required and optional reading, lectures, class discussions and exercises, and the completion of assignments, the student should fulfill the following course objectives:

Knowing

- The student will familiarize themselves with the relevant codes of ethics governing the practice of counselling and spiritual care (chaplaincy).
- The student will become familiar with the competencies related to ethical behaviour as defined by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) and the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care and Practice (CASC/ACSS).
- The student will be familiar with the processes of ethical decision-making within the context of their work as counselors or spiritual care providers.

- The student will understand the differences between “ethical concerns,” “moral issues,” and “legality.”

Being

- The student will become self-aware of how their values shape their response to ethical concerns that arise within the context of their work as counselors or spiritual care providers.

Doing

- The student will engage in ethical decision-making with respect to situations that arise within the context of their work as counselors or spiritual care providers.
- The student will be able to support or guide others in the process of ethical decision-making.

3. COURSE TEXTS:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

Required Texts:	MTS/MDiv Specializations	
	CS	CW & PS
Gula, Richard M. <i>Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers</i> . New York: Paulist Press, 2010.		√
Truscott, Derek, and Kenneth H. Crook. <i>Ethics for the Practice of Psychology in Canada</i> , Third ed. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2021.	√	

4. INSTRUCTOR:

Biography: Kelvin Mutter is an Affiliate Associate Professor at McMaster Divinity College. He is a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO); an OAMFT/AAMFT Clinical Fellow & Approved Supervisor; and a Certified Pastoral Counsellor & Associate Teaching Supervisor (CASC/ACSS). Dr. Mutter’s ministry and counseling experience includes both his current work as an individual, couple and family therapist as well as over twelve years in pastoral leadership. Dr. Mutter is married and has three adult children.

Availability: Dr. Mutter will be available for one-on-one consultation after class and during breaks on the days class is scheduled. Otherwise, students may contact him at mutterk@mcmaster.ca.

5. COURSE SCHEDULE:

Module and Dates	Class Topic / Activity Assignment Due
Model One May 13–18	Understanding Ethics and Making Ethical Decisions Introduction to Professional Ethics Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, chs. 1–2; (CW & PS) Gula ch. 4. Assignments Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 1. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 15.

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Module and Dates	Class Topic / Activity Assignment Due
	<p>Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 17.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: May 18, 2023)
<p>Module 2 May 20–25</p>	<p><i>Informed Consent</i> Professional Competence: Obtaining Informed Consent and Creating the Therapeutic Contract Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, ch. 5; (CW & PS) Gula ch. 5. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 2. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 22. Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 24. • Second Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: May 25, 2023)
<p>Module 3 May 27– June 1</p>	<p><i>Protecting Confidentiality</i> Professional Competence: Confidentiality and its Limits Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, ch. 6; (CW & PS) Gula ch. 7. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 3. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 29. Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on May 31. • Third Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 1, 2023)
<p>Module 4 June 3–8</p>	<p><i>Helping without Harming [a.k.a. S.E.U.S.]</i> Professional Competence: Self-Care of the Counsellor or Spiritual Care Provider Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, ch. 7; (CW & PS) Gula ch. 3. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 4. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 5. Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 7. • Fourth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 8, 2023)
<p>Module 5 June 10–15</p>	<p><i>Maintaining Professional Boundaries</i> Professional Competence: Managing Boundaries and Multiple Relationships Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, ch. 8; (CW & PS) Gula chs. 6 & 8. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 5. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 12. Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 14. • Fifth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 15, 2023)
<p>Module 6 June 17–22</p>	<p><i>Appreciating Diversity</i> Professional Competence: Multicultural Competencies in Counselling and Spiritual Care Read: (all) Ratts et al. <i>Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies</i>; (CS) Truscott & Crook, ch. 9. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 6. First response is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 19. Second is to be posted no later than 11:55pm on June 21. • Sixth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 22, 2023)
<p>Module 7 June 24–28</p>	<p><i>Being Socially Responsible</i> Read: (CS) Truscott & Crook, chs. 4, 10, 11; (CW & PS) Gula chs. 1 & 2. Assignments Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventh Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 28, 2023)
<p>Aug 2, 2024</p>	<p>Final Reflection Paper</p>

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6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments	Course Weight	Due Dates
Knowledge Engagement (seven papers, each worth 7% of course)	49 %	Weekly
Knowledge Implementation (Discussion Boards) (six discussions, each worth 6% of course)	36 %	Weekly
Final Reflection Paper	15 %	August 2, 2024

6.1. Knowledge Engagement (weekly) Due: 12:00 noon (EST) each Saturday

Intended Instructional Outcomes: i) Knowledge Acquisition & Interpretation (knowing / discernment); ii) Contextualization (knowing + doing); and iii) Personal / Professional Formation (being).

