

COUN5323 Marriage and Family Counseling
Midwestern State University
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
Summer I 2021

Instructor/Contact Information:

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Office Hours: I am available by appointment

Class Room/Class Times: Online

Dates during which communication may be delayed due to conference travel: ***

Required Text:

Gladding, S. T. (2014). Family therapy: History, theory, and practice (6th ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: Pearson.

*Supplemental articles or readings as assigned throughout the course. These will be provided to you through D2L

Suggested Texts

Johnson, S. M. (2004). The Practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R. & Shellenberger, S. (2008). Genograms: Assessment and intervention (3rd ed.). New York City, NY: Norton.

*Note: These will be helpful with portions of the course; however, they are not required.

Catalog/Course Description: A comprehensive study of the major theories of marriage and family counseling. Skill building through media, modeling, and role playing.

Prerequisites: COUN 5203

CACREP Common Core Area Standards Addressed in this Course:

- 1.f. professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues
- 2.a. multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally (KPI)
- 2.c. multicultural counseling competencies
- 3.a. theories of individual and family development across the lifespan
- 5.a. theories and models of counseling (KPI)
- 5.b. a systems approach to conceptualizing clients
- 5h. developmentally relevant counseling treatment or intervention plans

9.b. theories and models related to clinical mental health counseling

Learning Objectives:

- LO1. Students will explore historical antecedents to the practice of family system therapy.
- LO2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the various family systems theories.
- LO3. Students will be able to identify and describe the various family counseling modalities and major theorists associated with family systems modalities.
- LO4. Students will be able to understand the rationale for selecting family systems theories as appropriate modalities of intervention for working with families.
- LO5. Students will be able to understand the legal and ethical considerations when engaging in family systems therapy.

Focus of the Course: Students will gain the knowledge and skills needed to begin counseling couples and families. Students will learn various approaches to helping with marriage and family conflicts related to divorce, complex family dynamics, issues surrounding children, and family violence. In addition, students will learn how to navigate the sometimes difficult issue of couples in conflict.

Course Calendar and Activities:

Class Session	CACREP Standards	Topics	Materials	Activities/ Assignments
1	3.a. 5.b. 9.b. 2.a., 2.c. 5.b.	Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy History & Theoretical Context of Family Therapy Types & Functionality of Families; Single-Parent & Blended Families	Reading: Chapters 1-4 4	Discussion reflection of chapters 1-4
2	3.a. 5.a. 5.b. 5.h. 1.f. 2.a. 2.c. 3.a. 5.a. 5.b. 9.b. 2.a. 2.c. 5.a. 5.b. 9.b.	The Process of Family Therapy Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues Couple and Marriage Family	Reading: Chapters 5-8 Student Presentation Video	Discussion reflection of chapters 5-8 Presentations Due

Class Session	CACREP Standards	Topics	Materials	Activities/ Assignments
		Culturally Diverse Families		
3	2.c. 3.a. 5.b. 5.h. 9.b.	Transgenerational Theories: Psychodynamic & Bowen Experiential Family Therapy Behavioral and Cognitive Behavioral Family Theories Structural Family Therapy	Reading: Chapters 9-12	Discussion reflection of chapters 9-12 All Theoretical Expert Projects Due KPI 2.a., 5.a.
4	2.c. 3.a. 5.b. 5.h. 9.b	Strategic & Milan Systemic Family Therapy Solution-Focused, Narrative, & Feminist Family Therapies	Reading: Chapters 13 & 14	Family Theory Paper Due KPI 5.a, 2.a.
5	5.b. 5.h.	Substance-Related Disorders, Domestic Violence, & Child Abuse	Reading: Chapter 15	Unessay Project KPI 5.a. Due 5/5

*This is a tentative schedule that may change due to the discretion of the instructor

Assessment and Assignments:

Student performance of knowledge and skills will be formally assessed through:

Online Assignments (15 pts. Each/210 points): You will have weekly assignments that are due in D2L at 11:59 pm on Sunday evenings. The purpose of the weekly assignments is to help you synthesize information learned from the reading, to enable you to exchange information with classmates, and for you to practice material learned. There are fourteen assignments in this class. The online assignments help me make sure you are staying on track, and

participating in the course. I may email you if you miss multiple online assignments in a row to make sure that you are still planning on staying in the class.

Theoretical Expert Project (150 pts.) KPI 2.a. 5.a.

You will be assigned a theory, on which you will create a 15 minute presentation. Depending on the class size, this will be an individual or group (approximately) 15 minute presentation uploaded to Youtube (you share the link with the class), or uploaded through Dropbox in D2L and sent to me 2 days in advance of the due date, so that I can upload the video for class review. You will not receive extra time for technical difficulties, so I suggest you get the video done in time. If you have issues with uploading the video or creating a Youtube video, then you need to contact IT Help, distance learning or both. You can also contact me, as you will be turning in the assignment 2 days in advance of the hard due date. Please note, that if you email 2 days before, and have not attempted or sought help through IT, there will be little I can do to help if there is no easy solution. The class will be required to watch the video and reflect on the presentation in their online assignment for that week.

The presentation will focus on the following: *theorist, theoretical tenets, techniques, application, and reflection*. The *theorist, theoretical tenets, techniques, and application* portions will come from the book and the literature. Each student will select at least three journal articles on contemporary marriage and family issues within the boundaries of their topic and incorporate this information into their project. The journals must be peer reviewed, and be no older than 2007. The presentation can include areas of concern for which this approach is used, populations who may benefit, specific techniques, barriers to consider, etc. The purpose of your presentation is to answer the questions: When would I use this approach? How would I use this approach?

