

PCf 3083

**Theories of Change  
Fall 2014**

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**Syllabus**

**Course Description:**

This course explores historical and epistemological foundations for the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy, especially as this is integrated in a theological context. The course focuses on primary (as opposed to secondary) literature in the psychological traditions that support family therapy and family therapy as a clinical discipline and field of study. The course is a graduate seminar. It is heavily focused on reading and class discussion. Course content focuses is organized around evaluation and critique of three foundational epistemological streams influencing family therapy—personality theory, general systems and cybernetic theory, and postmodern philosophy. Evaluation and critique will be theoretical and theological with particular attention to how theories are socially located and attend to central issue of gender, race, class, and ethics.

**Format:**

This class is a graduate seminar. Participants are expected to be prepared for class by completing all reading. Discussion leadership may be rotated between participants throughout the semester.

**Learning Objectives:**

*One day a mystic stopped Nasrudin on the street and pointed at the sky. He meant: "There is only one truth, which covers all." Nasrudin was accompanied at the time by some desiring to be his disciple. They said to themselves, "This weird apparition is mad. Perhaps Nasrudin will take some precaution against him."*

*Sure enough, the Mullah rummaged in his knapsack and brought out a coil of rope. The followers thought, 'Excellent, we will be able to seize and bind up the madman if he becomes violent' Nasrudin's action had, in fact, meant, "Ordinary humanity tries to reach the sky by methods as unsuitable as this rope." The madman laughed and walked away. "Well done," said the followers, "you saved us from him."*

*This story has given rise to the Persian proverb: "A question about the sky warrants the answer of a rope."  
Idries Shah*

## Theories of Change: Course Outcomes

<u><i>By the end of the semester, students will:</i></u>	<u><i>Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) &amp; MFT Competencies (MFTC:)</i></u>	<u><i>Assessment Signature Assignments</i></u>
Develop a historically-informed understanding of three epistemological streams of family therapy theory.	SLO: 2 -Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory... MFTC: 1.1.1...understand systems concepts, theories...foundational to MFT 1.1.2...understand theories and techniques of individual, marital...psychotherapy 6.1.1-Know the extant MFT literature, research...	Theory of Change Paper (Rubric) Reading/Session Evaluation Form Class Discussion Leadership (Rubric)
Demonstrate skill in critically discerning the epistemological foundations for principal therapeutic schools of thought in Family Systems Theory.	SLO: 2-Demonstrate a broad knowledge of MFT theory... MFTC: 2.1.6 -Understand the strengths and limitations of models of assessment and diagnosis... 2.4.2-Assess ability to view issues and therapeutic processes systemically 4.1.2-Recognize strengths, limitations...of specific therapy models... 4.5.3-Articulate rationales for interventions related to treatment...	Theory of Change Paper (Rubric) Reading/Session Evaluation Form Class Discussion Leadership (Rubric)
Demonstrate the skill for critical analysis of epistemological issues in current Marriage and Family Therapy periodical literature.	SLO: 4...ability to apply multicultural approaches to MFT and attend...to...differences... MFTC: 3.1.1-Know which models...are most effective for presenting problems 4.1.1-Comprehend a variety of individual and systemic therapeutic models...	Class Discussion Leadership (Rubric)
Discuss the dynamic interaction between theoretical foundations in family therapy and key theological understandings of existence, creation, and the human person in a moral and relational ecological context.	SLO: 5 able to use a theologically informed and clinically appropriate framework to integrate religious and spiritual factors...into MFT MFTC: 4.5.1.-Respect multiple perspectives...	Theory of Change Paper (Rubric)
<b>Multicultural Therapy Definition:</b> 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).

## Requirements

Writing and examination requirements have been reduced for this course since its content relies on more reading than many courses for similar credit. This fact, and the course’s graduate seminar format, requires students to manage time effectively to complete all reading well enough to participate in class discussions. The course will be graded with the following criteria:

### **1. Complete all reading and participate effectively in class discussion of reading--33% of grade. (See Session Evaluation Form)**

This requirement will be assessed by the Session Evaluation Form (see appendix 1) that is to be turned in each class period. This form will also be available on CAMS.

### **2. Discussion Leadership--33% of grade. (See Rubric)**

Each class member (individually or in dyad) will be responsible for leading one class session about assigned reading using the following format:

- General overview of the historical, cultural and intellectual context of the theory upon which the reading of the day focused;
- Highlight and discuss the epistemological framework and key concepts that drive, organize and define the theory;
- Discuss how theory is/has been applied (1) to specific clinical contexts, (2) with what populations, and (3) with what kind of clients;
- Discuss specific techniques advocated by the theory;
- Discuss relationship to family and systemic therapies;
- Discuss what research has shown about the theory/model’s effectiveness;
- Lead a critical discussion of the strengths, liabilities, indicators and contra-indicators of the theory or model;
- Discuss theological and spiritual implications of the theory or model;
- Be creative.

