

1 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
2 Kentucky Board of Licensure for Pastoral Counselors
3 (New Administrative Regulation)
4 201 KAR 38:031. Equivalent course of study.
5 RELATES TO: KRS 335.620
6 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 335.615(6), 335.620(1)(d)-(g)
7 NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 335.615 requires the Kentucky Board
8 of Licensure for Pastoral Counselors to promulgate administrative regulations to implement KRS
9 335.600-335.699. KRS 335.620(1)(d)-(g) authorizes the board to promulgate administrative
10 regulations establishing a course of study equivalent to a Master of Divinity degree. This
11 administrative regulation establishes the criteria for the equivalent course of study.
12 Section 1. To qualify as an equivalent course of study as referenced in KRS 335.620(1)(d), a
13 master's or doctoral degree shall consist of a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours of
14 graduate-level coursework. The coursework may include, or extend beyond, the professional
15 degree in a theological or spiritual discipline or a mental health discipline, and may include
16 unlimited graduate-level hours earned in either:
17 (1) A pastoral counseling training program approved by the Kentucky Board of Licensure for
18 Pastoral Counselors, such as the Kentucky Association of Pastoral Counselors Academy
19 (hereinafter "KAPC Academy"); or
20 (2) Another educational institution or program that meets the requirements stipulated by the
21 Board.

- 1 Section 2. A master's or doctoral degree in an equivalent course of study shall include the
- 2 following:
- 3 (1) Theological foundations. This area shall consist of a minimum of fifteen (15) semester hours
- 4 in any of the following areas:
- 5 (a) Scripture;
- 6 (b) Theology;
- 7 (c) Religious history;
- 8 (d) Theological and social ethics;
- 9 (e) Spirituality;
- 10 (f) World religions; and
- 11 (g) Non-degree theological formation, subject to the following:
- 12 1. Qualifying non-degree theological formation may include, but is not limited to:
- 13 a. Completion of an ordination preparation process recognized by a denomination, faith
- 14 community, or ecclesiastical body;
- 15 b. Completion of one or more units of clinical pastoral education which are accredited by the
- 16 Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (hereinafter "ACPE");
- 17 c. Completion of a structured theological curriculum offered by a board-approved training
- 18 program, such as the KAPC Academy, where the content is substantially equivalent to graduate-
- 19 level theological coursework; or
- 20 d. Other theological formation, as reviewed and approved by the board on a case-by-case basis,
- 21 with documentation of such to be provided by one or more of the following:
- 22 (i) ordination certificates and documentation of ordination process;

1 (ii) clinical pastoral education unit completion records, program curricula, syllabi, and
2 certificates of completion; or
3 (iii) a written statement from a supervising clergy person, bishop, or denominational authority
4 attesting to the nature and scope of the formation.
5 (2) Core clinical theory. This area shall consist of graduate level coursework in each of the
6 following core clinical theory areas:
7 (a) Pastoral Counseling Theory. Coursework may include theological and psychological
8 integration models, pastoral counseling frameworks, spiritually-oriented therapeutic approaches,
9 religious coping theory, and the application of pastoral identity within clinical practice.
10 (b) Counseling Theory and Techniques. Coursework may include foundational and
11 contemporary counseling theories, models of change, therapeutic processes, and evidence-based
12 intervention techniques applicable to individual counseling practice.
13 (c) Group Dynamics and Techniques. Coursework may include theories of group development,
14 group leadership styles, facilitation skills, therapeutic factors, and methods for conducting
15 psychoeducational and therapeutic groups.
16 (d) Couples and Family Systems. Coursework may include systemic theories, relational patterns,
17 family development, couple and family assessment, and intervention strategies grounded in
18 family systems approaches.
19 (e) Social and Cultural Diversity. Coursework may include multicultural counseling theory,
20 cultural humility, identity development, social justice frameworks, and the impact of culture,
21 power, and context on the counseling relationship.

1 (f) Professional Ethics. Coursework may include ethical decision-making models, professional
2 standards of practice, legal considerations, confidentiality, boundaries, and application of the
3 American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, or comparable professional codes.
4 (g) Trauma-Informed Care and Neuroscience. Coursework may include the neurobiological
5 foundations of trauma, principles of trauma-informed practice, the impact of adverse
6 experiences, including complex and relational trauma, on development and functioning, and
7 evidence-based approaches to trauma recovery.
8 (3) Where a single graduate-level course addresses the content requirements of more than one of
9 the core clinical foundation areas described in subsection (2) of this section, the Kentucky Board
10 for Licensure for Pastoral Counselors may, in its discretion, accept such a course as satisfying
11 the requirement for each area addressed, provided the applicant submits a course syllabus or
12 description that in the Kentucky Board for Licensure for Pastoral Counselors' discretion,
13 demonstrates that the relevant content was substantively covered.
14 (4) Additional Applicable Coursework. The following graduate-level coursework may also be
15 applied toward the sixty (60) semester hour requirement set forth in Section I, provided the
16 content is consistent with the knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of a clinically
17 trained pastoral counselor and is documented through an official transcript or other means of
18 verification suitable in the discretion of the Kentucky Board of Licensure for Pastoral
19 Counselors.
20 (a) Advanced Pastoral Counseling Theory. Coursework may include graduate-level study that
21 deepens the integration of clinical mental health practice with theological reflection, spiritual
22 assessment, pastoral identity formation, and spiritually informed approaches to trauma, grief,
23 crisis, and ethical decision-making within therapeutic practice.

