Course Syllabus—Suffering and Hope  
Toronto School of Theology

**Course Identification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number:</th>
<th>KNP3510</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course Name:</td>
<td>Suffering and Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus:</td>
<td>Knox College, St. George</td>
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| Contact hours: | 24 contact hours, winter semester 2016 – Tuesday evenings  
 30 contact hours summer semester |

**Instructor Information**

| Instructor: | Pamela McCarroll, PhD, Certified Specialist & Teaching Supervisor (CASC), Registered Psychotherapist (RP) (Spiritual Care) |
| E-mail: | pam.mccarroll@utoronto.ca |

**Course Prerequisites or Requisites**

This is an elective course for all 2 and 3-year master programs. It is strongly recommended that students wishing to take this course have completed at least one full year of their program.

**Course Description**

This course explores the practical and theological intersections of suffering and hope. Drawing from pastoral theology, spiritual care, healthcare and psychological literature and the scriptures we will consider ways to understand, recognize, practice and nurture hope in the context of the devastations and suffering in life. Far from ignoring suffering in the face of hope, this course explores the hidden intersections and discontinuities between suffering and hope and seeks out a deeper ground for hope that does not flee from or obscure the trauma, grief and injustice in life, but faces it head on in theology and spiritual care/pastoral practice. This course is relevant for students training for congregational or social ministry and those training for spiritual care and counselling as well as interested others.

**Course Methodology**

The course includes lectures, small group and large group discussions, readings, journaling, spiritual practices, experiential activities and case studies.

**Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course students will:

- become familiar with contemporary literature on suffering and hope in the fields of pastoral theology and practice and have familiarity with the hope literature in the fields of spiritual care psychology and health sciences. (RH)
- be able to distinguish between multiple experiences and theologies of suffering;(CC)
- be able to articulate diverse theologies and practices of hope. (CC)
- Be able to identify how contextual issues (power dynamics, culture, gender, etc.) affect experiences of suffering and hope. (CC)
- understand diverse perspectives on theodicy and be able to further articulate their own perspectives on theodicy; (PSF)
- be able to articulate how their theology of suffering and hope and pastoral/spiritual care practice intersect. (PSF)
- be able to identify pastoral/spiritual care practices and tools that can serve hope in the face of suffering; (CM)
- be able to identify areas for further exploration and study in healthcare research, their theology of suffering and hope and their pastoral/spiritual care practice (CM)

**CPR0 Entry-to-Practice Competencies**

1. **Foundations** - through in-class opportunities, and through submitted case studies, reflection papers and research students will demonstrate the following:
   1.1 Integrate theory of human psychological functioning in terms of hope and suffering
   1.2 Work within a framework based upon established spiritual care practice in terms of suffering and hope – assessment and care in context
   1.4 Integrate awareness of self in relation to professional role – not only will students explore their own experiences of suffering and hope, they will engage hope index/inventory tools for themselves as a means for self awareness and building assessment capacity regarding hope.
   1.5. Integrate knowledge of human and cultural diversity – particularly through group interaction across diverse cultural/life experiences. As well, the course explores diverse manifestations of hope.

2. **Collegial and Interprofessional Relationships** – through class participation, presentations, written reports and small group work, students will develop capacity for clear communication, maintaining relationships and contributing to a collaborative and productive atmosphere.

3. **Professional Responsibilities** – Through case studies, discussion groups, and final paper students will demonstrate awareness of the following:
   3.2 Ethical decision-making process
   3.3 Maintain self care and level of health necessary for responsible therapy
   3.8 Assist Client with needs for advocacy and support

4. **Therapeutic Process** – through case studies as well as in-class assignments and final paper students will demonstrate the following:
   4.3 Safe and Effective Use of Self in therapeutic relationship
   4.5 Structure and facilitate the therapeutic process

5. **Professional Literature and Applied research** - Through final assignment student will demonstrate
   5.1 Remain current with professional literature
   5.2 Use research findings to inform practice

**Course Resources**

**Required Course Texts**


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1 Please see College of Registered Psychotherapists Entry-to-Practice Competencies at [www.crpo.ca](http://www.crpo.ca)
McCarroll, Pamela R. *At the End of Hope – The Beginning: Narratives of Hope in the Face of Trauma and Death*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014


Other required readings/sites will be made available online –
- Hope Herth Index;
- Scioli Adult Hope Inventory;
- Forgiveness project, etc.

AD Students required course texts (in addition):


**Recommended Books** – both classic and contemporary texts


[http://gainhope.com/hope/author.cfm](http://gainhope.com/hope/author.cfm)

**Course Website(s)**
- Blackboard [https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/](https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/)
This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at http://portal.utoronto.ca and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask librarian for further help.

**Evaluation**

**Requirements**

Basic Degree Students: it is expected that students will gear the assignments and readings to the context in which they serve or seek to serve.

Participation – 20% - this is based on evidence of having read and absorbed the material; be present and timely; fulfilling commitments to class; being prepared to engage in discussion in small and large group setting; willingness to listen and hear others.

Reflection Paper on Suffering and Hope – 15% – in this brief 4-5 page reflection paper you will share your thoughts, questions and concerns regarding the experiences of suffering and hope in life (see questions Week 1 in-class activity). Due week 3 – **January 26, 2016 – hard copy**

Case Study - 30% - based on cases distributed in class or from your own experience. Case study outline is posted on Blackboard. Another option is the verbatim case study option (see outline on blackboard). – Due week 8 – **March 8, 2016 – hard copy**

Final Paper – 35% - exploring understandings of suffering and hope and how this impacts assessment and practices of care. You are to choose a topic that grows out of a context of care/therapeutic relationship in which you felt (or anticipate feeling) unprepared to work with the person(s)/community involved. Feel free to write it up as a brief narrative case study (at the beginning of your paper) to experientially represent the situation/issue. Describe the issue and the experiential realities that result from the issue/situation. Present your research on the situation/condition using social/health sciences and theological resources (used in class and beyond) regarding the dimensions of suffering and the possibilities for hope present in this situation. Describe implications and a general plan for care in working with people in such situations. Paper topics must be approved by professor by the end of week 11 (March 29). Final paper Due – **April 12, 2016 – hard copy**

**Grading System**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>(90-100)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(85-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(80-84)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>(77-79)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(73-76)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>(70-72)</td>
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<td>Failure</td>
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Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).
Late work.