General Instructions:

- Students are required to view each week's assigned video(s) and complete the assigned reading for the week.
- In each paper students will identify their specialization and the readings for the module.
- Students will limit their comments to two pages (approximately 475 words); double-spaced, Times Roman (12 pt) font. **Note:** Papers longer than two pages will be returned to the student for editing before they are graded.
- Each reflection paper is worth approximately 8.5% of the course grade.
- Due dates for these reflections are listed below and in the course schedule (above). Late papers will be deducted one grade point for each day they are late.
- ***These papers are intended to be of personal (formative) value and are not intended to be research papers.*** A student may use parenthetical references to refer to the assigned readings or course videos—e.g., (Truscott and Crook, 2021, p. 69; Module 3, slide 6).

Grading Rubric:

- Knowledge (knowing), i.e., ability to identify the ethical topic within the student's current or future practice (40% of grade).
- Contextualization (knowing + doing), i.e., ability to reflect on the relevance of this ethical topic to one's work (40% of grade).
- Professional Formation (being), i.e., personal feelings, biases, or self-interest might affect the student's ethical judgment (20% of grade.)

First Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: May 18, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the following questions/prompts.
 - Identify one point from the reading and one point from the lecture that has added to your understanding of ethical practice. Identify why these ideas are important to you and/or your work context.
 - Identify one question about ethical practice that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

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Second Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: May 25, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the following questions/prompts.
 - What philosophical, theological, and practical principles undergird the principle of Informed Consent? (please refer to the course reading and lecture)
 - Reflect on the relevance of this principle to your current or future ministry setting in light of **one** of the following questions.
 - If you are, or plan to be, a pastor, when and how is it important to obtain informed Consent?
 - If you are, or plan to be, a chaplain or spiritual care provider, reflect on the place of informed consent in that context?
 - If you are, or plan to be, a counsellor or psychotherapist, reflect on the place of informed consent in that context?
 - Identify one question about obtaining informed consent that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

Third Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 1, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the following questions/prompts.
 - What philosophical, theological, and practical principles undergird the principle of Confidentiality? (please refer to the course reading and lecture)
 - Identify possible ways in which confidentiality may be breached in your work setting.
 - Identify one situation in which you may need to break confidentiality and describe how you might manage that situation.
 - Identify one question about confidentiality that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

Fourth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 8, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the topic "Helping Without Harming."
 - What philosophical, theological, and practical principles might inform your perspective on this topic? (please refer to the course reading and lecture)
 - Identify three ways in which someone in your occupation might end up harming someone who comes to them for help (e.g., acts of commission and omission).
 - Reflect at length on one of the above noted examples of "causing harm."
 - Identify one question about "helping without harming" that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

Fifth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 15, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the topic of "Maintaining Professional Boundaries."
 - Reflect on the role of professional boundaries from the perspective of the following people and situations: the care recipient, the caregiver, the professional, the care recipient's social circle, the caregiver's social circle, the work context.

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- Sexual impropriety is one of many ways that professionals fail to maintain professional boundaries. Identify at least three other ways in which someone in your profession might fail to maintain a professional boundary.

Sixth Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 22, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the topic of "Diversity."
 - Describe, in 200 words or less, your understanding of your occupational group's responsibilities and obligations with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - What do you believe to be the strengths of this stance? (please refer to the course reading and lecture)
 - Identify and reflect on one question that you may have with respect to "diversity" that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

Seventh Knowledge Engagement Paper (due: June 28, 2023)

- Students will reflect on the week's reading and video before writing a brief paper that reflects on the topic of "Social Responsibility."
 - Describe, in 250 words or less, your understanding of what "social responsibility" means to your occupational group.
 - What philosophical, social, and/or theological principles or values might inform your perspective on "Social Responsibility?" (please refer to the course reading and lecture)
 - Identify and reflect on one question about that you may have with respect to "Social Responsibility" that has come to mind as a result of this week's reading or video.

