

**Family Therapy-Theory and Practice
PC 3043**

“In every conceivable manner, the family is the link to our past, the bridge to our future”
Alex Haley

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Course Description

This course provides procedural, theoretical, and theological foundations for the practice of family therapy. In this course, students will explore the nature and development of family therapy, its impact on understanding human motivation and relationship systems, and explore its application in clinical practice. This will include a focus on family organization, family subsystems, and trans-generational processes as they apply to assessment, case conceptualization, treatment, and theological understandings of family therapy. Through exploring contemporary family therapy approaches, students will have the opportunity to experience a variety of intervention methods and begin the process of formulating a theologically and personally integrated model of family therapy. Concepts discussed in this course will be applied to a variety of contexts and relationships.

Required Texts

Nichols, M. P. (2011). *Family therapy: concepts and methods*, 10th ed. New York: Pierson.

Sprenkle, D. H., Davis, S.D., & Lebow, J. L. (2009). *Common factors in couple and family therapy: The overlooked foundation for effective practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Required Reading From

Gehart, D. R. (2014). *Mastering competencies in family therapy: A practical approach to theory and clinical case documentation* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Recommended Texts

Dattilio, F. M., & Beck, A. T. (2010). *Cognitive-behavioral therapy with couples and families: A comprehensive guide for clinicians*. New York: Guilford Press.

Franklin, C., Trepper, T. S., McCollum, E. E., & Gingerich, W. J. (Eds.). (2012). *Solution-focused brief therapy: A handbook of evidence-based practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Sweezy, M., & Ziskind, E. L. (Eds.). (2013). *Internal family systems therapy: New dimensions*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

SEMINARY POLICIES – See Student Handbook for policies on use of inclusive language, academic honesty, citation, attendance, and special accommodations. (NOTE FOR COAMFTE: These policies are normally inserted but removed due to space limitations for the self-study.)

Make-Up Work Policy: *No make up work for unexcused absences will be accepted.* Simply emailing the instructors informing them that you will be absent (for any reason) will **not** count as an excused absence, and therefore will count as an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences will result in a score of “0” for any assignments due on the day of your absence. Acceptable excused absences include death of an immediate family member, an obligatory school function or illness with a doctor’s note. In order for these absences to be **excused**, students must provide documentation of their absence. If you have an excused absence, you will be allowed to make-up assignments that you missed as a result of your absence. Arrangements for make-up assignments are to be coordinated with the instructors.

Email Policy: Emails will be responded to as quickly as possible. However, emails sent on the weekend may not be responded to until Monday. It is highly recommended that you provide sufficient time before an assignment is due for receiving a response to an email asking a question.

Objectives and Expected Student Learning Outcomes

<u>By the end of the semester, students will:</u>	<u>Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) & MFT Competencies (MFTC:)</u>	<u>Assessment Signature Assignments</u>
Demonstrate basic knowledge of a broad systemic perspective as it relates to human interaction in diverse family, romantic and professional relationships	SLO: 2: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory MFTC 1.1.1 Understand systems, concepts, theories and techniques foundational to...MFT MFTC 1.1.2: Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics	-Complete Reading -Class Participation -Clinical Case Study & Presentation (Rubric) -Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation (Rubric) -Final Exam
Be able to use systemic categories to conceptualize family organization, family subsystems, and transgenerational processes in a therapeutic context	SLO: 2: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory MFTC 2.1.1: Understand principles of...family development and processes MFTC 2.2.3: Develop hypotheses regarding relationship patterns and their bearing on the presenting problem...	-Final Exam -Clinical Case Study & Presentation (Rubric)
Demonstrate understanding of interactions of class, race, gender, and cultural experience on theory development and intervention procedures	SLO 4: able to use a multicultural approach to Marriage and Family Therapy that attends appropriately to religious, cultural, racial, economic, gender, and sexual orientation diversity in client systems, client-therapist systems, supervisory systems, and broader social systems. MFTC 1.2.1: Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics...	-Clinical Case Study & Presentation (Rubric) -Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation (Rubric)
Be able to discuss the history of Marriage and Family Therapy, development of its methods and its professional requirements (licensing, etc.)	SLO: 2: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory MFTC: 1.1.1 Understand systems, concepts, theories and techniques foundational to...MFT	-Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation (Rubric) -Final Exam

