



Protecting the Vulnerable

Lecturing Professor

Julie Lowe, MA, LPC

Contact

Questions pertaining to the course material can be directed to your professor. If you have a question regarding class administration, please contact

student.services@ccef.org.

Canvas & Class Expectations

Canvas is an online learning platform that will host your course. Students enrolled in the course for credit are expected to watch the assigned video lectures, complete assigned readings, complete and submit assignments as listed in this syllabus for assessment, and participate in live meetings.

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Course Objectives

This course is for all who are interested in better understanding and addressing the need to protect the vulnerable in church and ministry contexts. Misunderstanding the nature of abuse and those who are abused often leads to a multitude of mistakes: confusion, fear, minimization, misuse of biblical principles, and harm to the individuals involved as well as the church community. We will work to wisely identify the issues of abuse as well as a theological approach to loving and protecting the vulnerable populations in our midst. The course will focus primarily on the group that is often seen as most vulnerable; children. However, we will touch on other groups that are increasingly targeted: the elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged.

In this course, students will:

- develop a biblical understanding of deception as it relates to abuse in church and ministry contexts
- understand and recognize predatory behavior and learn how to intervene
- examine the emotional, spiritual, and community impact of abuse on those who are vulnerable and whose weakness is preyed upon
- develop philosophies and strategies for caring for those who have been abused from a biblical worldview
- establish proactive, preventative approaches for caring for vulnerable groups
- learn how to build a ministry culture that is safe

Course Required Reading

Books Required for Purchase

- *On Guard: Protecting & Responding to Child Abuse* by Deepak Reju (224 pages)
- *Rid of My Disgrace: Hope and Healing for Victims of Sexual Assault* by Justin and Lindsay Holcomb (288 pages)
- *This Little Light: Beyond a Baptist Preacher Predator and His Gang* by Christa Brown (236 pages)
- *Protecting the Gift: Keep Children and Teens Safe (and Parents Sane)* by Gavin de Becker (352 pages)

Recommended Reading

- *Safe Sanctuaries for Ministers: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church* by Joy Thornburg Melton.
- *What Is A Girl Worth?* by Rachel Denhollander
- *Predators, Pedophiles, Rapists, & Other Sex Offenders: Who They Are, How They Operate, and How We Can Protect Ourselves and Our Children* by Anna Salter
- *Suffering and the Heart of God: How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores* by Diane Langberg



Course Schedule

Week One

Attend

- Live Meeting on Monday, October 25 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 1: Biblical Rationale for Mandated Reporting

Read

- *This Little Light*, pgs. 1-115

Submit

- Mandated Reporting for your state or locale

Week Two

Attend

- Live Meeting on Monday, November 1 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 2: Who Are the Vulnerable?

Read

- *This Little Light*, pgs. 116-236

Submit

- Engagement Paper #1 by Monday, November 8 at 11:30AM US ET

Week Three

Attend

- Live Meeting on Monday, November 8 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 3: The Nature of Deception, Part 1
- Lecture 4: The Nature of Deception, Part 2

Read

- *Protecting the Gift*, chs. 1-4

Week Four

Attend

- Live Meeting on Monday, November 15 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 5: Those Who Prey Upon the Vulnerable & How They Work
- Lecture 6: Why & How Churches Are Targeted

Read

- *Protecting the Gift*, chs. 5-8
- *Rid of My Disgrace*, pgs. 1-119

Week Five

Attend

- Live Meeting on Monday, November 29 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 7: Understanding How the Church Should Respond
- Lecture 8: The Wisdom & Complexity of Responding to Abuse

Read

- *Rid of My Disgrace*, pgs. 120-288
- *On Guard*, pgs. 1-100

Submit

- Engagement Paper #2 by Monday, November 22 at 11:30AM US ET



Course Schedule Continued

Thanksgiving Break

Given the amount of books assigned, we encourage students to use the week of Thanksgiving to complete required reading.