6.2. Discussion Boards (dates as assigned in the course schedule)

Intended Instructional Outcomes: i) Fostering a community of learning (being + knowing), ii) Knowledge & Interpretation (knowing / discernment); iii) Contextualization (knowing + doing); and iv) Personal / Professional Formation (being).

Instructions:

- Students are required to submit two responses to each discussion. The intent of the first response is for each student to provide a meaningful and thoughtful response to the assigned question (use the first person voice). The intent of the second response is for each student to provide a thoughtful response to, or comment on, someone else's post (use the first person voice). **Note:** Students are advised that they will only see their responses to the discussion thread after the professor has read their post.
- Students are required to restrict their first response to the assigned discussion question to 300 words and to restrict their second response to 200 words. **Note:** Students will be asked to edit any responses that exceed the requested word limits.
- Each pair of Discussion Posts is worth approximately seven (7) percent of the course grade and will be graded on the basis as to whether the student has answered the posted question and whether their response meaningfully engages the readings for the week and the framework for ethical practice introduced in the first week.
- Use of outside sources is not necessary to complete the assignment. A student may refer to the textbook. However, students are requested to keep the number of citations in their discussion

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posts to a *bare minimum*. If the student believes that they *must* cite an external source, they should use a parenthetical reference—i.e., (Truscott and Crook, 2021, p. 69).

- Due Dates: As posted in the course schedule. Late posts cannot be accepted without medical/crisis-type justification.

Grading Rubrics:

a) *Initial response to the discussion question (max 10 points per discussion question).*

- Knowledge (knowing), i.e., ability to identify how the ethical concern presented in the case study connects with the literature **or** relevant ethical standard(s), **or** relevant legal standards (max 3 points per post).
- Interpretation (knowing / discernment), i.e., ability to identify one of the following—who is affected, limits of your competence, the ethical challenge presented in the case study (max 3 points per post)
- Contextualization (knowing + doing), i.e., ability to identify alternative courses of action and a preferred course of action (max 3 points per post)
- Professional Formation (being), i.e., personal feelings, biases, or self-interest might affect the student's ethical judgment (max 1 point per post)

b) *Response to another student (max 5 points per discussion question).*

- Does the student acknowledge a strength in the other student's response?
- Does the student identify how the other student's response has helped them to think more deeply or differently about the case study?
- Based on the above, does the student pose a question that invites themselves and others to further explore or reflect on the case study?

6.3. Final Reflection Paper

August 2, 2024

Intended Instructional Outcomes: i) Knowledge Acquisition & Interpretation (knowing / discernment); ii) Contextualization (knowing + doing); and iii) Personal / Professional Formation (being).

Assignment Guidelines:

Students will submit a reflection paper (6–7 pages + cover page) in which the student reflects on their professional development in relationship to the course objectives.

These papers are intended to be of personal (formative) value and are not intended to be research papers. A student may use parenthetical references to refer to the assigned readings or course videos—e.g., (Truscott and Crook, 2021, p. 69; Module 3, slide 6).

Knowing (select two of these outcomes to reflect on, up to three pages)

- Familiarity with the relevant codes of ethics governing the practice of counselling and spiritual care (chaplaincy).
- Familiarity with the competencies related to ethical behaviour as defined by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) and the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care and Practice (CASC/ACSS).

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- Familiarity with the processes of ethical decision-making within the context of my work as a counselor or spiritual care provider.
- Understand the differences between “ethical concerns,” “moral issues,” and “legality.”

Being (please reflect on the following objective, two pages or less)

- The student will become self-aware of how my values influence my response to ethical concerns that arise within the context of my work as counselors or spiritual care providers.

Doing (select one of these objectives to reflect on, two pages)

- Able to engage in ethical decision-making with respect to situations that arise within the context of my work as a counselor or spiritual care provider.
- Able to support or guide others in the process of ethical decision-making.

Grading:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| • Knowledge & Interpretation (knowing / discernment) | (40 %) |
| • Contextualization (knowing + doing) | (30 %) |
| • Personal / Professional Formation (being) | (30 %) |

7. **COURSE ADMINISTRATION:**

Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one’s own (regardless of the means of its production) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student’s dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

AODA:

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

Gender 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

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you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as, for example, the following: NRSV (2021), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is a violation of the integrity of persons in the form of unsolicited, unwelcome, verbal, or physical behaviour, 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.