Demonstrate basic knowledge of primary models of Family Therapy and how they are used to guide the clinical practice of Marriage and Family Therapy	<p>SLO 1: able to conduct multicultural, evidence-based therapy with individuals, couples and families that meets entry-level professional standards.</p> <p>SLO: 2: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory</p> <p>MFTC 1.1.1: Understand systems, concepts, theories and techniques foundational to...MFT</p> <p>MFTC 1.3.1: Gather and review intake information...balanced attention to individual, family, community...contextual factors</p> <p>MFTC 3.1.1 Know which models...are most effective for presenting problems</p> <p>MFTC 4.1.2: Recognize strengths, limitations...of...therapy models</p> <p>MFTC 4.5.1: Respect multiple perspectives...</p>	<p>-Family Therapy Model Role Play</p> <p>-Final Exam</p> <p>-Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation (Rubric)</p>
Be able to describe how Marriage and Family Therapy Differs from other clinical disciplines	<p>SLO: 2: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory</p> <p>MFTC: 1.1.1 Understand systems, concepts, theories and techniques foundational to...MFT</p> <p>3.1.1 Know which models...are most effective for presenting problems</p>	-Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation
Be able to describe basic counseling processes from intake to termination of therapy	<p>SLO 1: able to conduct multicultural, evidence-based therapy with individuals, couples and families that meets entry-level professional standards..</p> <p>MFTC 1.1.4: Understand the risks and benefits of ...family...psychotherapy</p> <p>MFTC 3.3.5: Manage...therapy toward treatment goals</p> <p>MFTC 4.1.2: Recognize strengths, limitations...of...therapy models</p>	-Clinical Case Study & Presentation
Demonstrate a beginning ability to relate theological/spiritual concepts, contexts and meanings to the theory and practice of marriage and family therapy.	<p>SLO 4: able to use a multicultural approach to Marriage and Family Therapy that attends appropriately to religious, cultural, racial, economic, gender, and sexual orientation diversity in client systems, client-therapist systems, supervisory systems, and broader social systems.</p> <p>SLO 5: able to use a theologically informed and clinically appropriate framework to integrate religious and spiritual factors into the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy.</p> <p>MFTC: 1.2.1 Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics</p> <p>2.2.3: Develop hypotheses regarding relationship patterns and their bearing on the presenting problem...</p> <p>2.2.4 Consider the influence of treatment on extra-therapeutic relationships</p> <p>2.3.8 Identify clients' strengths, resilience, and resources</p> <p>4.3.2 Deliver interventions in a way that is sensitive to special needs of clients...</p>	<p>-Clinical Case Study and Presentation</p> <p>-Group Family Reflection Paper</p>

Multicultural Therapy Definition: Multicultural Therapy, according to D. W. Sue and Torino (2005, p 3) "...can be defined as both a helping role and process that uses modalities and defines goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of clients, recognizes client identities to include individual, group, and universal dimensions, advocates the use of universal and culture-specific strategies and roles in the healing process, and balances the importance of individualism and collectivism in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of client and client systems." Multicultural competence as a therapist includes: (1) therapist awareness of personal assumptions, values and biases, (2) understanding the worldview of diverse clients, and (3) facility with appropriate strategies and interventions consistent with the life experiences and values of culturally different clients. (Sue & Sue 2008)

Evidence-based Practice Definition: EBP is a "...practice-friendly approach to using research to enhance family therapy" (Gehard, 2010, 133). This approach looks to research to help clinicians make decisions in therapy about care for individual clients, couples and families. Evidence-based practice will (1) look to research for information about what treatments are most effective for specific problems, (2) critically examine that research for its validity and applicability to specific cases, and (3) evaluate how effective a selected method is for specific clients, couples and families (for example, using the ORS/SRS).

Course Requirements:

I. Assigned Readings, Class Participation, Attendance (15%)

Task:

Students will complete required reading and participate in class discussion each class period.

Evaluation:

Students will demonstrate completion of reading assignments by participating in class discussions. Students will document completion of reading assignments each class period using the Class Feedback form.