- 1 (b) Professional Identity. Coursework may include the history and philosophy of the counseling
2 profession, roles and functions of professional counselors, professional organizations,
3 credentialing, and advocacy.
- 4 (c) Theories of Human Behavior, Learning, and Personality Development. Coursework may
5 include developmental theories, learning theories, personality theory, and the study of human
6 growth across the lifespan.
- 7 (d) Career Development. Coursework may include career development theories, vocational
8 assessment, career counseling techniques, and the impact of work on mental health and
9 well-being.
- 10 (e) Diagnostic Assessment. Coursework may include diagnostic interviewing, use of the DSM,
11 differential diagnosis, case formulation, and assessment strategies used in clinical mental health
12 settings.
- 13 (f) Abnormal Behavior. Coursework may include the study of psychopathology, symptom
14 patterns, etiology of mental disorders, and evidence-based approaches to treatment planning.
- 15 (g) Substance Use Disorder Assessment and Treatment. Coursework may include screening and
16 assessment of substance use disorders, models of addiction, co-occurring disorders, and
17 evidence-based treatment approaches.
- 18 (h) Specialized Technical Studies. Coursework may include advanced or specialized clinical
19 approaches such as family systems theory, marriage and family therapy, psychodynamic
20 psychotherapies, cognitive-behavioral therapy, brief therapy models, and group therapy methods,
- 21 Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, or other counseling theories and techniques.
- 22 (i) Assessment and Testing. Coursework may include principles of psychological testing, test
23 selection, administration, scoring, interpretation, and ethical use of assessment instruments.

- 1 (j) Research and Program Evaluation. Coursework may include research methods, statistics,
2 evidence-based practice, program evaluation, and the use of research to inform clinical
3 decision-making.
- 4 (k) Human Sexuality. Coursework may include psychosexual development, sexual functioning,
5 sexual ethics, and counseling approaches related to sexuality and relationships.
- 6 (l) Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention. Coursework may include crisis theory, risk
7 assessment, crisis stabilization, suicide prevention, and emergency response strategies.
- 8 (m) Grief, Loss, and Bereavement. Coursework may include theories of grief, complicated grief,
9 spiritual dimensions of loss, and counseling interventions for bereavement.
- 10 (n) Pastoral or Spiritual Care Practices. Coursework may include spiritual assessment, pastoral
11 care methods, religious coping, and integration of spirituality in counseling practice.
- 12 (o) Psychopharmacology. Coursework may include basic knowledge of psychotropic
13 medications, indications, side effects, and collaboration with prescribing professionals.
- 14 (p) Technology, Telehealth, and Digital Ethics. Coursework may include the ethical and legal
15 dimensions of technology-assisted counseling, telehealth delivery standards and best practices,
- 16 electronic health record management, HIPAA compliance in digital clinical environments,
17 informed consent for remote services, and the clinical limitations and contraindications of
18 telehealth modalities.
- 19 (q) Ordination Preparation. Coursework may include supervised formation processes,
20 denominational ordination requirements, ministerial identity development, ecclesial leadership,
21 and vocational discernment, but no more than six (6) semester hours in Ordination Preparation
22 may count toward the sixty (60) semester hours required for an equivalent course of study in
23 Section I.

1 (r) Clinical Pastoral Education. Coursework may include supervised clinical ministry, pastoral
2 assessment, spiritual care interventions, interdisciplinary collaboration, and reflective practice
3 consistent with the training models of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education, but no
4 more than six (6) semester hours in Clinical Pastoral Education may count toward the sixty (60)
5 semester hours required for an equivalent course of study in Section I.
6 (s) Practicum, internship or residency. Coursework may include any supervised hands-on
7 activities, practical experience, or other activities relating to the rendering of pastoral counseling
8 services, but no more than three (3) semester hours in a practicum, internship or residency course
9 may count toward the sixty (60) semester hours required for an equivalent course of study in
10 Section I.

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APPROVED BY AGENCY:

Margaret Brooks

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