You can use a variety of methods to complete the assignment, such as Powerpoint, Prezi, or Google Presentation. You could also get really creative and do some acting by creating your own film. It's really up to you, and creativity is encouraged! Remember though that you have to actually present (audio and video), and just turning in a Powerpoint will not count as a 15 minute presentation.

*See *Theoretical Expert Project Handout* for more information.

Family Theory Paper (150+15 extra for genogram = 165 pts.) KPI 5.a.

Write a 10-15 page paper, in APA Style (not including cover page or references). Choosing the theory of your choice explain the: *theorist, theoretical tenets, techniques*. Then apply the theory to the movie, book, or TV show family of your choice. Explain how you would complete family therapy with the family chosen from the book, or TV Show you choose. You may use the same theory you presented on, but it will be beneficial to you to choose a theory that aligns with your beliefs, and how you would like to actually conduct therapy to prepare you for working with future families.

*See *Family Theory Paper Handout* for more information.

The Unessay Project (100 points) KPI 5.a.

The final exam is the Unessay, a project that involves any theory, theorist, or approach to family therapy, in any medium you choose. As therapists it is important to take the knowledge you

learn, and apply that knowledge creatively to the clients present in your therapy session. You choose your own theory, theorist, or approach to family therapy, present the work however you please, and you are evaluated by how truthful, effective, and compelling your message is. Do you want to write an autobiography, a children's book, or create a family sculpture? Do you want to make a collage, write a paper, film a therapy session (talk to me if you choose this option), or create a game or movie? Will you write a screenplay, or theory of family therapy? Will you write a song or haiku, or create a website or company? You are completely free to use your creativity to make a project that conveys something what you have learned from class.

*See *The Unessay Project Handout* for more information.

Grading Procedures:

Grading Policy

Total Points = 625 pts.

625-500 = A

499-400 = B

399-200= C

199-0= Below a C

The MSU Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling programs require at least a B average. C's are unacceptable, and more than 2 C's will put you in danger of being removed from the program. Please consult the Student Handbook for more information.

Grades

Online Assignments/Discussions	210 pts.
Theoretical Expert Project	150
Family Theory Paper	150 pts. (15 extra for genogram = 165) pts.)
The Unessay Project	100 pts.
Total	610 pts.
Total with extra points	625 pts.

Counseling Expectations

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, its faculty, and its students adhere to the University Code of Conduct, State of Texas licensure laws and regulations, and the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (2014). The program has a professional responsibility to ensure that all students display ethical, professional, and personal behaviors that comply with these guidelines. Students are strongly encouraged to review, understand, and consult the [American Counseling Association website](#) for details related to these guidelines

Other Class Policies

Classroom Behaviors

Department of Counseling students are expected to demonstrate appropriate classroom behavior, consistent with their counselor-in-training roles. Counselors-in-training are expected to convey attentiveness and respect in all professional and classroom settings.

Late Assignments: All papers and assignments must be turned in the day they are due. **No exceptions.** If you have an emergency please let me know in advance, and/or email me your assignment the same day it is due. Any late papers will be lowered **five (5) points** for the first day it is turned in late. After the first late day, the paper will drop 25% off the entire paper per day until the student turns in the work, or reaches a 0%. No other assignments will be accepted late. Please observe that your assignments are worth a considerable amount of points and skipping even one assignment will most likely significantly lower your grade. Please begin planning your semester schedule accordingly. Online assignments will not be accepted after the due date. If you have an emergency that prevents you from completing an assignment and you would like credit, documentation of the emergency is required Ex. Hospital note etc.

Netiquette: It is expected that students use formal, professional language when corresponding online. It is expected that you use complete sentences, address one another with respect, follow the American Counseling Association *Code of Ethics* (2014), and treat all members of the class with respect.

Respect for Diversity: It is my intent to present material and activities that are respectful of diversity. It is also my intent that students from all perspectives and diverse backgrounds be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated.

Confidentiality: Upholding confidentiality is a major responsibility of the student. Anything discussed during supervision, online in this class, or shared by individual students about themselves is considered confidential. Please do not share any information shared to you by other students. A PICS will be completed on students who break confidentiality without an appropriate clinical reason.

Academic Honesty:

MSU students demand of themselves the highest level of academic honesty as delineated in their honor creed. Academic honesty involves the submission of work that is wholly the student's own work, except in the case of assigned group work. Additionally, academic honesty involves the proper citation of other author's works.

Senate Bill 11:

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at: [Campus Carry](#).

Limited Right to Intellectual Property:

By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

Disability Services:

Disability Support Services (DSS) provides services to students with disabilities to insure accessibility to university programs. DSS offers information about accommodations and disability, evaluation referral, adaptive technology training and equipment, and interpreter services for academically related purposes.

If you suspect you have a disability that is impacting your academic performance or have been previously documented as a person with a disability, you will need to apply and provide documentation of that disability to the Disability Support Services. This documentation must be supplied by a qualified professional who is licensed or certified to diagnose the disability in question.

The Disability Support Services office is located in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center. If you need assistance, you can also contact them at (940) 397-4140.

References:

Gladding, S. T. (2014). Family therapy: History, theory, and practice (6th ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: Pearson.