

ILIFF'S MILITARY MINISTRY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ILIFF
— SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY —
DENVER



Iliff's Military Ministry Course Provider Program offers progressive theological education for military chaplains, religious leaders, and mental health practitioners specializing in ministries with military service members, veterans, and their families. Pastoral theology faculty at Iliff have developed a two-year sequence of six online courses (one per quarter) available to students at other ATS accredited schools through the course provider program.

This program responds to needs identified in spring 2014, when faculty representatives from Brite Divinity School, Iliff School of Theology, Boston University School of Theology, and Eden Seminary met with active and retired military chaplains and service members concerned about the lack of theological diversity in military chaplaincy. The Strategic Document that came out of this 'Pathways to Military Chaplaincy' Conference issued an invitation to "theologically centrist and left-of-center Christian seminaries, theological schools, and divinity schools" to become more invested in educating military chaplains.

Iliff's Military Ministry program will bring progressive theological perspectives to the topics of war and peace, engage challenges and opportunities of ministry in multicultural and pluralistic contexts, and address a range of theological and psychological issues related to the impact of war and military service on persons, families and communities of faith.

The course provider program allows students at any ATS accredited graduate school to take our online Military Ministry courses through their home institution, without the need to transfer credits. Students can contact the Iliff registrar, Carmen Baca (cbaca@iliff.edu) for questions about registration through their seminary. Please contact Professor Carrie Doehring for questions about the courses (cdoehring@iliff.edu).

ONLINE MILITARY MINISTRY PROGRAM COURSES

IST2018 Impact of War on Pastoral Care and Theology

This course examines the unique challenges and opportunities of providing pastoral care with veterans and military families, focusing on issues including warrior identity, deployment and combat experience, impact on families, post-deployment reintegration, and the role of congregations. This course also explores how pastoral caregivers' personal and family experiences of war has an impact on pastoral care. This is a constructive, contextual theology course at the intersection of religious traditions, military culture, clinical disciplines and personal experience. Offered online in **Fall Quarter, 2019**

IST 3034 Post-Traumatic Stress: Pastoral, Psychological, and Theological Perspectives

This course uses a practical theological approach to traumatic narratives, drawing upon psychological perspectives on acute stress responses and post-traumatic stress (PTS), post-traumatic growth (PTG) and religious coping; and theological perspectives (theodicies) on traumatic suffering, and, in particular, the moral dilemmas generated by trauma and its aftermath. Students begin with their own trauma narratives in order to become aware of the embedded religious and existential beliefs and values they use to make sense of and cope with overwhelming stressors. They share their reflections and learn how to use a theologically-oriented transactional understanding of religious coping. The peer learning and support helps them practice an intercultural approach to spiritual care that fully acknowledges the mystery and alterity of

their religious worlds. This self and theologically reflexive learning forms them as pastoral and spiritual caregivers who deeply engage religious and cultural traditions within a spiritually, socially complex world. Offered online in **Winter Quarter, 2018**.

IST 3078 Crisis Care and Pastoral Theology

This course uses a practical theological approach that begins with life experiences of crisis care that include suicide, sexual assault, domestic violence, addiction, disability, and mental illness with particular populations (military service personnel, veterans, and their families; young adults; those marginalized because of aspects of their identity like sexual minority groups, racial groups, those going through the court system, those who are homeless). Students present case studies focusing on one of these specialized populations, with special attention to the ways intersecting social systems of privilege and oppression shape spiritual meanings of crises. Offered online in **Spring Quarter, 2018**



IST 3088 Spiritual Care in Pluralistic Contexts

This course helps students identify their personal values, attitudes, and beliefs and examine their own social identities to better understand how these dimensions of self can guide and challenge them in pastoral care and counseling settings. Students cultivate cultural sensitivity by considering care seekers' social identities and values, and the ways lived theologies are shaped by internalized social oppression. These theories and skills are used within an intercultural contextual approach to spiritual care that draws upon postmodern approaches to religious knowledge. Offered online in **Fall Quarter, 2018**

IST 3093 Moral Stress, Resilience and Spiritual Integration

Spiritual struggles and moral stress arise from conflicts (1) within oneself, particularly one's values, (2) between oneself and God for those in theocentric religious traditions, and (3) between oneself and one's significant religious and spiritual communities. Spiritual struggles "are defined as religious/spiritual expressions that reflect a religious/spiritual system in tension and turmoil" (Ano & Pargament, 2012, p. 419). Spiritual struggles "embody fundamental questions about the ultimate benevolence, fairness, and meaningfulness of the world..." (Pargament, Murray-Swank, Magyar, & Ano, 2005, p. 254). Moral stress is a consequence of spiritual struggles involving one's spiritual orienting system or lived theology—emotionally charged constellations of values, beliefs and ways of coping. When spiritual struggles become chronic they decrease spiritual, physical, and relational well-being. This course will explore spiritual struggles both in caregivers and care seekers from theological, psychological, and cultural perspectives. The goal of such exploration is liberative spiritual integration of spiritual struggles. This course is designed for pastoral and spiritual caregivers and for those interested in spiritually-orienting counseling, health care, and military chaplaincy. Offered online in **Winter Quarter, 2019**

IST 3097 War: Moral and Pastoral Perspectives

This course explores moral and pastoral perspectives on war and peace that are contextually relevant in encounters with persons and communities experiencing the impact of war and military service. We will begin with our own stories about the impact of war on our lives, in order to explore the embedded theologies/moral orienting systems (values, beliefs and behaviors) elicited by the case studies drawn from fiction, film, and writings about war and military service. We will use our discussion posts and responses to demonstrate capacities for intercultural spiritual care (Doehring, 2017), as we listen empathically across theological and moral differences about war. Offered online in **Spring, 2019**.

Faculty Director:

Carrie Doehring is Professor of Pastoral Care at Iliff School of Theology, ordained in the PCUSA, a licensed psychology and a diplomat in AAPC. She is author of (2015) *The Practice of Pastoral Care: A Postmodern*

Approach (Revised and Expanded). She has published extensively on pastoral care, trauma, and moral stress.

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