Submission of Written Work:

- **Style Guide:** All written work—unless informed otherwise by the professor—is to be submitted in accordance with the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses*, available on the McMaster Divinity College website (<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/MDC-StyleGuide-September-2023.pdf>).
- **Length:** Students are expected to adhere to the word count. If a paper exceeds the word count, grace will be accorded for the first 10%. However, the grade will be reduced by 3% or 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional 10% a paper exceeds the stipulated word count.
- **Late Penalties:** Late assignments will receive a deduction of 2% per day.
- **Mode of Submission:** Students are directed to submit their assignments directly to the professor's college email account.

8. **SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- **Relevant Codes of Ethics and Competencies**

———. Health Ethics Guide. Ottawa, ON: Catholic Health Association of Canada, 2002.

Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling. "ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling LGBTQIA." <https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/competencies/algbtic-competencies-for-counseling-lgbqia-individuals.pdf?sfvrsn=8>

Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling. "Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling." <https://aservic.org/spiritual-and-religious-competencies/>

Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CASC/ACSS)
<http://www.spiritualcare.ca/page.asp?ID=44>

College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) <https://www.crho.ca/code-of-ethics/>

CRPO *Professional Practice & Jurisprudence for Registered Psychotherapists*.

<https://www.crho.ca/professional-practice-and-jurisprudence-for-registered-psychotherapists/>

- **Relevant Legislation (Ontario):**

Ontario Legislation: (available at elaws: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws>)

- Child and Family Services Act §27, §28, §72
- Health Care Consent Act (HCCA)
- Long-Term Care Homes Act
- Mental Health Act

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- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)
- Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)
- Psychotherapy Act
- Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)
- Substitute Decisions Act

- **Books and Articles:**

Cottone, R. Rocco, and Vilia M. Tarvydas. *Counseling Ethics and Decision Making*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Merrill Prentice Hall, 2007.

Doherty, W. (1995). *Soul Searching: Why Psychotherapy Must Promote Moral Responsibility*. New York: Basic Books.

Grenz, Stanley J. *Welcoming but not Affirming: An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

Grenz, Stanley J., and Roy D. Bell. *Betrayal of Trust: Sexual Misconduct in the Pastorate*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995.

Huber, Charles H. *Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy*, 2nd Edition. New York: Merrill, 1994.

Milco, Michael R. *Ethical Dilemmas in Church Leadership: Case Studies in Biblical Decision Making*. Kregel Academic & Professional, 1997.

Mohrmann, Margaret E. "Ethical Grounding for a Profession of Hospital Chaplaincy," *Hastings Center Report* 38, no. 6 (2008). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1353/hcr.0.0080>

Peace, William J. "A Peaceful Death or a Risk to People with Disabilities?" *Bioethics Forum*, 03/19/2013. <https://www.thehastingscenter.org/a-peaceful-death-or-a-risk-to-people-with-disabilities/>

Pope, Kenneth S., and Melba J.T. Vasquez. *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling*. (2nd edition) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.

Pope, Kenneth, Janet Sonne, and Beverly Greene. *What Therapists Don't Talk About and Why: Understanding Taboos That Hurt Us and Our Clients*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Ratts, M. J., et al. "Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies: Guidelines for the Counseling Profession." *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 44 (January 2016), 28-48. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12035>

Remley, Theodore R., and Barbara Herlihy. *Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues in Counseling*, 3rd edition. Boston: Merrill, 2010.

Sanders, R. K. *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Therapists, Pastors & Counselors*, 2nd Edition. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2013.

Smith, Martin L. "Chaplaincy and Clinical Ethics: A Common Set of Questions," *Hastings Center Report* 38, no. 6 (2008). Online: <https://doi.org/10.1353/hcr.0.0082>

Sperry, Len. *The Ethical and Professional Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. New York: Pearson, 2007.

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Trull, Joe E., and James E. Carter. *Ministerial Ethics: Moral Formation for Church Leaders*. (6th printing). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008.

West, Walter E., and Elwyn A. Smith. *Ethics in Ministry: A Guide for the Professional*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg/Fortress, 1990.

Yarhouse, M. A.; and L. A. Burkett. "An inclusive response to LGB and conservatively religious persons: The case of same-sex attraction and behavior." *Professional Psychology: Research & Practice*, 39, (2002), 235–241.

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