



WHERE THE CHURCH BECOMES THE REFUGE

*A 30-Day Pastoral Counseling Residency
for Churches Ready to Heal Their Community*

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Program Creators and Instructors:

Lance Flood, Ph.D. & Deanna Flood, M.A.

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Welcome from Dr. Lance and Mrs. Deanna Flood

“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

— Galatians 6:2 (ESV)

The verse displayed above is a calling as much as it is a command, and the fact that you are reading this document has demonstrated your desire to faithfully answer that call.

For over a decade, through Tennessee Valley Ministry Institute, we traveled to churches across North America delivering an intensive weekend program designed to equip church leaders with foundational counseling skills. Thousands of pastors went through that training, and that work became the foundation upon which everything you are about to experience was built. TVMI shaped us as teachers, refined the content, and proved that the local church is exactly the right place for this kind of training. The Legacy Institute carries that commitment forward, with Converge being its fullest expression yet.

What you are about to experience over the next thirty days is unlike any training program you'll ever encounter in a context outside of graduate school. We do not say that to impress you, but because it is factual. Every module, framework, and practicum structure was built from the ground up, shaped by decades of academic and clinical training, ministry experience, and a deep conviction that the local church deserves better than what has traditionally been available.

Converge represents the most comprehensive church-based counseling training program in existence because the people sitting in your congregation deserve nothing less. Over the course of this month, you'll work through 60 individual training sessions, which includes lectures, Q&A, and cover the full range of clinical and biblical counseling content, from foundational theory to counseling specialized populations that other training programs simply never address.

However, knowledge alone was never enough, which is why Converge includes something the weekend program never could: a fully supervised clinical practicum. Beginning in Week 3, you will also sit across from a real person carrying a real burden and begin doing the very thing Galatians 6:2 calls you to do. By the time you complete Week 4, you will have received supervised counseling experience across eight progressive practicum sessions, each one building on the last.

We will not pretend this month will be easy. Some of what you learn will challenge you clinically and some of what surfaces in the practicum will challenge you personally. We want you to understand that is not a flaw in the design, it *is* the design. You cannot bear another person's burden well until you have learned something about the weight of your own.

What we can promise you is this: You will not leave this month the same person who walked in. You will leave equipped, certified, commissioned, and connected to a network of churches and counselors who share your calling.

We are honored to be with you, now let's get to work.

With gratitude and expectation,

Dr. Lance Flood & Mrs. Deanna Flood

The Flood Legacy Foundation

www.floodlegacy.org

Participant Informed Consent & Program Disclosures

Please read the following disclosures carefully prior to beginning the program. Your Program Coordinator will ask you to sign and date this page. You will receive a copy and it should remain in your course guide for the program duration.

1. Instructor Role & Dual Relationship Policy

Lance and Deanna Flood serve exclusively as instructors and clinical supervisors for the duration of this residency. They are not functioning as your personal counselors. Therefore, please remember that no counseling relationship will be formed between any participant and either instructor at any point during this program.

Participants are encouraged to seek personal counseling through appropriate channels if personal needs arise during the residency. The emotional content of this training, including the clinical practicum in Weeks 3 and 4, may surface material that warrants professional attention. However, this program is not the appropriate setting for that care.

This policy is not a legal formality, but a direct application of the dual relationship ethics you will study during the first week in Module 18. You are being protected by the same boundaries you will one day extend to your own clients.

2. Mandatory Reporting & Duty to Warn

Please be aware that the Floods are bound by mandatory reporting and duty to warn obligations regardless of the training context. These obligations do not pause for classroom or clinical practicum settings.

IMPORTANT: Please Read Carefully

If at any point during this residency, including during Weeks 3 and 4 practicum sessions, any participant discloses information that constitutes a mandatory reporting situation (suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly person, or dependent adult) or a duty to warn situation (credible threat of serious harm to self or others), Dr. Flood and/or Mrs. Flood will be obligated to act on that information in accordance with applicable state law. This applies whether the disclosure occurs in the role of client, counselor, observer, or in general class discussion.

By participating in this program, you acknowledge that you have been informed of this obligation and understand that it supersedes any expectation of confidentiality within the training environment.

3. Week 3 Practicum Consent

The clinical practicum in Week 3 involves real personal issues rather than fabricated scenarios and is an academic requirement for successful completion of the program. However, what you choose to share as the client is entirely your own decision and you will never be required to disclose anything you are not comfortable sharing.

By participating in the practicum, you acknowledge that you are choosing to share personal material in a supervised training environment, that your triad members are fellow students and not licensed professionals, and that the experience is designed for training purposes and does not constitute professional counseling.

4. Confidentiality Within the Cohort

What is shared within the practicum triads and in class discussion remains confidential among participants. This is not a legally enforceable confidentiality agreement, but it is a covenantal one. Therefore, what you hear in this room stays in this room. Please note that violations of this expectation will be taken seriously and may result in removal from the program.

5. Gender-Separated Practicum Policy

In keeping with the biblical and clinical principle that men should counsel men and women should counsel women, all practicum triads in Weeks 3 and 4 will be gender-separated. Male students work in all-male triads under the supervision of Dr. Flood. Female students work in all-female triads under the supervision of Mrs. Flood. This policy seeks to protect every participant from the risk of transference and countertransference in a vulnerable training environment, and models the same standard you are expected to carry into your counseling ministry.

The sole exception occurs during the Week 4 instructor-prompted couples counseling scenario. Married students are required to invite their spouse to participate in this single session. Participating spouses will not be evaluated or graded in any capacity and are invited solely to ensure that no married student is paired in a simulated spousal role with someone other than their actual spouse. Married students whose spouses are unable to attend will serve exclusively in the counselor and observer roles for this session and will not be assigned to a couples pairing.

Single students will be paired with another single student of the opposite gender for this scenario. Due to the relational boundaries this policy is designed to protect, single student pairings are only assigned clinically appropriate and neutral presenting issues such as communication failure, financial strain, or parenting conflict. No issue of a sensitive, intimate, or personally vulnerable nature will ever be assigned to a single student. This exception is limited exclusively to the couples counseling practicum session and does not alter the gender-separation policy governing any other aspect of the program.

6. Lecture Protocol and Schedule Integrity

Each module consists of a 30-minute lecture followed by a 10-minute question and answer period. To protect the schedule and ensure every module receives its full instructional time, all questions and comments must be withheld until the lecture has concluded. Interruptions, however well-intentioned, compress content and affect every student in the room. The Q&A period is yours. Use it fully. Raise your hand the moment the lecture closes.

Punctuality is equally non-negotiable. Converge is an intensive, progressive program in which each module builds directly upon the content that preceded it. Arriving ten to fifteen minutes late to any session is not a minor inconvenience. Rather, it represents the loss of foundational content upon which subsequent modules depend. Students who miss the opening of a module may find themselves without the clinical or theological framework needed to process what follows. You are expected to be seated and ready at the scheduled start time every evening.

7. Formation Journal

Each evening's homework assignment includes a journal prompt designed to help you process and personalize what you learned during class. These prompts are not academic exercises and are never collected or evaluated. They exist because Converge is committed to forming counselors, not merely *informing* them. Clinical knowledge without personal integration produces technicians, and while information fills the mind, formation shapes the whole person and is a critical component of this program, so please make sure to complete each assignment. Plan to spend approximately 10 minutes with each daily entry. These prompts are never collected or graded, and are merely for your own personal enrichment and development, designed to increase your professional competence as a paraprofessional within the ministry of counseling.

I have read, understand, and agree to fully abide by all of the above disclosures as a participant in this program.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Church: _____

Program Overview



Converge is a 30-day immersive church residency in which Dr. Lance Flood and Mrs. Deanna Flood come directly to your church to build a fully functioning pastoral counseling ministry from the ground up. Over four weeks, you move from foundational knowledge through clinical skill development to full ministry implementation.

This is a residency, rather than a seminar or weekend conference. This distinction matters because, by the time the month is over, your church will have trained and certified counselors, operational systems and protocols in place, all necessary forms and documentation for the counseling ministry, and a living connection to The Flood Legacy Foundation and the North America Christian Counselors Association.

