



# Spiritual Care for the Elderly

## CHP 680 OLL \*

Learning Lab at KPU, Langley BC

*The mission of MB Seminary is to educate and equip men and women to help lead the church in reaching Canada and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

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Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: none

Course Term: June 1 – August 1, 2026

### **Course Instruction**

\*Hybrid Model – The course materials are delivered online through the Populi Learning Management System from June 1 – August 1, 2026. The Populi classroom will open one week prior to the start of the course. In-person attendance for the Learning Lab at KPU, Langley is required June 10 – 12, 2026.

Learning Lab - Day 1	Wednesday, June 10 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am - 4:30pm
Learning Lab - Day 2	Thursday, June 11 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am – 4:30pm
Learning Lab - Day 3	Friday, June 12 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am – 3:00pm

### **Course Description**

Students will review the concepts of spirituality/religion in the elderly and how the impact of gerontological/physical changes will effect their ministry. Topics to be covered will include spiritual assessment and care planning, dementia, the impact of life losses and anticipatory end-of-life issues. The bio-psychosocial-spiritual implications of geriatrics will be reviewed with a discussion of appropriate spiritual care interventions.

### **Course Objectives**

This course’s theme and content are consistent with, and taught through the lens of, the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith.

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate strengthened pastoral skills to enrich effectiveness in Spiritual/Pastoral Care for the Elderly and those moving towards the end-of-life.
- Understand the value of spiritual considerations when conducting Life Reviews.
- Describe the physical changes of aging and how those changes impact the spirituality of the elderly.
- Conduct a spiritual assessment for creating a spiritual care plan that promotes the spiritual wellbeing of an elderly person.
- Be better able to provide spiritual care to the of other cultures and faith/spiritual traditions.
- Understand MAiD and have a more prepared pastoral approach for individuals, families dealing with medical assistance in dying.

The most effective learning occurs as you carefully process information through higher-order thinking skills. Your performance and evaluation in this course will be based on demonstrating your engagement and learning, not simply repeating basic facts. In all that you do in this class, you should use higher-order thinking skills, as described below:

- Comprehension: demonstrates the ability to grasp meaning, explain, and restate ideas,
- Application: demonstrates the ability to use learned material in new situations,
- Analysis: demonstrates the ability to separate material into component parts and show relationships between the parts.
- Synthesis: demonstrates the ability to put together the separate ideas to form a new whole, to establish new relationships, and
- Evaluation: demonstrates the ability to judge the worth of material against stated criteria.

### **Required Texts**

- Swinton, John, and Richard Payne, *Living Well and Dying Faithfully; Christian Perspectives for End-of-Life Care* (2009) Grand Rapids, Michigan; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Moberg, David, *Aging and Spirituality; Spiritual Dimensions of Aging Theory, Research, Practice and Policy* (2009) New York; Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group
- Swinton, John, *Dementia; Living in the Memories of God* (2012) Grand Rapids, Michigan; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Any other required reading will be found on the Populi Course site.

Recommended, Not Required Reading – this list is provided as a resource.

- Callanan and Kelley, *Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communications of the Dying*. (2012)
- Wiens, Walter (2022) *Preparing To Cross The Finish Line*
- Atchley, R. (2009) *Spirituality and Ageing*
- Everett, Deborah (1996) *Forget Me Not: The Spiritual Care of People with Alzheimer's*
- Harris, Ray (2023) *Fullness of Time*
- Goldsmith, M. (2004) *A Strange Land: People with Dementia in the Local Church*
- Kirkland, K & McIlveen, H. (2012) *Full Circle: Spiritual Therapy for the Elderly*

## Schedule of Assignments

Each week there will be recorded lessons to be viewed, unless otherwise specified. In addition, you will have academic assignments to complete. Attending all portions of the in-person learning lab and viewing all online course sessions, along with timely completion of assignments is required to pass the course.