Instructors are not obliged to accept late work, except where there are legitimate, documented reasons beyond a student’s control. In such cases, a late penalty is normally not appropriate. Where an Instructor intends to accept and apply penalties to late assignments, this must be set out clearly here in the course syllabus. Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. **Late Policy**: one grade (4 marks) deducted per week late.

Completion of Course work:
All course work must be completed by the due date of final paper. Only in the case of illness (with a note from a doctor), bereavement or other unusual circumstances will an SDF extension be considered and this must be authorized by the Faculty. A request for a SDF extension must be submitted in writing by the last day of the class to the Registrar or the Director of Academic Programs who will refer the matter with a recommendation, to the Faculty for final decision.

**Attendance and lateness**: Consistent and timely attendance is required. If a student is unable to attend a class the professor is to be informed by email. More than 2 absences will result in failure to pass the course. Habitual lateness will be regarded as absence.

**Course grades**. Consistent with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm)) or college grading policy.

**Policies**

**Accessibility**. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at [http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/). The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism**. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST Basic Degree Handbook ([linked from](http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks)) and the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871)). A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences**. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm)).
Weekly Descriptions

Describe each class session with topics and readings.

Week 1 – Situating our Discussion Contextually, Theologically, Practically, Spiritually

Reading - McCarroll, At the End of Hope, Intro, pp. 1-6

Recommended Wendy Farley, Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion
McCarroll, Waiting at the Foot of the Cross, chapter 1 & part 2, pp 1-23; 89-187
Natalie Kertes Weaver, The Theology of Suffering and Death, pp 1-73

Week 2 – Suffering – A Brief History, making some distinctions

Reading - Mindy Makant, Practice of Story, Intro & Ch. 1, pp. 1-29

Recommended
Simone Weil, “The Love of God and Affliction” in Waiting for God
Douglas John Hall, God and Human Suffering
Wendy Farley, Tragic Vision and Divine Compassion
Natalie Kertes Weaver, The Theology of Suffering and Death

Week 3 - Hope – A Brief History, making some distinctions

Reflection Paper Due

Reading - McCarroll, At the End of Hope - chs 1-2, pp 7-52
Makant, Practice of Story, ch. 2, pp. 31-46

Recommended
Andrew Lester, Hope in Pastoral Care and Counselling

Week 4 – Hope, Suffering and the meaning and purpose of life - Human Identity, Vocation, Agency

Reading – Makant, The Practice of Story, chs., 3-5, 47-146

Recommended
Louw, Daniel J., “Fides Quaerens Spem: A Pastoral and Theological Response to Suffering and Evil,” Interpretation, Oct 2003, 57.4, 384-397 - see PDF

Week 5 – Suffering and Hope in Job – Guest the Rev. Dr. Harris Athanasiadis

Reading - Job 1-42
READING WEEK

Week 6 – Hope as Fight

Reading - McCarroll, At the End of Hope, ch 3

Recommended

Donald Capps, Agents of Hope
Andrew Lester, Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling

Week 7 – Hope as Meaning

Reading – McCarroll, At the End of Hope, ch 4
Viktor Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning

Week 8 - Hope as Survival, Hope as Lament

Reading - McCarroll, At the End of Hope, ch 5-6, pp 81-116
Judith Hermann, Trauma and Recovery

Recommended - Walter Brueggemann, Spirituality of the Psalms
Ann Weems, Psalms of Lament

Week 9 — Hope as Surrender, Hope as Forgiveness...

Reading - McCarroll, At the End of Hope, ch 7, etc. pp 117-135
http://theforgivenessproject.com/stories/

Recommended
Russell Herbert, Living Hope: A Practical Theology of Hope
John de Gruchy, Led Into Mystery: Faith Seeking Answers in Life and Death

Week 10 – Hope indexes/ measures for clinical practice and self use

Reading: Herth Hope Index, handout
http://gainhope.com/hope/test_form.cfm - Adult Hope test
Gain hope – Anthony Scioli, Clinical Psychologist and founder
http://gainhope.com/hope/default.cfm
Beck, Hopelessness Scale


Week 11 – Hope in the present tense - Indicators of Hope, Inhibitors of Hope

Final Essay Proposal Due

Read your own life – When/how do you recognize hope’s presence? What are times that you have experienced a shift toward hope? Write and describe the experience. How might this effect how you work with others or perceive hope’s possibility in others? Positively? Negatively?

**Week 12 – Spiritual practices and care, claiming hope**

Reading - McCarroll, *At the End of Hope*, conclusion, p. 135-140

McCarroll, *Waiting at the Foot of the Cross*, ch 8, pp 188-207

**Bibliography**


-----------. “Hope in Older Adults in Community and Institutional Settings,” Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 14.2 (1993), 139-156.


Louw, Daniel J. “Creative Hope and Imagination in a Practical Theology of Aesthetic (Artistic) Reason,” Religion and Theology, 8.3-4: 327-344.


At the End of Hope - the Beginning: Narratives of Hope in the Face of Trauma and Death. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014.