Program at a Glance

Format: Classes meet Monday–Friday for four weeks, 3 hours each evening

Weeks 1–2:

4 modules per night (40 minutes each: 30-minute lecture + 10-minute Q&A) | 15-minute break | 5-minute closing prayer

Total per evening: 3 hours

Weeks 3–4:

2 modules per night (40 minutes each: 30-minute lecture + 10-minute Q&A) | 15-minute break | 75-minute practicum sessions | 5-minute recap | 5-minute closing prayer

Total per evening: 3 hours

Saturday of Week 4: Online certification exam (completed at home at the student's convenience)

Saturday Evening: Graduation ceremony *

Program Totals: Training Modules: 60 | Practicum Sessions: 10 | Contact Hours: 60 | CEUs Awarded: 6.0

Enrollment: Minimum of 15 and maximum of 75 students | Each gender group must be divisible by 3

** The entire congregation is invited to join us for the graduation ceremony, along with a potluck meal to be served immediately following to honor our newly certified counselors and announce the official ministry launch. Come ready to celebrate your work!*

What You Will Leave With

- Certificate of Completion
- NACCA Board Certification
- 6.0 continuing education units (awarded after successful completion of final examination)
- Complete course guide covering all 60 modules
- Supervised clinical practicum experience with real presenting issues
- All client forms: intake, informed consent, SOAP notes templates, and evaluation rubrics
- Connection to the NACCA network of partner churches
- A fully operational counseling ministry within your local church that is capable of serving your entire community

About Your Instructors



Dr. Lance Flood is, first and foremost, a man who is truly amazed by grace. He's also a husband who still holds hands with his wife Deanna after decades of marriage, a dad who's incredibly proud of his kids, and a "Gampy" who's convinced that his "grandberries" hung the moon.

Dr. Flood's life has been marked by God's sovereign hand of preservation. Having been spared from death on multiple occasions, he now lives with stage 4 liver failure, a reality that has only deepened his resolve to remain faithful to God's calling.

The same Christ who rescued him from death to eternal life has graciously granted additional time, and Dr. Flood stewards each day with intentionality and gratitude. His testimony is not merely one of physical survival, but of a life radically transformed and wholly surrendered to the purpose for which he has been kept.

With nearly three decades of ministry and mental health experience, Dr. Flood brings both a shepherd's heart and counselor's insight to the realm of pastoral care. As a graduate of Liberty University, he holds undergraduate degrees in the areas of Biblical Studies and Psychology, along with dual Master's degrees in the areas of Marriage & Family Therapy and Addictions & Recovery Counseling.

He also earned Graduate Certificates in Pastoral Counseling and Executive Leadership from Liberty, as well as an online certificate in Evangelism from Dallas Theological Seminary and one in Missions from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has previously served as a pastor for churches in Kentucky and Tennessee.

He holds a Ph.D. in Pastoral Counseling, where his dissertation focused on developing a hybrid treatment approach combining elements of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. This integrated model was specifically designed for couples in marriage counseling where personality disorders exist.

Before transitioning fully into pastoral counseling, Dr. Flood's ministry journey included a vibrant season in music ministry. He recorded several albums and had the privilege of traveling extensively with the renowned group *Acappella*, using his gifts in worship and music to minister to congregations and audiences nationwide.

In 2013, he and Deanna founded Tennessee Valley Pastoral Counseling, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, along with Tennessee Valley Ministry Institute, the training division. Through the latter, they developed and taught a live weekend certificate course in Christian counseling which equipped thousands of ministry leaders across the globe.

This work continues and has now evolved into The Legacy Institute, which offers targeted 90-minute topical webinars designed specifically for church teams seeking practical training in pastoral care and counseling, and a 30-day on-site comprehensive residency program called Converge, featuring additional components, including an intensive practicum.

Dr. Flood provides pastoral counseling for individuals, couples, and families at no cost, reflecting his commitment to Kingdom economics and trust in God's provision through His people. All services are offered freely, with ministry supported entirely through the partnership of believers who share in the mission.

He is co-founder of The Flood Legacy Foundation, focusing on "restoring shepherds, equipping servants, and proclaiming hope." Through this initiative, Dr. and Mrs. Flood provide training resources and virtual retreats for church leaders and spouses dealing with compassion fatigue or toxic church environments.

In 2018, Dr. Flood created *Marital Triage*, which is an eight-week restoration program for couples in crisis. As of 2025, it has demonstrated a 96% success rate when both spouses are fully committed to engaging with the process.

Following on the heels of that success, he recently launched the *Plug-and-Pray™ Marriage Enrichment System*, a 16-week group model designed to assist many couples, even those in otherwise healthy relationships, to discover a depth of emotional intimacy that strengthens connection and often brings couples closer than they have ever experienced.

Dr. Flood hosts multiple podcasts through Amnesty Media Group which include *The Flood Zone*, which helps couples navigate marriage with honesty and hope; *The Shepherd's Toolbox*, equipping pastors with clinical counseling skills. He also facilitates *Healing Circle*, a monthly live webinar addressing mental health, trauma, grief, and relational struggles, and *ZoeTable*, a weekly virtual gathering offering worship, teaching, and authentic community around the table of grace.

Through the Foundation, the Floods have developed additional initiatives including *Refuge*, a confidential virtual retreat for pastors wounded in ministry; *Haven*, a companion retreat for pastors' wives and women in ministry run by Deanna.

He is the author of *Love Never Fails: 15 Marriage Truths from Scripture's Perfect Portrait* and *When Sheep Bite: A Pastoral Guide to Cluster B Personality Disorders*, among others, and is available for speaking engagements and training seminars (in person or virtual) for a variety of issues within the field of pastoral counseling.

Although Tennessee officially remains "home base," you're sure to find them somewhere in their humble house on wheels, traveling in full-time ministry and helping others experience true restoration, healing, and hope which is only available through Jesus. He is currently authoring the forthcoming work titled *CHASED: Relentlessly Pursued, Radically Redeemed*, a raw spiritual memoir of doubt and the ultimate rescue that broke through the silence.

You can follow his Facebook channel @DrFloodOfficial.



Mrs. Deanna Flood is co-founder of The Flood Legacy Foundation and Vice President of Tennessee Valley Ministries, serving as both visionary partner and operational backbone of every initiative under the Foundation's umbrella.

Since 2013, she has been the irreplaceable force behind the ministry's existence and growth. None of this work would be possible without her unwavering dedication, leadership, and belief in the mission to restore shepherds, equip servants, and proclaim hope.

She holds an A.A. in Psychology from Central Christian College and is a graduate of Liberty University with a B.S. in Psychology and dual M.A. degrees in Crisis & Trauma Counseling and Addictions & Recovery Counseling. She also earned Graduate Certificates in Pastoral Counseling and Christian Ministry from Liberty's School of Divinity.

As co-laborer in all ministry efforts, Mrs. Flood oversees ministry operations, pastor outreach, communications, and the administrative framework that enables The Flood Legacy Foundation to function with excellence and integrity. She handles the essential tasks that allow the ministry to serve thousands globally while maintaining the personal, pastoral care that defines their work. She is not simply supportive of the vision, she is essential to its fulfillment.

Mrs. Flood provides pastoral counseling at no cost through Tennessee Valley Pastoral Counseling, reflecting the Foundation's commitment to Kingdom economics and trust in God's provision. Her work reflects both professional excellence and a deeply compassionate heart.

Her clinical training includes experience as a Behavioral Medicine Clinical Intern at Decatur General West, where she conducted psychosocial assessments, treatment planning, and group therapy support for individuals navigating complex emotional and mental health challenges.

Known for her remarkable empathy and discernment, Mrs. Flood specializes in grief recovery, trauma-informed care, and women's mental health, offering biblically grounded guidance to those in need of comfort and clarity.

She personally oversees and facilitates *Haven*, a confidential virtual retreat specifically designed for pastors' wives and women in ministry serving in difficult or toxic church environments. Through this initiative, she creates a safe place for women to rest, heal, and rediscover hope, identity, and strength in their calling. Her ministry to these often-overlooked servants reflects her heart for those who carry burdens few others see or understand.

Her passion for equipping women with resilience and faith extends beyond the counseling room. She is the author of the forthcoming memoir, *Spared: A Mother's Story of Love, Loss, and the God Who Never Let Go*, a deeply personal and raw account of grief, faith, and God's faithfulness following the sudden death of their son Nathan at age 27. Dr. Flood wrote the foreword for this powerful work, which will minister to countless parents who have walked similar valleys of loss.

To all who know her, Mrs. Flood is a woman of grace. She is gentle, wise, forgiving, and unwaveringly devoted to her family. She is known for the way she quietly puts her husband above all others, cherishes her children and grandchildren beyond measure, and extends love even to the smallest of God's creatures. Her empathy runs deep, and her graciousness defines her presence wherever she goes.