Week	Date	Assignments	Due Date	% of Grade	Cumulative %
1	June 1 – 6, 2026	Introduction of Self & Response  <b>Forum Response #1</b>  Complete Reading Articles for Learning Lab	June 2  <b>June 4</b>	  <b>3%</b>	  3%
2	June 8 – 13	<b>Learning Lab</b> – In person @ KPU Langley Campus	<b>June 10 -12</b>	<b>20%</b>	23%
3	June 15 -20	<b>Reflection Paper</b>	<b>June 18</b>	<b>5</b>	28%
4	June 22 – 27	<b>Forum Response #2</b>  <i>Note: You should have established your Life Review client &amp; presentation preparation by this week.</i>	<b>June 24</b>	  <b>3%</b>	  31%
5	June 29 – July 4	<b>Dementia, Living in the Memories of God</b>	<b>July 2</b>	<b>10%</b>	41%
6	July 6 – 11	<b>Living Well, Dying Faithfully</b>	<b>July 9</b>	<b>10%</b>	51%
7	July 13 – 18	<b>Forum Response #3</b>	<b>July 15</b>	<b>4%</b>	55%
8	July 20 – 25	<b>Life Review Class Presentation</b>	<b>July 22</b>	<b>35%</b>	90%
9	July 27 – August 1	<b>Personal Development Reflection</b>	<b>August 1</b>	<b>10%</b>	100%

## Assignments and Evaluation

### **Forum Response #1**

**Submit by June 4**

**3%**

Please post your thoughts in response to the following question using a maximum of 350 words.

- How might the gerontological changes discussed, affect the provision of spiritual care or how might it impact an elder's participation in religious activity?

**Learning Lab\_ Full Participation** **June 10 – 12** **20%**

**Personal Learning Lab Reflection Paper** **Due: June 18<sup>th</sup>** **5%**

Following your participation in the Learning Lab. Write a personal reflection paper on your experience. Your submission should be a minimum of 3 pages to a maximum of five pages.

Has the Learning Lab opened the doors to growth – professionally or spiritually? In what areas - In what ways - how will you go through the open door to growth?

How has or how will the Learning Lab impact your ministry?

This is a personal reflection. You are welcome to comment on any experience of the Learning Lab.

**Forum Response #2** **Submit by June 24<sup>th</sup>** **3%**

Please post your thoughts in response to the following question using a maximum of 350 words.

We focused this week on Leaving Home and the experience of Joseph in Genesis 37:1-36. How would the feelings that Joseph may have experienced give you insights into ministry of the elderly who are needing to move into a care facility?

*Note: You should have established your Life Review client and be involved presentation preparation by June 24<sup>th</sup>*

**Dementia, Living in the Memories of God** **Due: July 2** **10%**

After reading the text, prepare a 5-page response based on the following:

- What do you feel was the author's purpose in writing the text?
- What has this book told you about the ministry of spiritual care?
- How has your theology of spiritual care been enlarged or challenged by the text?
- Present any questions raised by your readings of the texts and/or points you will incorporate into your ministry?

**Living Well, Dying Faithfully** **Due: July 9** **10%**

The authors of this text discuss at length "The Theology of the Cross in End-of-Life Care". On page 121 the authors present three ways that Luther's theology of the cross can enlighten end-of-life care. Please give these points your consideration and write a three-to-five-page reflection sharing your insights regarding the three ways presented.

**Forum Response #3** **Due: July 15** **4%**

Please post your thoughts in response to the following question using a maximum of 350 words.

In this week's brief presentation of Interpathic Presence the point was made that this is an intentional part of ministry which involves recognizing the other as an individual made in the image of God. An Interpathic presence in spiritual care can help others recognize there is something to our God. How will you be an Interpathic presence in your ministry?

**Spiritual - Life Review** **Online Presentation** **Due: July 22** **35%**

Using the Moberg text, *Aging and Spirituality*, (Chapter 12) as a guide you are to arrange and conduct a spiritual life review with an aged person. Then create a presentation that gives others your understanding of the value of doing a spiritually oriented life review.

Be sure to include:

- Your chosen process of life review and why you chose it.

