

**Couple and Family Counseling
Psychology 768
Sample Syllabus**

"The family--that dear octopus from whose tentacles we never quite escape."
D. Smith

"All happy families are alike, but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."
Tolstoy

"There's no vocabulary /For love within a family; love that's lived in/
But not looked at, love within the light of which/
All else is seen, the love within which/ All other love finds speech./
This love is silent."

T.S. Eliot

Textbooks

Required: ***Note: textbooks required by individual professors may differ from this list*

Minuchin, S., Nichols, M., Lee. W. (2007). Assessing families and couples: From symptom to system. Boston: Pearson: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN 0205470122

Recommended:

Jongsma, A. & Dattilio, F. (2000). The family therapy treatment planner. New York: John Wiley.

Minuchin, S. & Fishman, C. (1981). Family therapy techniques. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Prep.

Minuchin, S., Lee. W., Simon, G. (2006). Mastering Family Therapy: Journeys of Growth and Transformation. John Wiley & Sons.

O'Hanlon, W. & Beadle, S. A Guide to Possibility Land: Fifty-One Methods for Doing Brief, Respectful Therapy.

O'Hanlon, W. (2003). A guide to inclusive therapy.

Ragg, M. (2006). Building family practice skills. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Sherman, R. and Fredman, N. (1986). Handbook of structured techniques in marriage and family therapy. Levittown, PA: Bruner Mazel Publishing Company.

Worden, M. (1998). Family therapy basics, 3rd edition. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company. (Also used for PSYC 668 002)

Course Description:

This graduate level course is designed to provide students with an introduction to conducting couple and family therapy. The primary objective of the class is to assist the beginning clinician in translating theories into action. At the completion of this course the student should be able to:

- *formulate hypotheses about couple and family structure and process
- *compose goals for couple and family therapy
- *identify problematic patterns of interaction and communication in families and couples
- *design and practice therapeutic, systemic interventions with individuals, couples, and families
- *provide meaningful feedback to interprofessional team members

*identify and respond to culturally sensitive issues

*identify and respond appropriately to ethical issues in treatment.

To accomplish these objectives the format of the class will combine lecture, discussion, and experiential activities. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings or activities prior to each class and to contribute to class discussions in an informed manner.

If you are a student with a documented disability, who will be requesting accommodations in my class, please make sure you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, Wilson Hall, Room 107, 568-6705, and provide me with a copy of your Access Plan letter outlining your accommodations. I will be glad to meet with you privately to discuss accommodations.

Course Requirements:

The requirements for the class include:

1. Class attendance and participation.
2. Therapy team participation. You are to participate as a member of therapy team and observe your team member(s) conducting couple or family therapy. Team members are expected to provide feedback about the progress of the case to the primary therapist(s). Students are expected to conduct/observe therapy sessions at CAPS. Maintain a record of your observations using the Family Systems Team observation form. (If you are unable to observe a session directly, you may observe videotapes, prepare written feedback, and share it with the therapist(s). Submit your forms with a cover sheet listing the sessions observed at the end of each week. (20%)
3. Videotape of therapy. You will submit 2 videotapes for class presentation and peer review. The videotapes (at least 30 minutes in length) are to show you conducting a couple or family therapy session. The session may be done with a co-therapist and the clients should be from a clinical setting. A written analysis of each videotape segment will also be submitted (5 pages). The analysis should provide a:
 - brief discussion of the relevant background information for the client/couple/family
 - 3-generation genogram (e.g., children, parents, grandparents);
 - circular/contextual description of the system's interactions (Do NOT submit a linear/blaming description. I suggest you use the McGoldrick Carter diagram showing reciprocal ecosystemic influences, vertical and horizontal stressors, and life cycle stage to illustrate relevant influences and describe the family's patterns of interaction.);
 - listing of the hypotheses you are exploring;
 - multi-axial diagnosis (DSM-IV);
 - goals for therapy (I suggest you consult the Jongsma and Dattilio text);
 - description of the strategies and techniques you employed and a theory-based rationale for the interventions you conducted.
 - Please include a transcription of 10 minutes of the tape for more in-depth analysis.

For your class presentation you are encouraged to use the above outline to introduce the class to your clients and the major emphases of your work

together. Use the class to practice your conceptualization/reporting skills and to explore questions you have generated about the work you are doing. For example, you may want to use the class to sculpting, do a family art activity, or examine the family from a different theoretical orientation. (Select a total of no more than 10 minutes of videotape.) Plan on 30 minutes to one hour for your presentation. (30%)

4. "Self in the system" writing assignments. You will complete three brief (about 3 pages each) writing assignments. The topic of these papers is you.
 - First, please take some time to introduce your family to me in relation to your goals for this class (remember, I may have had a previous introduction).
 - The second paper should be a "progress report" of sorts, i.e., are you meeting your goals (of course, they may have changed), what have you learned about yourself as a couple or family counselor?
 - In the last paper, please review your progress and imagine yourself in 5 years. How will you be using this information and the experiences? What will you be doing? (10%)