When she is not counseling, writing, or managing ministry operations, Mrs. Flood finds joy in family time, laughter with her grandchildren, and caring for the couple's beloved pets that travel with them in full-time ministry. Together, she and Dr. Flood continue to pour their hearts into the work of restoration, bringing healing to the broken, hope to the weary, and the reminder that no story is ever beyond redemption with Jesus as Lord.

Statement of Faith



This Statement of Faith reflects our love for God and our commitment to His Word as the unchanging foundation of everything we teach and practice. Before we ever reached out to your church, we took care to ensure that our theological convictions align with those of your pastor and your congregation.

Your participation in this program carries his confidence and endorsement. We receive that trust with both humility and gratitude, considering it a sacred responsibility. We invite you now to learn alongside us, where truth is alive, mercy is abundant, and faith grows deeper as we encounter His presence together.

I. The Book That Changes Everything

The Bible is the living Word of God. Each page reveals His glory, His justice, and His mercy. By the Spirit, the Word awakens faith and points us to Christ, whose grace alone brings eternal life. Obedience flows naturally from hearts already made alive by His saving power.

Jn 3:16; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15–17

II. The Mystery of Three-in-One

God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three persons are distinct yet perfectly one in essence. Their love flows without end and reveals eternal harmony. Though we cannot fully comprehend this mystery, we trust in it and rest in the beauty of their relationship and power.

Matt 28:19; Jn 10:30; Eph 4:4–6

III. The Story That Changed History

Jesus Christ entered our world to redeem it. Born of a virgin, living a sinless life, and dying in our place, He satisfied the justice of God. His resurrection proves death cannot hold Him. He now reigns at the Father's right hand and will return to complete the work of redemption for all who are His.

Matt 1:23; Jn 1:1–4 and 1:29; Acts 1:11 and 2:22–24; Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:3–4; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:5–11; Heb 1:1–4 and 4:15

IV. The Great Rescue Mission

Every person is spiritually dead apart from Christ, and by nature the heart does not seek God. Yet the grace of God has appeared to all, and it is that grace alone, not human will or effort, that awakens the heart, draws the soul, and brings the dead to life. The Holy Spirit awakens the heart, reveals the depth of our sin, and leads us to repentance and faith in Christ. When we trust in Him, we are made alive together with Christ and sealed with His Spirit. Those whom God has brought to life in Christ are kept by His power, and nothing in all creation can separate them from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Salvation is a gift of grace, freely offered to all who believe.

Jn 10:28–29 and 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom 2:4, 3:23, and 8:38–39; Eph 2:1–5, 8–9; Phil 1:6; 2 Tim 2:25; Titus 2:11 and 3:5–7

V. The Helper Within

The Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of those who turn to Christ. He teaches, guides, and strengthens us to live in love and obedience. He convicts of sin, illuminates our need, and continues to draw us toward repentance and faith. He transforms desires, forms belief, and produces the fruits of holiness that show a life made new by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Jn 3:5–8 and 16:8–13; Acts 1:8 and 4:31; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 2:14; Gal 5:16–18; Eph 6:12; Col 2:6–10; Titus 3:5

VI. The Ultimate Awakening

Death is certain for all, and every person will face resurrection. Those who belong to Christ will rise to eternal life and unbroken joy with God. Those who refuse His mercy will face the just judgment of their sins. The promise of resurrection calls us to live with eternity in view and to receive the gift of life offered in Christ.

1 Cor 15:51–57; 1 Thess 4:16–17; Rev 20:11–15 and 21:1–5

VII. The Family Without Walls

The Church is the body of Christ. Believers are united in faith and bound together by grace. True community flows from hearts devoted to God and one another. It expresses God's love, accountability, and mercy to the world. Believers support each other, rejoice together, and share in God's mission.

Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 12:12, 27; Eph 1:22–23

VIII. The Law of Christ Lived Out

Followers of Jesus are called to walk with one another in love, bearing each other's burdens as an expression of Christ's compassion. This shared life is not optional, nor is it transactional. As we carry one another through suffering, weakness, restoration, and hope, we fulfill the law of Christ. True faith expresses itself through sacrificial care, humility, and a willingness to enter the struggles of others as Christ has entered ours.

Jn 13:34–35; Rom 15:1–3; Gal 6:2; Phil 2:1–5; 1 Jn 3:16–18

IX. The Signs of Grace

Jesus gave His church two sacred acts that tell the story of His saving love. Baptism by immersion declares that we have been buried with Christ and raised to new life by His grace. It is a public confession of faith and a joyful witness that the old life has ended and a new creation has begun. Communion invites us to remember His body broken and His blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. As we share the bread and the cup, we proclaim His death until He comes again. These sacraments do not save us, but they beautifully remind us of the One who does.

Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41; Rom 6:3–4; 1 Cor 11:23–26

X. The Mission That Matters

Every follower of Christ is called to proclaim the gospel and make disciples. This calling applies to all who have experienced God's mercy. Each life transformed by His grace becomes a witness to His power and an invitation for others to encounter Him. The work of the Church is to proclaim the good news, teach obedience that flows from faith, and care for the poor and broken in Christ's name.

Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:9–15; 1 Pet 3:15

XI. The Gift Given Freely

We believe the grace of God cannot be bought, earned, or exchanged. As we have freely received the mercy, truth, and care of Christ, we are called to freely give to others. The gospel is not a commodity, and ministry is not a transaction. We seek to offer counsel, care, teaching, and restoration without cost, trusting God to provide through His people as He sees fit. Our confidence rests not in provision models, but in the faithfulness of God.

Isa 55:1; Matt 10:8; Lk 6:38; Acts 3:6; 2 Cor 9:6–8; Jas 1:5

XII. The Design That Defines

God created humanity as male and female, designed for relationship and marriage. Marriage between one man and one woman reflects His wisdom and faithfulness. This design serves as the foundation for family, society, and human flourishing, rooted in divine intention and held up by Scripture.

Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5-6; Mk 10:6-9; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9

XIII. The Life That Counts

Following Jesus involves daily surrender. Prayer, service, love, and obedience flow from hearts transformed by His mercy. Obedience is the fruit and evidence of salvation, not its cause. Our lives glorify God and extend His hope to everyone we meet. True discipleship shapes every thought, word, and action according to His will.

Matt 9:35-38, 22:37-39, and 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:9-15 and 12:20-21; Gal 6:10; Col 2:6-10; 1 Pet 3:15

XIV. The Value That Never Changes

Every human life bears the image of God. From conception to final breath, each person is precious. We are called to protect the vulnerable, care for the hurting, and live with compassion. Life is sacred because God is its source, and every soul is worth His love.

Ps 139:13; Isa 49:1; Jer 1:5; Matt 22:37-39; Rom 12:20-21; Gal 6:10

XV. The Gift Nobody Wanted

Suffering is not evidence of God's absence, but is often the very place where His presence is most profoundly known. God does not waste pain. Instead, He works through it, in it, and sometimes because of it, shaping us into the counselors, servants, and witnesses that comfortable lives could never produce. The tears we have carried become the credentials which open doors that no degree ever could. We do not minimize suffering, explain it away, or rush past it. We sit with it, trust the One who sovereignly permits it, and believe with confidence that He is working all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. This conviction is not a cliché. Rather, it is the foundation beneath every counseling relationship we will ever enter.

Ps 34:18 and 46:1; Rom 5:3-5 and 8:28; 2 Cor 1:3-4 and 4:17; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 5:10

WEEK 1

FOUNDATIONS OF COUNSELING

Biblical, psychological, legal, ethical, and multicultural foundations for Christian counseling ministry



Over the course of Week 1, we will establish the complete clinical and theological foundation upon which every subsequent module is built. You will examine the definition and biblical mandate for Christian counseling, survey the major psychological theories and their foundational figures, and trace human development across the lifespan through the frameworks of Erikson, Piaget, and Kohlberg.

You will also study attachment theory and its lifelong clinical implications, master the core and advanced skills of the counseling relationship, and work through the full legal and ethical framework that governs ministry counseling, including confidentiality, mandatory reporting, duty to warn, dual relationships, scope of practice, and multicultural competency. By Friday night you will possess the foundational knowledge every competent counselor must carry before the first client ever sits across from them.