- A non-identifying description of your client and the setting in which you are doing the life review.
- Discuss the client’s interaction with you. How did the client engage - did the client gain insights, new understandings, or closure as they shared their life with you? Were there any indicators in the client that further help was needed, or a referral to another professional would support their well-being?
- Was there a spiritual component to your discussion?
- Were there scriptures or components of faith/theology that were helpful in the situation?
- How did you see God in the life review session?
- Also discuss your experience as a spiritual health practitioner conducting a life review. How did you decide on a method of review? Were some parts/questions of the review harder for you? What were your feelings, triggers, emotions? Did you experience any challenges, practically, emotionally, or spiritually, and how did you deal with them? What would you do differently, next time?

Please remember as you prepare; this is an “in-class” presentation that will be a demonstration lesson to others and open for constructive response. Your presentation must be a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes in duration.

**Personal Development Reflection**

**Due: August 1**

**10%**

Please write a personal reflection that addresses key points of learning for you, throughout this course. This will include learning of personal and professional or ministry application. What in the course has resonated with you and what is the impact on your life and ministry? You are free to write of any other developmental impacts or insights that have come to you. Please answer the question of how this course has helped prepare you to be a co-laborer with Christ in the ministry of spiritual care for the elderly.

Minimum of 2 pages – Maximum of 5 pages.

**Course Evaluation**

Near the conclusion of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Because feedback is very important to us, the course evaluation is a required part of the course and is tied to the submission of your last assignment. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Populi classroom in Week 8.

## Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skillful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style.
C	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision or references and resources not taken fully into account or examples are basic or not completely convincing or barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

## Important Academic Notes

### Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire MB Seminary community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at MB Seminary. Instances of academic misconduct are taken seriously at MB Seminary, and appropriate consequences for plagiarism and academic fraud will be applied.

### Artificial Intelligence

The inappropriate use of artificial intelligence tools is also a form of Academic Misconduct. Generative AI, when properly cited, may support a student's work, but it may not be used to transform it. Therefore,

When students use generative artificial intelligence tools to **research** any course-related work, the generated material must be clearly and correctly indicated and cited using the Chicago/Turabian referencing style for generative AI. Additionally, students must also cite the exact prompts used.

Citation is not required to document the use of simple proofreading. However, generative **AI tools may not be used to translate, paraphrase, or increase the fluency of a student's original work**. Therefore, if the AI tool's results produce material changes to your wording, structure, phrasing, language, or style, you are in contravention of this policy.

Failure to clearly indicate and reference AI-generated material or any use of AI paraphrasing tools that alter syntax, originality and/or clarity will be considered a violation of academic integrity and reported as academic fraud.

For specific issues related to your course, students are encouraged to contact their course professors directly.

### Paper Formatting

Students are required to adhere to the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format for all papers. Please consult the [Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#) for information or:

Turabian, Kate, L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

### Assignment Grade Appeals

Students can appeal an assignment's grade to the course instructor by stating their reasons for contesting the grade in writing. The deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has

received their grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made directly to Dr. Brian Cooper, Director of Student Development, [briancooper@mbseminary.ca](mailto:briancooper@mbseminary.ca). These must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the grade being posted.

### **Web Support-Student Portal — <https://mbseminary.populiweb.com>**

All students at MB Seminary will receive an MBS-Populi username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application. If you have any difficulty with your password or your login credentials, please contact Keith Reed, Director of Church Equipping, [keithreed@mbseminary.ca](mailto:keithreed@mbseminary.ca).

### **Course Intensive/Campus Closure**

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate class cancellation information. You should check the Populi classroom for updates.

### **Equity of Access**

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the MB Seminary Director of Student Development ([briancooper@mbseminary.ca](mailto:briancooper@mbseminary.ca)) of this fact **before the start of a course** so that necessary arrangements can be made to support the student's learning. Medical documentation is required, along with a description of the accommodation the student is seeking. Students are encouraged to have any accommodations granted in place well before the start of their course.