II. Research-Informed Clinical Case Study and Presentation--Due December 8 (30%)

Tasks:

- A. The paper will consist of an identification of a problem depicted in the movie, a narrative summary of what occurred and the family members involved, followed by your conceptualization of the system based on the model chosen. From there, you are to identify three ways the system could change that are consistent with the model's belief about relationships. **Due dates for movie choice and model choice are listed in the course schedule.**
1. Choose a movie of interest from the list in Appendix A. The movies involve a family topic or other systemic relationship. Your job is to analyze the family situation based on the models you have chosen and formulate these relationships in the form of their presenting problem and case conceptualization (i.e., assessment, treatment plan, theory of change based on the models you have selected).
 2. Select ONE Modern Family Therapy Model and ONE Postmodern Family Therapy Model from which to analyze your clinical case. **Note: The models chosen must be ones that we have covered in the course.**

3. Find a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed research articles and 2 or more books on the family models you have selected (break down: 5 articles and 1-2 books on the modern family therapy model and 5 articles and 1-2 books on the postmodern family therapy model).
4. Find a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed research articles on the presenting problem identified by your family.
5. Follow the directions outlined in the Case Study Integration Guide.

B. Write a case study following the Case Study Rubric Download from CAMS.

1. Your case study should be based on research related to one of the family therapy models central to this class. This requires you to use professional sources. Remember to **CITE** anything that is not your own work. Keep in mind that you are presenting a **SCHOLARLY** application/analysis of the model. Your paper should show substantial investigation into the model you are using beyond classroom instruction and assigned reading.
2. Since this is a research informed case study (consistent with Evidence-based Practice) be sure to attend to the following:
 - You will need to locate professional journal articles related to use of the model you selected.
 - You will also need to include journals articles related to the identified problem. For example: If you were to chose a case involving a stepfamily and you wanted to use intergenerational family therapy you would search for articles on the topic of stepfamilies and on intergenerational family therapy and its use with stepfamilies. The library can help you to find online databases such as PsycINFO and other family therapy databases. Many of the articles will be available instantly online or from interlibrary loan within a few days. Articles must be cited in your presentation as well as in a reference page at the end of your paper. You must use **APA Style** to cite your sources. If you are unfamiliar with APA Style check out the following website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.
3. The case study **should be approximately 8 pages long** not including your reference page.
4. Your case study should include:
 - A description of the model you have chosen using the language and key concepts of the model itself.
 - A clear description of how the model understands “family” and its theory of how families and people change.
 - Description of assessment procedures or tools regularly used by those who practice the model. Apply these to the case as best you can.
 - A rationale for who you include and exclude from the therapy process.
 - As described in the rubric, write a brief (but excellent) theological/pastoral reflection about the case and your interaction with it. Be sure to include any countertransference issues that may be relevant.

C. Present your Research-Informed Clinical Case Study in Class:

1. The **presentation should be 10 minutes in length.**
2. Email presentation and handouts (if any) to the instructors BEFORE you present.

Evaluation: See Clinical Case Study Grading Rubric Download from CAMS

II. Family Therapy Models – Role Plays Due—sign up for date (20%)

Tasks: Students will demonstrate two specific therapeutic techniques or interventions for each family therapy model discussed in this course. The instructor will supply brief case studies during class and have students practice interventions based on the cases.

Evaluation: See Family Therapy Models—Role Plays Grading Rubric

Structural Family Therapy – Joining, enactments and modifying interactions, boundary making, challenging the family's worldview, intensity and crisis induction, unbalancing, expanding family truths and realities, making compliments and shaping competence, working with boundaries and alliances, detriangulation, opening closed systems

Strategic Family Therapy – Hypothesizing (for conceptualization, as an intervention, about alliances, about myths and premises, to analyze communication), positive connotation, the double bind and counterparadox, invariant prescriptions, dangers of improvement, restraining/going slow, directives (straightforward and indirect directives), pretend techniques, ordeals

Experiential Family Therapy – Therapist's Use of Self, facilitating emotional expression, softening family rules, communication enhancement (coaching, role play, enactment), sculpting or spatial metaphor, touch

Intergenerational (Bowenian) Family Therapy – Process questions, encouraging differentiation of self, genograms, detriangulation, relational experiments, going home again