Week 1 Nightly Schedule

0:00 – 0:40	Module 1 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
0:40 – 1:20	Module 2 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
1:20 – 1:35	Break
1:35 – 2:15	Module 3 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
2:15 – 2:55	Module 4 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
2:55 – 3:00	Closing Prayer

MONDAY

Foundations of Counseling (Modules 1-4)

MODULE 1

Introduction to Christian Counseling

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The biblical basis and scope of Christian counseling ministry
- The difference between nouthetic and integrative counseling models
- Empathy and active listening as the foundation of effective care
- Common errors that undermine lay counseling effectiveness
- How the church can become a refuge rather than a referral

MODULE 2

Brief Survey of Psychological Theory

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- What psychology is, what it can do, and what only the gospel can do
- The major schools of psychological thought every counselor should know
- Key figures whose work shaped modern counseling theory
- How to engage secular research without compromising Scripture
- The all-truth-is-God's-truth framework for integrative practice

MODULE 3

Human Development Across the Lifespan

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- How childhood experiences shape adult emotional and relational functioning
- Erikson's stages of psychosocial development and their ministry implications
- Piaget's stages of cognitive development and how people learn and process
- Kohlberg's framework for understanding moral reasoning in clients
- How adverse childhood experiences become lifelong clinical patterns in various clients

MODULE 4

Attachment Theory & Clinical Implications

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Attachment theory defined and its foundational research basis
- The four attachment styles and the early experiences that produce them
- How childhood attachment patterns persist into adult relationships
- The link between insecure attachment and common counseling presentations
- The therapeutic relationship as a corrective attachment experience

HOMEWORK: Write a brief response to this question: *Based on what you learned tonight regarding the nature of humanity apart from Christ and biblical counseling mandate, how is the church uniquely able to offer what no secular therapist can?*

TUESDAY

Foundations of Counseling (Modules 5-8)

MODULE 5

Counseling Theories & Effective Models

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Major counseling models and the theoretical assumptions behind them
- Behavioral, psychoanalytic, humanistic, and systemic approaches surveyed
- Specialized modalities including EMDR, play therapy, and group therapy
- Why no single approach works for every presenting issue
- The case for an integrative, client-centered therapeutic orientation

MODULE 6

CBT in a Christian Counseling Context

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: How thoughts drive emotions and emotions drive behavior
- The ABC framework: activating event, belief, and consequence
- Identifying and addressing cognitive distortions in counseling
- Romans 12:2 as the biblical foundation for cognitive transformation
- Practical CBT techniques appropriate for lay counseling ministry

MODULE 7

Core Clinical Skills I: Listening & Attending

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Active listening defined as hearing meaning, not just words
- Proxemics, kinesics, and nonverbal communication in the counseling room
- Minimal encouragers, open questions, and reflective statements
- Paraphrasing and reflection of feeling as distinct clinical competencies
- Why premature advice-giving is the most common and costly counseling error

MODULE 8

Core Clinical Skills II: Facilitative Techniques

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Session structure as a tool for creating safety and predictability
- Confrontation, immediacy, and genuineness in the counseling relationship
- Funnel questioning and capping as advanced facilitative techniques
- The therapeutic alliance as the single greatest predictor of counseling outcome
- Self-disclosure, hierarchy of needs, and evidence-based homework assignment

HOMEWORK: Select a conversation from your day, evaluating it using the SOLER framework. In your journal, note where your attending was strong and where it declined. What automatic thought or distraction pulled you away from the person?

WEDNESDAY

Foundations of Counseling (Modules 9-12)

MODULE 9

Solution-Focused Counseling Techniques

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Solution-focused brief therapy and its core clinical principles
- The Miracle Question: what it is and how to deliver it effectively
- Scaling questions and exception-finding as practical counseling tools
- Reframing as a technique for shifting client perspective
- Applying solution-focused approaches across diverse presenting issues

MODULE 10

Counselor Self-Care & Ministerial Longevity

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Why self-care is stewardship, not self-indulgence
- Burnout, vicarious traumatization, and compassion fatigue defined
- Warning signs that a counselor is approaching clinical impairment
- The ethical implications of counseling while depleted
- Sustainable practices for long-term effectiveness in ministry counseling

MODULE 11

Pastoral Considerations in Counseling Ministry

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Why time boundaries are non-negotiable in pastoral counseling
- The dangers of unsolicited self-disclosure from the pulpit
- Building a referral network before you need one
- The ethical and theological problem of refusing to refer
- Affirming mental illness as a clinical reality, not a spiritual failure

MODULE 12

The Integration of Psychology & Theology

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The historic conversation between theology and psychology
- Why treating mental illness as purely spiritual causes harm
- Scripture as the non-negotiable foundation of Christian counseling
- How to use secular therapeutic tools without compromising biblical truth
- A principled framework for navigating conflict between research and Scripture

HOMEWORK: *In your journal, apply the Miracle Question to one area of your own life where you feel stuck. Write as though the problem has already been resolved. What is different? What did you have to let go of to get there?*

THURSDAY

Foundations of Counseling (Modules 13-16)

MODULE 13

Legal Issues I: The Law and Confidentiality

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The three primary legal risks facing every church-based counseling ministry
- What confidentiality covers and where it legally ends
- Clergy-penitent privilege: its basis and its limits
- Mandatory reporting: when the counselor is legally required to act
- Duty to Warn: Self-harm disclosures and the counselor's obligations

MODULE 14

Legal Issues II: Risk and Sexual Misconduct

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The legal and relational equivalence of false accusation and substantiated misconduct
- Transference and countertransference as both clinical and legal risks
- Why false accusation and actual misconduct carry equivalent consequences
- Structural safeguards: the third-person rule, window visibility, and open-door policy
- Non-negotiable boundaries every lay counselor must maintain without exception

MODULE 15

Legal Issues III: Scope and Documentation

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The intake form and informed consent: the legal function of every component
- What lay counselors are absolutely prohibited from doing
- Standards for record retention, storage, and confidentiality protection
- Responding correctly when client records are subpoenaed
- How to credential lay counselors as lay pastors within your church structure

MODULE 16

Principles of Cross-Cultural Counseling

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Why culturally adaptive counseling is both a clinical and ethical necessity
- The demographic shifts reshaping the American church and community
- Why ethnic minority clients terminate counseling at higher rates and what to do about it
- The RESPECTFUL model: ten factors shaping every client's worldview
- Identifying and suspending your own cultural bias before it harms a client

HOMEWORK: *Reflect on one area of your counseling ministry context where a legal boundary may be unclear or untested. Write about how tonight's content on confidentiality, mandatory reporting, and scope of practice would guide your response.*

FRIDAY

Foundations of Counseling (Modules 17-20)

MODULE 17

Ethical Issues I: Harm and Sexual Ethics

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The do-no-harm principle and what it demands of every counselor
- Ethical obligations when clients present threats to themselves or others
- Biblical positions on abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide
- The absolute prohibition on sexual conduct with current or former clients
- The counselor's ethical obligation to seek supervision when personally triggered

MODULE 18

Ethical Issues II: Relational Conduct

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- What a dual relationship is and why it creates unavoidable clinical risk
- Social media and the counseling relationship as an overlooked boundary violation
- How to ethically counsel church members you know personally
- Scope of practice as both an ethical and a clinical boundary
- The counselor's role as an active advocate for client welfare

MODULE 19

Ethical Issues III: Financial Ethics

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Ethical standards governing fees, gifts, and referral compensation
- Why prolonging counseling for financial reasons is a serious ethical violation
- Six legitimate grounds for terminating a counseling relationship
- How to close a counseling relationship without abandoning the client
- The prohibition against selecting or rejecting clients based on financial status

MODULE 20

Ethical Issues IV: Managing Boundaries

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual boundaries in pastoral counseling
- The most common boundary violations in pastoral settings and how to prevent them
- How to decline ministry requests without damaging relational trust
- Managing the transition when a church member becomes a counseling client
- The clinical and ethical distinction between pastoral care and formal counseling

HOMEWORK: *Identify one boundary you currently hold well in ministry and one that you find consistently difficult to maintain. Write about what makes that boundary hard and what a corrective posture would look like.*

WEEK 2

PRESENTING ISSUES AND INTERVENTION

Individual presenting issues, addiction and recovery, marriage and family, group counseling, and documentation



Week 2 moves from foundation to application. You will work through the full range of individual presenting issues a church counselor will regularly encounter, including anxiety, depression, grief, and anger. The addiction curriculum spans four modules covering substance use disorders, behavioral addictions, process addictions, and recovery models within family systems.

The marriage and family sequence addresses pre-marital counseling, emotional and physical affairs, pornography, destructive communication patterns, domestic violence, and structural family theory including genogram assessment. The week closes with group counseling theory and clinical documentation. By Friday night you will carry enough clinical knowledge to enter the Week 3 practicum with confidence.