YOUR CHOICE

5. Topical presentation. Please collaborate with a classmate to conduct a topical presentation for the class. Topics will be discussed and assigned in class and may be related to the clients you are working with or simply a topic of interest to you. You are expected to include and summarize relevant work from both research and clinical couple and family systems literature. Create a handout for the class that includes:
 - a definition/description of the topic
 - key constructs
 - recommended systemic techniques
 - an annotated professional reference list and client's resource list.(at least 5 items on each list) (20%)

-----OR-----

5. Videotape presentation of technique (You may do this activity with a partner.). Please select a videotape of particular theoretical approach, issue, or problem to review from the collection at Carrier library or from Anne. View the tape and prepare a brief description of the theory and technique and an outline of the video content to distribute to the class (1-2 pages). Select a segment of the tape (not more than 10 minutes) to show in class that demonstrates a therapeutic technique. In your class presentation (up to 45 minutes)
 - introduce the technique and show the tape
 - provide some practice/experience with the technique for the class
 - critique the use of the technique. (20%)
6. Final exam. The format of the final examination will be experiential. Small groups will be formed and you will be asked analyze and role play a family therapy session. You will discuss your conceptualization of the case and the intervention with each other and the instructor. The final exam will be help at our regular class time during finals week. (10%)

Each requirement contributes toward the course grade.

Students are expected to conduct their class activities in adherence with the JMU Honor Code.

SAMPLE

DATE	TOPIC and ASSIGNMENT
Week 1	<p data-bbox="427 258 1203 287">Introduction. Thoughts about therapy, systems, and families.</p> <p data-bbox="427 323 737 449">Will you, want you, Will you, want you, Will you join the dance? -Carroll, 1865</p> <ul data-bbox="427 485 714 579" style="list-style-type: none"> • BB PPT (Slides 1-40) • Family Life Cycle • Family Timeline
Week 2	<p data-bbox="427 615 857 741">Thinking Family: Theories and Frameworks Family Functioning and Normality Assessing Families and Couples</p> <ul data-bbox="427 777 1370 936" style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapt 1 • Chapt 2 • BB PPT (Slides 1-40) • BB McGoldrick, M. & Carter, B. <u>Self in context: The individual life cycle in systemic perspective.</u> <p data-bbox="427 972 568 1001">OPTIONAL:</p> <ul data-bbox="427 1003 946 1035" style="list-style-type: none"> • BB Family therapy without the family
Week 3	<p data-bbox="427 1071 829 1134">Theories and Frameworks Assessing Families and Couples</p> <ul data-bbox="427 1169 906 1262" style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapt 10 • BB PPT (Slides 41-68) • 1st paper due--Family and Goals
Week 4	<p data-bbox="427 1297 1010 1392">Assessing Families: Exploration and Data Collection with Families Structuring Family Exploration</p> <ul data-bbox="427 1428 1094 1491" style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapt 3 • BB Re-envisioning families through a cultural lens <p data-bbox="427 1526 568 1556">OPTIONAL:</p> <p data-bbox="427 1558 1390 1650">Hayden, L., Schiller, M. Dinkstein, S., Seifer, R., Sameroff, A., Miller, I., Keitner, G., & Rasmussen, S. (1998). Levels of family assessment: I. Family, marital, and parent-child interaction. <u>Journal of family psychology</u>, 12, 1, 7-22.</p>
Week 5	<p data-bbox="427 1686 833 1715">Assessing and Treating Couples</p> <ul data-bbox="427 1751 790 1852" style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapt 6 • Chapt 7 • BB Handouts on couples

- BB Blow, A. & Hartnett, K. (2005). Infidelity in committed relationships II: A substantive review. *Journal of marital and family therapy*.
- BB Gottman, J. (1994). Why marriages fail.

OPTIONAL:

Johnson, S. & Whiffen, V. (1999). Made to measure: Adapting emotionally focused couple therapy to partners' attachment styles. *Clinical psychology: Science and practice*, 6, 4, 368-381.

Guerin, P., Fay L., Burden, S. & Kautto, J. (1987). The marital dyad: A theoretical overview. In P. Guerin, L. Fay, S. Burden & J. Kautto, *The evaluation and treatment of marital conflict*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 33-61.

Duncan, B. & Rock, J. (1993). Saving relationships: The power of the unpredictable. *Psychology today*, 86, 94, 46-51.

Dahlheimer, D. & Feigal, J. (1991). Bridging the gap. *Family therapy networker*. January/February, 44-53.