Cognitive-behavioral Family Therapy – Classical conditioning, operant conditioning and reinforcement techniques, forms of reinforcement and punishment, behavior exchange and quid pro quo, communication and problem-solving training, psychoeducation, challenging irrational beliefs, thought records, mindfulness training

Solution-focused Family Therapy – Formula first session task, scaling questions, asking presuppositional questions and assuming a future solution, utilization, coping questions, compliments and encouragement

Narrative Family Therapy – Externalizing the problem, relative influence questioning (mapping influence of the problem and persons), externalizing conversations, externalizing questions, problem deconstruction, mapping in landscapes of action and identity or consciousness, intentional versus internal state questions, scaffolding conversations, permission questions, situating comments, reflecting team, letters and certificates

III. Group Family Reflection Paper--Due October 29 (15%)

See Instructions and Rubrics—[Download from CAMS](#)

IV. Final Examination (20%) – Due end of finals week

Students will demonstrate their mastery of the primary body of knowledge presented during the semester and how this knowledge applies to clinical contexts. Students will also gain experience

preparing for professional body of knowledge and competency evaluations. This examination will prepare students for the national licensing examination for marriage and family therapists. **Note:** **According to MFT Program policy, students must score 80 or above on the final examination to receive a passing grade in the course. This material is fundamental to success in the program. Should a student receive a grade lower than 80 on the final, he or she must retake the test and score at least an 80 in order to pass the class. The first score (not the retake score) on the test will be used to figure the overall class grade.** A link for an online study program to prepare for the test will be provided near mid-semester. The test will be administered in the library computer lab during the weeks of finals. This is a closed book test.

Summary of Grading

15%	Assigned Readings, Class Participation, Attendance
15 %	Group Family Reflection Paper and Presentation
30%	Research-Informed Clinical Case Study and Presentation
20%	Therapy Models Role Plays
20%	Final Examination
100%	Total

Grading Scale and Philosophy

A	96.6-100
A-	93.6-96.5
B+	90.6-93.5
B	87.6-90.5
C	85.6-87.5
C+	83.6-85.5
C	81.6-83.5
C-	79.6-81.5
D	70.6-79.5
F	Below 70.6

Individuals admitted to graduate study are expected to perform consistently and well in academic work. This is translated into grades in the following way:

1. Basic mastery of the body of knowledge at a level expected in graduate study will earn scores in the B to B+ range.
2. Grades of A- are granted for work which demonstrates
 - basic mastery of the body of knowledge, and
 - independent thought about the subject matter.
3. Grades of A are granted for work which demonstrates
 - mastery of the required body of knowledge,
 - independent thought about the subject matter, and
 - creative/integrative use of the material, exceptional writing which integrates the material into a student's own system of thought, and/or exceptionally well done or articulate research.
4. Scores C and below do not meet the standard expected for graduate level academic work.

Appendix A: Movie List

<i>The Family Stone</i>	<i>To Sleep with Anger</i>	<i>The Kite Runner</i>	<i>Not Easily Broken</i>
<i>Ordinary People</i>	<i>Kramer Vs. Kramer</i>	<i>Postcards From the Edge</i>	<i>A Place Beyond the Pines</i>
<i>The Boys are Back</i>	<i>As Good as it Gets</i>	<i>The Other Sister</i>	<i>Melancholia</i>
<i>Rachel Getting Married</i>	<i>Because I Said So</i>	<i>Precious</i>	<i> Antwone Fisher</i>
<i>Stepmom</i>	<i>Steel Magnolias</i>	<i>Little Miss Sunshine</i>	

Note: if you would like to choose a movie not on this list, the instructor must give permission no later than September 27, 2013. If you are choosing a movie from this list, you must provide the instructor with your choice on the date located in the course schedule.

Family Therapy: Theory and Practice Comprehensive Rubric

Assessment Rubric: (Note to COAMFTE: Rubrics for assessing SLOs and Marriage and Family Therapy core competencies have been removed to meet self-study space limits. See SIE rubric which is used for all case studies in the MFT Program and see one sample comprehensive course rubric in Bookmarks. All rubrics can be provided upon request.)

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