Week 2 Nightly Schedule

0:00 – 0:40	Module 1 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
0:40 – 1:20	Module 2 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
1:20 – 1:35	Break
1:35 – 2:15	Module 3 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
2:15 – 2:55	Module 4 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
2:55 – 3:00	Closing Prayer

MONDAY

Presenting Issues and Intervention (Modules 21-24)

MODULE 21

Individual Presenting Issues I: Anxiety

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Anxiety defined as persistent fear that frequently lacks a clearly identifiable source
- The clinical distinction between anxiety and normal fear
- Five etiological categories every counselor should recognize
- The theological errors that compound clinical anxiety in the church context
- Counseling goals and clear indicators for professional referral

Note: This module addresses anxiety from a pastoral counseling perspective. For the full DSM diagnostic classification, see Module 43.

MODULE 22

Individual Presenting Issues II: Depression

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Depression defined and distinguished from normal grief and situational sadness
- Four etiological categories: circumstance, biology, medical factors, and spiritual dimension
- The physical symptoms of depression most commonly missed in ministry settings
- Why treating depression as inherently sin-derived is a theological and clinical error
- Counseling goals and clear indicators for professional referral

MODULE 23

Individual Presenting Issues III: Grief

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Grief defined as a natural, multidimensional response to loss
- The five stages of grief understood as descriptive, not prescriptive
- Delayed grief, sudden loss, and complicated bereavement presentations
- Five grief identity patterns that shape how individuals process loss
- Counseling goals: sustained presence, community integration, and honoring the relationship

MODULE 24

Individual Presenting Issues IV: Anger

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Anger defined and addressed as both a clinical and biblical reality
- Seven escalating levels of anger every counselor must recognize
- Three primary expressions: internalization, suppression, and ventilation
- The refusal to forgive as the most clinically and spiritually destructive posture available
- Four counseling goals: recognition, delay, regulation, and resolution

HOMEWORK: *Identify one person in your life, past or present, whose unresolved grief, persistent anxiety, or chronic anger shaped how you relate to others. Write about what you previously observed in them, and can now understand clinically.*

TUESDAY

Presenting Issues and Intervention (Modules 25-28)

MODULE 25

Addictions I: Substance Addictions

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Substance Use Disorders defined with DSM criteria and severity classifications
- The progressive stages of addiction from experimentation to dependency
- Common substance categories and the biological factors in addiction development
- The church's unique and often underutilized role in long-term recovery
- Counseling goals and the boundaries of scope of practice with addicted clients

MODULE 26

Addictions II: Behavioral Addictions

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Behavioral addictions defined as non-substance compulsions driven by neurological reward
- Self-harm, gambling, gaming, and hoarding as clinical presentations
- Compulsive buying, kleptomania, and sexual behavioral disorders surveyed
- The neurological reward cycle that drives and sustains behavioral addiction
- Counseling response and referral considerations for each presentation

Note: Social media is addressed as a behavioral addiction. For the broader cultural and adolescent mental health context, see Module 57.

MODULE 27

Addictions III: Process Addictions

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Process addictions defined as compulsive engagement in experiential behaviors
- Adrenaline-seeking, rage, and perfectionism as underrecognized addictive patterns
- Codependency, enmeshment, and the dynamics of toxic relational systems
- Workaholism: four typologies and their distinct clinical presentations
- Religious addiction and toxic faith as process addiction presentations in the church

MODULE 28

Addictions IV: Recovery Models

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Eight theoretical models of addiction and their clinical applications
- The ACE score as a statistically validated predictor of addiction vulnerability
- Family roles in addiction systems: enabler, hero, scapegoat, mascot, and lost child
- Cults and the occult: manipulation techniques and counselor awareness
- Counseling goals for addicted clients and the family systems around them

HOMEWORK: *Reflect on whether any of the addiction patterns covered, substance, behavioral, or process, have touched your own family system. Write about how that awareness will shape your empathy in counseling.*

WEDNESDAY

Presenting Issues and Intervention (Modules 29-32)

MODULE 29

Financial Crisis & Stewardship

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The theological significance of financial stewardship in the counseling context
- Financial crisis as a simultaneously spiritual, relational, and practical presenting issue
- Financial stress as both an individual and a marital clinical concern
- Common etiological factors: overspending, unemployment, debt, and inadequate planning
- Counseling goals, referral resources, and scope of practice boundaries

MODULE 30

Premarital Counseling: Foundations & Practice

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The biblical theology of marriage as covenant rather than contract
- Compatibility assessment across values, communication styles, and conflict response
- The financial conversation that must happen before the wedding
- The sexual conversation that must happen before the wedding
- Recommended assessment instruments and pre-marital counseling structure

MODULE 31

Marriage Counseling I: Emotional Affairs

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Emotional affairs defined and their equivalence in relational damage to physical infidelity
- How most affairs develop gradually from appropriate friendships
- Limerence: the neurochemical basis of obsessive romantic attachment
- The CAGE assessment as a self-diagnostic tool for identifying an emotional affair
- Counseling goals for emotional affair prevention and recovery

MODULE 32

Marriage Counseling II: Physical Infidelity

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The deeper causes of infidelity beneath surface-level presentations
- Evidence-based first-session response protocols following disclosure
- The genuine requirements of marital restoration from both spouses
- Clinical criteria for recognizing when restoration is not a viable outcome
- Counseling goals: no-contact commitment, forgiveness, and sustained accountability

HOMEWORK: Write about what tonight's content on emotional affairs and limerence reveals about the gradual nature of relational compromise. If you are married, consider briefly discussing one insight from tonight's session with your spouse.

THURSDAY

Presenting Issues and Intervention (Modules 33-36)

MODULE 33

Marital Counseling III: Pornography Use

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The neurological mechanics of pornography addiction and its progressive escalation
- The documented impact of pornography on marital intimacy and relational trust
- A five-step recovery framework including the HALT relapse prevention tool
- Counseling the betrayed spouse: specific clinical needs of the non-using partner
- The role of sexual shame in both the addiction cycle and in recovery

MODULE 34

Marital Counseling IV: Toxic Communication

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Gottman's Four Horsemen: criticism, defensiveness, stonewalling, and contempt
- The Giver and Taker dynamic and its long-term relational consequences
- The Policy of Joint Agreement as a framework for mutual decision-making
- The DESC model for structured conflict resolution in couples counseling
- Four marital bonding principles: respect, fulfillment, spirituality, and passion

MODULE 35

Marital Counseling V: Domestic Violence

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Domestic violence defined as a systematic pattern of control, not isolated incidents
- The circular abuse cycle: tension building, battering, and remorse
- The critical distinction between biblical headship and coercive control
- Safety planning protocols and non-negotiable pre-session assessment requirements
- Recognizing when separation is the only safe and clinically appropriate recommendation

MODULE 36

Family Counseling I: Genograms Assessment

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Structural Family Therapy: dysfunction resides in the system, not just the individual
- Nine essential terms every family counselor must understand
- The genogram as a clinical tool for mapping multigenerational patterns
- Reading inherited patterns of addiction, abuse, and dysfunction across generations
- Helping clients distinguish between inherited relational patterns and intrinsic character

HOMEWORK: Begin sketching your own genogram. Start with your grandparents and work forward through your parents to your own generation. Note recurring generational patterns of addiction, divorce, estrangement, abuse, or mental illness.

FRIDAY

Presenting Issues and Intervention (Modules 37-40)

MODULE 37

Family Counseling II: Parenting Theory

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The four parenting styles and the developmental outcomes each consistently produces
- The neurological reality of the adolescent brain and impulse control
- Normal adolescent individuation versus genuine behavioral crisis
- Behavioral and emotional indicators that a child is experiencing significant distress
- Engaging the resistant adolescent who enters counseling involuntarily

Note: Child-specific counseling techniques and clinical warning signs are addressed in Module 42.