Gordon, K., Baucom, D., Snyder, D. (2004). An integrative intervention for promoting recovery from extramarital affairs. *Journal of marital and family therapy*.
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3658/is_200404/ai_n9394446

Week 6

Assessing Families and Couples

- BB Waters, D. & Lawrence, E. (1993). Creating a therapeutic vision. *Family therapy networker*. November/December, 52-58.
- Chapt. 4
- Chapt. 5
- PRESENTATIONS- Topical or Technique

Week 7

Building the Working Alliance: Preliminary Engagement with Family Members

VIEW and discuss Minuchin video

- Laszloffy, T. & Hardy, K. (2000). Uncommon strategies for a common problem: Addressing racism in family therapy. *Family process*, 39, 1, pp. 35-49.
- Greene, B. (1995). African American families: A legacy of vulnerability and resilience. *National forum*, 75, 3, 29-32.

OPTIONAL

Boyd-Franklin, N. (1987). The contribution of family therapy models to the treatment of black families. Psychotherapy, 24, 621-629.

Week 8 Building the Working Alliance: Interactive Engagement with Family Members

*1st VIDEOTAPE of Student/Team conducting systemic work DUE

Tape Presentation _____

Tape Presentation _____

OPTIONAL

Minuchin, S. (1998). Where is the family in narrative family therapy? Journal of marital and family therapy, 24, 4, 397-403.

Combs, G. & Freedman, J. (1998). Tellings and retellings. Journal of marital and family therapy, 24, 4, 404-408.

Tomm, K. (1998). A question of perspective. Journal of marital and family therapy, 24, 4, 409-413.

Tomm, K. (1988). Interventive Interviewing: III. Intending to ask lineal, circular, strategic or reflexive questions. Family Process 27, 1-15.

Week 9 SPRING BREAK--ENJOY!

Week 10 Positioning Families for Change and Direct Change Strategies for Influencing Family Action Systems

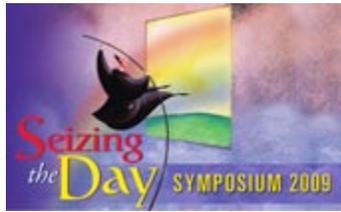
Gil, E. (2000). Use of play techniques in the assessment and treatment of families. Handout from Association for Play Therapy Conference, New Orleans.

- PRESENTATIONS- Topical or Technique
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Week 11 Positioning Families for Change and Direct Change Strategies for Influencing Family Action Systems

- BB Imber-Black, E. & Roberts, J. (2000). Rituals for our times. Annual editions: Marriage and family. Guilford, CT: Dushkin Publishing.
- BB Tomm, K. (1987b). Interventive interviewing: II. Reflective questioning as a means to enable self-healing. Family process 26, pp. 167-183.

- *2nd Paper due--Progress Report



Seizing The Day
Therapy and the Art of Engagement

March 26 - 29, 2009
Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, D.C.

Week 12 2nd VIDEOTAPE DUE

Tape Presentation _____

Tape Presentation _____

Week 13 Influencing Family Members Through Indirect Strategies of Change

- Chapt. 8
- Chpat. 11
- BB Andreas S. (1992). Embedding the message. Family therapy networker, May/June.
- BB Eron, J. & Lund, T. (1989). From magic to method. Family therapy networker, Jan/Feb

Week 14 2nd VIDEOTAPE DUE

Tape Presentation _____

Tape Presentation _____

Week 15 Special Issues – Outcomes in Family Therapy

- BB Client and therapists perceptions (in Outcomes folder)

OPTIONAL

Altman, H. (1997). Family systems therapy: Meeting the challenge of managed care. In R. Alperin & D. Phillips, The impact of managed care on the practice of psychotherapy (121-143). NY, NY: Brunner/Mazel Publishers.

Week 16

Final Examination

- *3rd paper due--A look at the Future

Week 17

No class

Complete paperwork for case.

Optional readings are available from Anne and may be on our class BB site.

SAMPLE

Family Systems Team Observation Form

Client initials _____ Session # _____ Date _____

Team members _____

Client members present _____

Contact before session _____

Team preparation

Hypotheses

Directions/ requests for team members

Plan of session

Treatment Goals

Session

Opening statement/presentation of family

Significant information/change reported

Language/themes

Progress of session

Team suggestions

Closing statements/homework

Questions for supervision

Part I: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: FAMILY THERAPY AS A MOVEMENT ACROSS TIME.

1. Family Therapy: Journey through Diversity and Integration.
2. The Journey Continues: Second-Generation Trends in Family Therapy.
3. Integration of Theory: Common Themes.
4. Integration of Practice: Common Themes.

Part II: ORGANIZING TREATMENT: AN OVERVIEW OF SEQUENCES AND TASKS.

5. Starting off on the Right Foot: Referral and Intake.
6. The Initial Interview: A Template for General Tasks in Family Therapy.
7. Relational Assessments: Exploring Client Experience.
8. Beginning and Maintaining Relational Change.

Part III: THE FUTURE OF FAMILY THERAPY: EVALUATIONS, RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION.

9. Evaluations and Research in Family Therapy.
 10. Family Therapy Collaborations.
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