Week Six

Attend

- Final Live Meeting on Monday, December 6 at 12:00PM US ET

Watch

- Lecture 9: Prevention & Protection, Part 1
- Lecture 10: Prevention & Protection, Part 2

Read

- *On Guard*, pgs. 101-224

Submit

- Final Paper by Monday, December 13 at 11:30AM US ET
- Reading Attestation
- Course Evaluation

Assignment Format

1. All submitted papers/projects should be typed, 12-point font, Times New Roman or similar legible font, one-inch margins, and double-spaced unless indicated otherwise in the specific assignment directions.
2. Assignments will be uploaded in the Canvas Classroom by the assigned due date.
3. Papers should be submitted with one of the following file extensions: doc or docx. This format ensures that your professor will be able to open it.
4. Please type your name and word count at the top of the first page of any assignments that you submit.



Assignment Expectations

Attendance & Class Participation

It is imperative that you are present and engaged in the course. It is a challenging topic that requires thoughtful interaction as well as conviction regarding where you will land on the subject matter. Some will come to the course with very strong feelings and experiences on this subject; others will struggle to believe it is as serious as will be presented. Please be sensitive and cautious, and consider how your own biases may impact your approach.

Live Meetings *(Required)*

Live meetings will be held each Monday at 12:00PM US ET on the following dates:

- October 25
- November 1
- November 8
- November 15
- November 29
- December 6

Students are expected to attend and participate in the live meetings. If a student needs to miss for extenuating circumstances, meetings will be recorded. These meetings will be held via Zoom and require reliable internet access.

Discussion Boards *(Optional)*

Students may use the optional discussion boards to share ideas and resources about the topics that week.

Mandated Reporter Training

Due by the end of Week 1

You are required to complete a mandated reporter training online through either A) the Family Support Alliance (for PA residents) or B) a comparable reporter training agency in your respective state or country. You will register for the training for \$30 (if through FSA), and then take it by the due date. When you have completed the training, print out a certificate of completion and upload it to Canvas in the week it is due.

The PA Family Support Alliance reporter training can be found here: <https://pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training/>

If you have completed mandated reporter training already for your current occupation or ministry, Professor Lowe will accept that training if it has been completed in 2021. If your training pre-dates June 2021, you will be required to complete a new training course and provide your certificate of completion.

Course Assignments

Throughout the course, students will be required to submit assignments for assessment to receive a grade. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are not optional. To find instructions for the assignments, please see the assignment in Canvas.

Readings

By the end of class, you will be asked to sign an attestation of the percentage of the assigned reading that you completed during the semester and submit on Canvas.



Grading

Traditionally, final grades reflect a student's proficiency in learning the course content. It is a way to demonstrate mastery of course material. Grades also help motivate some students to be diligent in their work. As Christians our motivation for doing our best is found in Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." The majority of our students are actively engaged in ministry. We know this creates limitations for how much time they can spend on course assignments. This means that it is possible that your final grade won't perfectly reflect your mastery of the course content. Perhaps you made a good choice to turn something in late for a good reason, or you weren't able to devote as much time as you had hoped to your final exam, or you couldn't complete all of the required reading. We are aware that even the best grading process isn't perfect. Grades are simply one tool in the learning process. That said, we do hope that through the process of submitting assignments, receiving feedback and grades you will grow in wisdom and love.

The chief purposes of a grade are to be informative about how you have done and to help hold you accountable. Taking a course for credit challenges you to put in the time and concentrated effort needed to do your very best quality thinking and work. Your life and ministry depend upon your growing wisdom. We want to handle truth well; we want to walk well. Put off the competitiveness or fear of failure that lurks within and competes with our Father's goals for our education. Jesus' disciples are learners by definition, unashamed of our continual need to grow in knowledge, wisdom, and love (James 1:5; Matt. 5:3). The grading is a tool to help hold you accountable to those goals and desires that led you to register in the first place.

Assignment		Grading Scale	
• Attendance & Participation	10%	A	95 and above
• Mandated Reporter Training	5%	A-	92-94.9
• Engagement Papers	40%	B+	88-91.9
• Final Paper	40%	B	85-87.9
• Reading	5%	B-	82-84.9
		C+	78-81.9
		C	75-77.9
		C-	72-74.9
		D+	70-71.9
		D	68-69.9
		D-	66-67.9
		F	< 66