MODULE 38

Family Counseling III: Blended Families

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Blended family dynamics: loyalty conflicts, stepparent authority, and parental interference
- Why stabilization in blended families takes four to seven years on average
- Estrangement as ambiguous loss: grief without social permission to grieve
- Counseling the parent of a prodigal through the sustained uncertainty of the waiting season
- Unconditional love without unconditional affirmation as the clinical and biblical model

MODULE 39

Theory and Practice of Group Counseling

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Group counseling defined as a distinct and uniquely powerful therapeutic modality
- Seven group typologies and the clinical indications for each
- The three developmental stages of every counseling group
- Seven categories of problem group members and evidence-based management strategies
- Cutting off and drawing out as the two most critical group leadership competencies

MODULE 40

Documentation and Case Conceptualization

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The legal and clinical function of accurate and consistent documentation
- SOAP notes defined: subjective, objective, assessment, and plan
- Standards of objectivity and discretion in clinical record-keeping
- Case conceptualization as the construction of a coherent clinical framework around the client
- What belongs in the client file and what must never appear there

HOMEWORK: *Return to your genogram and add your current family. Note patterns you now recognize as inherited rather than intrinsic. Write a few sentences about what you would say to a client who is carrying a pattern they did not choose.*

WEEK 3

ADVANCED TOPICS AND PRACTICUM I

Supervised individual counseling practicum with concurrent advanced diagnostic training



Week 3 is where training becomes practice. Each evening opens with two modules drawn from the advanced diagnostic curriculum, covering mood disorders, anxiety disorders, crisis and trauma intervention, psychotic disorders, gerontological counseling, and personality disorders across all three clusters. Following the lecture modules, you will enter the supervised clinical practicum, where you will rotate through the counselor, client, and observer roles within your assigned same-gender triad. The practicum is not a simulation. You will bring a real issue, working with real counselors, and receive real feedback. Read the triad model explanation below carefully before Monday night.

Each evening this week begins with two 40-minute modules, followed by a break and a 75-minute supervised clinical practicum. But the practicum is unlike anything you have done in a classroom. You will work with real issues. Not invented scenarios. Not hypothetical clients. Real people in your triad sharing real things they are genuinely carrying.

Understanding the Triad Model

Your triad consists of three people of the same gender. The counselor-client pairings are assigned on Monday night and remain fixed for all five nights of Week 3. They do not rotate.

Here is what the triad looks like using the male group as an example:

ROTATION 1 0:00 – 0:25	ROTATION 2 0:25 – 0:50	ROTATION 3 0:50 – 1:15
John = Counselor David = Client Michael = Observer	David = Counselor Michael = Client John = Observer	Michael = Counselor John = Client David = Observer

This same pattern repeats Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. John always counsels David. David always counsels Michael. Michael always counsels John. The pairings never reverse.

Why the Pairings Never Reverse

If David counseled John even once, John would be managing what he disclosed as a client while simultaneously holding the role of counselor to the very person who just heard it. That collapse of roles would compromise both the counseling relationship and the authenticity of what gets shared.

This is not a scheduling detail, but is actually a lived application of the dual relationship ethics you studied in Week 1. The structure of this week protects every person in it.

What to Bring as the Client

When it is your turn in the client seat, you will share a real issue you are genuinely carrying. This does not need to be your deepest wound. It simply needs to be real.

Choose something you are willing to work with across all four nights. It might be a relationship struggle, a recurring anxiety, a grief you have not fully processed, a conflict you have not resolved, or a pattern you keep repeating. Whatever you choose, bring it honestly.

You will select your issue before Monday night and stay with it all four nights. The consistency is the point. By Thursday your counselor will know your issue well. You will have experienced what it feels like to be genuinely heard across multiple sessions. That is something no textbook can teach.

Week 3 Nightly Schedule

0:00 – 0:40 Module 1 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
0:40 – 1:20 Module 2 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
1:20 – 1:35 Break
1:35 – 2:50 Clinical Practicum (3 rotations x 25 minutes)
2:50 – 2:55 Clinical Recap
2:55 – 3:00 Closing Prayer

MONDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum I (Modules 41-42)

MODULE 41

Clinical Issues I: Mood Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Major Depressive Disorder: diagnostic criteria, suicide risk, and counseling response
- Bipolar Disorder I and II: manic and hypomanic presentations and differential diagnosis
- Seasonal Affective Disorder and its frequent misidentification in ministry contexts
- Cyclothymic Disorder and why it is commonly missed by pastoral counselors
- The counselor's appropriate role alongside psychiatric medication: supportive, never directive

MODULE 42

Foundations of Child & Adolescent Counseling

Instructor: Deanna Flood, MA

- Why children must never be treated as miniature adults in the counseling room
- Nine evidence-informed practices for working effectively with younger clients
- The MacDonald Triad: three sociopathic warning signs no counselor should ever miss
- Appropriate therapeutic modalities for children: CBT, DBT, play therapy, and family therapy
- Engaging the involuntary adolescent: presence and genuine curiosity before clinical agenda

Note: Neurodivergence is introduced here as presented in younger clients. Full diagnostic criteria for all clients is addressed in Module 56.

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session I

Individual Counseling Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: First contact to include: informed consent, intake review, establishing rapport, SOLER attending, and initial empathy

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #1
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #1
- Client Rating Form #1

HOMEWORK: *In your journal, write two or three sentences about what it felt like to sit in the counselor seat tonight for the first time. What surprised you? What do you want to do differently tomorrow?*

TUESDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum I (Modules 43-44)

MODULE 43

Clinical Issues II: Anxiety Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The six DSM classifications of anxiety disorders every counselor must recognize
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder, OCD, and phobic disorders surveyed
- Panic Disorder and Social Anxiety Disorder: presentations and counseling response
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: etiologies, presentations, and referral criteria
- Counseling response and referral thresholds for each anxiety disorder classification

Note: This module addresses anxiety disorders from a diagnostic framework, while Module 21 is from a pastoral counseling perspective.

MODULE 44

Counseling Clients of Crisis and Trauma

Instructor: Deanna Flood, MA

- Crisis defined as a disruptive event that exceeds existing coping capacity
- Trauma defined and its four clinically defining elements
- Type I versus Type II trauma and why the distinction matters clinically
- Seven evidence-based crisis intervention techniques for the pastoral counseling context
- Suicide in the crisis context: assessment, intervention, and escalation protocols

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session II

Individual Counseling Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Goal-setting, homework assignment, deepening empathy, paraphrasing and summarizing

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #2
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #2
- Client Rating Form #2

HOMEWORK: Reflect on the goal you set with your client this evening. Was it truly their goal or did you lead them toward it? Write a few sentences about the difference between facilitating a session and directing one.

WEDNESDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum I (Modules 45-46)

MODULE 45

Clinical Issues III: Complex Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Psychotic disorders: hallucinations, delusions, and the referral obligation they demand
- Schizophrenia and Brief Psychotic Disorder: recognition and appropriate pastoral response
- Dissociative disorders: the trauma-rooted disruption of identity, memory, and awareness
- Dissociative Identity Disorder: clinical reality, common misconceptions, and counselor role
- Factitious disorders: Munchausen, Malingering, and mandatory reporting obligations

MODULE 46

Gerontological Counseling Issues

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The cumulative and compounding nature of loss across the aging process
- Depression in older adults: a consistently underdiagnosed condition in ministry settings
- Dementia caregiving: why the caregiver frequently presents the more urgent counseling need
- Elder abuse: recognition, mandatory reporting obligations, and victim care
- End-of-life discussions: clinical skill, theological grace, and the irreplaceable gift of presence

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session III

Individual Counseling Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Full session integration, Scripture application, closing skills, prayer

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #3
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #3
- Client Rating Form #3

HOMEWORK: Identify one moment from tonight's practicum where you felt clinically out of your depth. Write about what skill, technique, or knowledge would have helped you in that moment.

THURSDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum I (Modules 47-48)

MODULE 47

Clinical Issues IV: Cluster A Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Personality disorders defined and situated within the DSM framework of ten disorders
- Paranoid Personality Disorder: pervasive distrust and suspicion of others, namely the spouse
- Schizoid Personality Disorder: emotional detachment and preference for isolation
- Schizotypal Personality Disorder: eccentric behavior, odd speech, and attenuated psychosis
- Clinical recognition and pastoral response to Cluster A presentations in clients

MODULE 48

Clinical Issues V: Cluster B Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Antisocial, Borderline, Histrionic, and Narcissistic Personality Disorders surveyed
- Gaslighting: ten specific tactics used to destabilize victim perception and consolidate control
- DARVO: Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender as a systematic abuse response pattern
- Coercive control defined as autonomy-stripping behavior distinct from physical violence
- Counseling the victim of a Cluster B relationship without re-traumatization

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session IV

Individual Counseling Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Progressive session 4, deepening case conceptualization, beginning to work toward resolution, practicing appropriate use of Scripture and prayer

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #4
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #4
- Client Rating Form #4

HOMEWORK: *In your daily journal, reflect on what this evening's content on Cluster B personality disorders reveals about someone in your own life or ministry context. Be sure to address what personal boundaries you may need to implement.*

FRIDAY

Advanced Topics and Clinical Practicum I (Modules 49-50)

MODULE 49

Clinical Issues VI: Cluster C Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Avoidant, Dependent, and Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorders surveyed
- The core belief structures driving each Cluster C presentation
- Clinical adaptations required when Cluster C traits appear in the counseling relationship
- Counselor self-protection strategies against in-session manipulation
- Patience, clear boundaries, and a well-defined scope of practice as the essential framework

MODULE 50

Same Sex Attraction and Gender Dysphoria

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Defining terms: attraction, behavior, identity, and dysphoria are not interchangeable
- The biblical framework for human sexuality: clear, compassionate, and unapologetic
- The etiology of SSA and gender dysphoria: complex, multifactorial, and not fully settled
- Counseling parents: keeping the relationship open at all costs
- Detransitioners as a growing, underserved population the church must be prepared to receive

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session V

Individual Counseling Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Progressive session 5, working toward closure, reviewing counseling goals, assigning final homework, and practicing a formal session close

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #5
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #5
- Client Rating Form #5

HOMEWORK: *Write an honest assessment of your growth as a counselor this week. Where do you feel like you have improved the most? Where do you feel like extra attention needs to be given for change? Be both specific and kind to yourself.*

WEEK 4

ADVANCED TOPICS AND PRACTICUM II

Specialty populations, ministry infrastructure, and advanced supervised clinical practicum



Week 4 completes the clinical curriculum, advancing the practicum into specialty population and scenario-based territory. Each evening opens with two modules covering eating disorders, counseling women, neurological disorders, psychopharmacology, veterans and first responders, neurodivergent clients, the adolescent mental health crisis, spiritual abuse, counseling ministry infrastructure, and executive leadership.

The practicum sessions shift from individual presenting issues to assigned clinical scenarios requiring you to apply all you've learned with real-time instructor prompts. The week closes with the capstone practicum on Friday night and final exam and graduation ceremony on Saturday.

Week 4 Nightly Schedule

- 0:00 – 0:40 Module 1 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
- 0:40 – 1:20 Module 2 (30 min lecture + 10 min Q&A)
- 1:20 – 1:35 Break
- 1:35 – 2:50 Advanced Practicum (3 rotations x 25 minutes)
- 2:50 – 2:55 Clinical Recap
- 2:55 – 3:00 Closing Prayer

Note: Triads are reassigned for Week 4. Advanced scenarios are assigned each night. Dr. and Mrs. Flood may drop in a prompt mid-session, as this mirrors the unpredictability of real counseling.

MONDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum II (Modules 51-52)

MODULE 51

Clinical Issues VIII: Eating Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder defined and distinguished
- Biological, psychological, and environmental etiological factors surveyed
- Clinical signs and symptoms most commonly overlooked in a ministry setting
- Why professional referral is not discretionary for eating disorder presentations
- Counseling the family members of individuals with eating disorders

Note: Eating disorders also appear in Module 26 from a behavioral addiction perspective. Both address distinct clinical frameworks.

MODULE 52

Pastoral Care and Counseling for Women

Instructor: Deanna Flood, MA

- The compounding pressures women carry: relational, cultural, biological, and spiritual
- Postpartum depression perinatal mental health: clinical presentation and pastoral sensitivity
- The long shadow cast by sexual abuse and domestic violence in women's presenting concerns
- Body image, disordered eating, and the cultural assault on women's sense of worth
- Counseling the woman the church has already failed

CLINICAL
PRACTICUM

Session VI

Marriage & Couple Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Assigned scenario: couple presenting with communication breakdown and escalating conflict

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #6
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #6
- Client Rating Form #6

HOMEWORK: Reflect on the assigned couple scenario from tonight's practicum. What was the hardest moment for you to navigate and why? Write about what you would do differently.

TUESDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum II (Modules 53-54)

MODULE 53

Clinical Issues IX:
Neurological Disorders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Neurological disorders defined as a distinct class requiring careful differential assessment
- Alzheimer's, Lewy Body, Vascular, and Frontotemporal Dementia surveyed
- Pseudobulbar affect, Geschwind Syndrome, and Traumatic Brain Injury defined
- Clinical differentiation between neurological and psychiatric presentations
- Why accurate identification is non-negotiable before any counseling intervention begins

MODULE 54

Clinical Issues X:
Psychopharmacology

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Why every pastoral counselor needs a working knowledge of prescribed medications
- Antidepressants, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, stimulants, and anxiolytics surveyed
- The counselor's role regarding medication: always supportive, never directive
- Medication Discontinuation Syndrome and the clinical dangers of abrupt cessation
- How to support a client navigating psychiatric medication alongside pastoral counseling

CLINICAL
PRACTICUM

Session VII

Crisis & Trauma Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Assigned scenario of a client disclosing a recent traumatic event. Instructor may prompt acute emotional dysregulation, applying crisis intervention techniques

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #7
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #7
- Client Rating Form #7

HOMEWORK: In your journal, write about this evening's crisis scenario. At what point did you feel most uncertain, and what grounded you? What does it mean to be a calm, non-anxious presence when someone else is in the midst of crisis?

WEDNESDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum II (Modules 55-56)

MODULE 55

Counseling Veterans
and First Responders

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The cultural code of military and first responder communities and why it matters clinically
- PTSD versus moral injury: two distinct wounds requiring two distinct clinical approaches
- Hypervigilance: the nervous system trained for crisis that cannot stand down in civilian life
- Suicide risk in this population: prevalence data that demands full, sustained clinical attention
- What this population requires most: presence before process, along with sufficient grace

MODULE 56

Counseling Skills for Neurodivergent Clients

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Neurodivergence defined: ASD, ADHD, and ODD as neurologically different, not deficient
- How neurodivergent clients experience the counseling relationship differently
- Communication, sensory, and environmental adaptations for effective counseling practice
- Recognizing undiagnosed neurodivergence in adult clients who spent decades compensating
- The church's unique and largely unrealized opportunity to embrace this population

Note: For the presentation of ASD, ADHD, and ODD specifically in children and adolescent counseling contexts, see Module 42.

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session VIII

Personality Disorder Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Assigned scenario of a client presenting with Cluster B relational patterns, instructor may introduce manipulation or deflection requiring active boundary-setting

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #8
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #8
- Client Rating Form #8

HOMEWORK: *Reflect and write on what tonight's content on moral injury and neurodivergence reveals to you about the populations your church may be quietly failing to reach and where you may be uniquely equipped to serve.*

THURSDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum II (Modules 57-58)

MODULE 57

Mental Health in the Digital Generation

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- The adolescent mental health crisis and its correlation with social media adoption
- Dopamine, variable reinforcement, and why social media exploits the developing brain
- Validation dependence, identity fragmentation, and doomscrolling as clinical presentations
- Cyberbullying, online predation & adolescent pornography exposure as counseling realities
- The church as the community best positioned to model what no screen can replace

Note: Social media addiction is addressed from a behavioral addiction framework in Module 26. This module addresses the broader cultural, adolescent, and digital mental health context.

MODULE 58

Spiritual Abuse and the Wounded Believer

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Spiritual abuse defined as the weaponization of religious authority to wound rather than heal
- The four structural features present in every spiritually abusive system
- Survivor wounds carried: shunning, shame, doctrinal manipulation, and relational severance
- What survivors need first and most: validation, not reformation
- Helping someone trust God again when God's people were the source of the wound

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session IX

Suicidal Ideation Focus
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Assigned scenario of a client disclosing active suicidal ideation with a formulated plan, requiring immediate application of crisis intervention protocols.

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #9
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #9
- Client Rating Form #9

HOMEWORK: *Write about what tonight's content on spiritual abuse and church hurt means for how you will carry the authority of your counseling role. How will you be different from what wounded the people who will sit across from you?*

FRIDAY

Advanced Topics and Practicum II (Modules 59-60)

MODULE 59

Counseling Ministry Infrastructure

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- Why clinical supervision is non-negotiable for every counselor at every level of experience
- Peer consultation: how to structure it so it stays clinically productive
- Building a vetted referral network of licensed professionals before you ever need one
- The warm handoff: how to facilitate referrals that clients actually follow through on
- Building a ministry infrastructure that outlasts any individual, including the one who built it

MODULE 60

Executive Leadership in Counseling Ministry

Instructor: Lance Flood, PhD

- A biblical definition of Christian leadership and what it demands of the ministry leader
- The Ten Commandments of Executive Leadership applied to counseling ministry
- Leadership principles drawn directly from the life and example of Jesus Christ
- Constructing a leadership team with clear role definition and mutual accountability
- Embracing the long-term vision of a counseling ministry that lasts across generations

CLINICAL PRACTICUM

Session X

Capstone, Student Choice
3 × 25 min rotations

Rotation Focus: Capstone session with student selecting their own presenting issue with no instructor prompt, and demonstrating full integration of counseling skills

Evaluation Forms Required:

- Observer Rating Form #10
- Counselor Self-Evaluation Form #10
- Client Rating Form #10

HOMEWORK: Write a paragraph of a vision statement for the counseling ministry you'll be serving or building, to include a specific issue or population you feel called to focus on. As this is last night of the residency, write something worth keeping.

Note: After the conclusion of the capstone practicum tonight, Dr. Flood will address the full cohort together to explain requirements for the online final examination you will take tomorrow at your leisure prior to the evening graduation service!

WEEK 4

GRADUATION

Saturday, Congratulations! You earned this!



Thirty days ago you walked into this room as one who felt called to help people. Tonight you walk out as a trained, certified, and commissioned counselor. The Flood Legacy Foundation does not take that lightly and neither should you.

Your final exam is available online and may be completed at home at any time, either on Friday evening or during the day on Saturday, but it must be submitted prior to the start of the graduation ceremony. It is open notes, true/false, and fill in the blank, and should take no longer than an hour to complete. This is the final academic requirement for your NACCA Board Certification and your CEU credits. Please plan accordingly so that your evening is free to celebrate.

However, if you are unable to complete the exam prior to the ceremony due to work or other obligations, you are still welcome to walk, be recognized by name, and receive your certificate of completion. However, please note that your NACCA Board Certification, CEU credits, and authorization to counsel under the Converge ministry will be withheld until the exam has been successfully completed and submitted. There is no penalty for completing it after the ceremony, but it must be passed before you begin serving in a counseling capacity.

Graduation and Commissioning Ceremony (60 minutes)

- Worship (2-3 songs led by the church praise team)
- Welcome & Opening Prayer (Senior Pastor)
- TFLF Vision & Mission (Brief video highlighting initiatives and opportunities to partner)
- Reflections on the Residency (Remarks from the Program Coordinator)
- Residency Retrospective (Photographic reflection on the past 30 days)
- Student Testimonies (Selected graduates share brief reflections from their journey)
- A Word from Dr. Flood
- Presentation of Graduates (Mrs. Flood)
- NACCA Certification Presentation to the Church (Dr. Flood)
- Commissioning Prayer for the Graduates (Dr. Flood)
- Charge to the Church: Becoming a Church That Heals (Dr. Flood)
- Closing Benediction (Senior Pastor)

A Final Word from the Floods

Luke 6:38 says “give, and it shall be given to you.” That verse is the heartbeat of everything we’ve built this month. You did not pay for this training so that you could charge others for the healing. Instead, you received it freely so that you could give it freely. The ministry you are about to launch is not yours. It belongs to God alone to serve both the saved and lost in your church and community who are carrying burdens they have never shared.

Now go be the person who sits with them.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



The program you are about to experience grew out of a weekend intensive we developed and delivered to churches across North America through Tennessee Valley Ministry Institute, now operating as The Legacy Institute under The Flood Legacy Foundation. What follows are a few of the voices who experienced that foundation. While they received a weekend, you're getting a month, a supervised clinical practicum, sixty comprehensive training modules, and a turnkey, fully operational counseling ministry.

Converge is a new offering, and your church has the opportunity to be among the first to experience what happens when everything we learned over a decade of delivering that weekend content is brought to your doorstep. These testimonials are the seeds, and what grows in your church will be the harvest.

"I hold a master's degree in the area of counseling and have always been interested in Christian counseling but questioned the validity of any training program that wasn't offered by a regionally accredited college or university. I am extremely pleased with the soundness of this program and highly recommend it to anyone seeking to counsel."

Gayla Holmes; Norwich, CT

"I majored in Psychology in college, and was trained as a social worker. I later spent eighteen years working with students. In one day, I learned more practical information than all the other training combined. I was given information in a manner I can utilize in order to help a broad range of clients. I'm so grateful for the opportunity."

Jane Peterson; Decatur, AL

"This intensive class is well-equipped class to prepare anyone in this field. Although I hold a Ph.D. in Christian Counseling, I had realized that I learned important new information beneficial to any serious counselor."

Leonardo Guerrero; Fuquay-Varina, NC

"The training was very in-depth. I also appreciated the Q&A sessions to help clarify many points. I found the course to be more practical and informational than any of the counseling classes I took in seminary!"

Elbern Latorilla; Toronto, ON

"As a licensed professional counselor, I found Dr. Flood has a unique ability to convey difficult subject matter in a clear way. His use of humor and personal anecdotes made the time fly by."

Ronda Thorington; Hartford, CT

"Incredible program! I loved the biblical references how to effectively provide counseling. I also appreciated the sections on legal and ethical considerations, and the severe consequences that occurs when they're not observed."

Steven Engstrand, Boston, MA

"This course was incredibly valuable for me as I serve as a chaplain. It's helpful for anyone inclined to hear people's stories and meet them wherever they are in their growth process. The information is a great tool to have."

Kim Darnell; Nashville, TN

“I work as the children's director at our church. This was exactly what I was looking for. I see a multitude of hurts and issues and this gave a much better understanding how to minister to children & families more effectively.”

Melanie Norman; Knoxville, TN

“So much great information! A wonderful reminder that God's word is powerful, we all need Jesus and we live in a broken world. Perfect balance of biblical truth with the acknowledgment mental illness exists.”

Jessica Herman; Bristol, VA

“The course will definitely enhance my counseling skills. I gained an abundance of knowledge relevant in helping me as a pastor who deals with many pressing issues. Dr. Flood's ability in answering questions was superb.”

Matthew Thomas; Philadelphia, PA

“This program has reminded me why I want to do this work. The methodology taught is broad and helpful. I am grateful for the knowledge of combining biblical principles with new skills to help others overcome struggles.”

Stephanie Johnson; Atlanta, GA

“I can't say enough about this program! Dr. Flood took time to disseminate information in an incredibly relatable way. He also shared personal experiences that had us laughing at times and impacted emotionally at others.”

Randy Turner; Chattanooga, TN

“This course provided valuable information and was presented in a way that was easily relatable and understandable. Questions and feedback were both encouraged and welcomed. Dr. Flood helped our entire church staff understand the need for setting boundaries, along with examples how to incorporate the material learned in class. Excellent!”

Donna Puckett; Birmingham, AL

“As a professional therapist, this course was similar to the training I received in grad school, plus so much more. It gave an overview into real situations that occur in practice while maintaining a biblical worldview.”

Cassandra Thomas; Escondido, CA

“I thoroughly enjoyed the training we received and found the content presented with extreme clarity, despite the rather intense level of difficulty and the challenging nature of the information. I highly recommend!”

LaTisha Jones; Atlanta, GA

“TVMI is a jam packed day presenting numerous counseling techniques and provides necessary information. Through this course, I gained necessary skills that will help me counsel people of different ages and backgrounds!”

Thomas McDonald; Trinidad, CO

“The program is a tremendous opportunity for pastors, counselors, or anyone dealing with others. It gives tremendous insight in helping to evaluate and assist. I highly recommend those called to counsel take this invaluable course.”

David Chase; Miami, FL

“This program was an incredible opportunity. I'm so grateful for the information and highly recommend this training for anyone wanting to investigate further into Counseling and the impact you can make in your community.”

Sandy Lee; Tampa, FL

“This course was absolutely amazing! Dr. Flood is an exceptional teacher and I found the entire course life changing! I would strongly encourage anyone in a church leadership role to take full advantage of this training.”

Gary Battles; Huntsville, AL

“This was an on-time resource in my life and helped me to recognize in depth the importance of reaching people where they are, but having the empathy to not leave them there. I guarantee this course will light a fire under you to utilize God’s Word in more effective ways to help yourself and others build better relationships all for the glory of God.”

Tracy Roddy; Northglenn, CO

“Dr. Flood is an excellent resource and this program was extraordinary! I appreciated all of the practical applications. If you are pursuing a ministry in biblical counseling, then I promise that this is the course is for you!”

Brett Humphrey; Gilbert, AZ

“I found this training to be a phenomenal opportunity to help grow our various ministries as well as help support the mental health environment from within the church.”

LaThomas Willis; Detroit, MI

“This course offers many tools and techniques to assist a new counselor, and enhance the skills and knowledge of experienced counselors. This interactive course allowed us to glean from the instructor and other students.”

Carol Stevenson; Atlanta, GA



READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

*For more information about how to host **Converge** at your church, simply schedule a video consultation with Dr. Flood below.*

We look forward to connecting with you!

floodlegacy.setmore.com

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Learn about each of our free ministry initiatives and ways to partner with us at www.floodlegacy.org.