Some class members may be ambivalent about student-led discussions and may feel they do not gain as much as they might from professor-focused lectures. This class is a graduate seminar. As such it operates on the expectation that students' primary learning will take place outside the classroom as they research and read. The classroom is a space for students to share and expand what she or he has learned in a collaborative, relational context. In the classroom students are encouraged to engage each other with agreement, disagreement, critical questions, examples, etc. The professor's role in a graduate seminar is to be a resource person and catalyst for discussion.

### **3. Theory of Change Paper: 34% of grade (See Rubric)**

Write a 10-15 page double spaced, APA format (no more than 15 pages of text, excluding references—only the first 15 pages will be evaluated) paper describing your primary theory of change in your work as a therapist. Your paper should include, but is not limited to:

- A description of your theory and theology of change (that is, how and why do clients change in therapy?).
- Discuss the epistemological assumptions and commitments that support your theory of change.
- Describe how your theory(ies) and concomitant epistemological assumptions inform your actual, concrete work with clients? How do these inform your choice of therapy model? How do these inform your in-session decisions of what you do with clients? Be specific, use case examples.
- Consider broader issues such as: What do I believe about how change takes place for individual, couples and/or families? How does therapy work?
- Consider contextual issues, such as how cultural factors influence your epistemological and theoretical thinking.
- Construct a creative theological framework for your theory of change. For instance, what place does religion or spirituality play in your theory of change? What does your theory of change say about the nature of the human person? What does it say about how God acts in nature and in people's lives? How do I account for biology, psychology, social/contextual factors, and the life of the spirit?

#### **Texts**

Duncan, B. L., S. D. Miller, B. E. Wampold, and M. A. Hubble. *The Heart and Soul of Change*. 2 ed. (2009). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Keeney, B. (1983). *Aesthetics of Change*. New York: Guilford Press.

Leupnitz, D. A. (1988). *The Family Interpreted*. New York: Basic Books.

Anderson, H. and Gehart, D. (2007). Collaborative Therapy: Relationships and Conversations that Make a Difference. NY: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-95327-8

**Supplemental Texts (Library Reserve)**

Browning, Don S. (1987). *Religion and the Modern Psychologies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Gurman, Alan and David Kniskern. *Handbook of Family Therapy*, Vol. I and Vol. II.

McGoldrick, Monica, ed. *Revisioning Family Therapy*.

Piercy, Fred and Douglas Sprenkle, et al. *Family Therapy Sourcebook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Pinderhughes, Elaine. *Understanding Race, Ethnicity, and Power*.

Watzlawick, Paul, Janet Beavin and Don Jackson. *Pragmatics of Human Communications. A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes*.

White, Michael and David Epston. *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*.

Luepnitz, D. (1988). *The Family Interpreted*. New York: Basic Books.

Walsh, Froma, ed. (1993). *Normal Family Processes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Guilford Press.

**Theories of Change Session Evaluation Form**

**Use the CAMS electronic form so you can type your responses**

1. Class preparation: 100-200 word reflection/summary to inform your class participation):

2. Questions reading raised—for class discussion

3. Rate your reading preparation

a. Percent completed: 0-----25-----50-----75-----100

b. Comprehension: 0-----25-----50-----75-----100

4. Assessment of your participation in class discussion

0-----2-----5-----7-----10

Disengaged and lost

Fully engaged and contributing

### *Important Policies*

**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.)**

#### **Grading: Grade 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:

- Basic mastery of the body of knowledge at a level expected in graduate study will earn scores in the B to B+ range.
- Grades of A- are granted for work which demonstrates basic mastery of the body of knowledge, and independent thought about the subject matter.
- Grades of A are granted for work which demonstrates mastery of the required body of knowledge, independent thought about the subject matter, 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.

#### **Theories of Change 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 1 sample comprehensive course rubric Bookmarks. All rubrics can be provided upon request.)

**Scoring Directions:** Mark or highlight observations in each area. Complete rating score at the end of the rubric.

**Scoring:** 0-2 unacceptable, 3-5 marginal, 6-8 expected, 9-10 exceeds expectations for student's level of training.

<p>I. Each class member (individually or in dyad) will be responsible for leading one class session about assigned reading using the following format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General overview of the historical, cultural and intellectual context of the theory upon which the reading of the day focused;</li> <li>• Highlight and discuss the epistemological framework and key concepts that drive, organize and define the theory;</li> <li>• Discuss how theory is/has been applied (1) to specific clinical contexts, (2) with what populations, and (3) with what kind of clients;</li> <li>• Discuss specific techniques advocated by the theory;</li> <li>• Discuss relationship to family and systemic therapies;</li> <li>• Discuss what research has shown about the theory/model's effectiveness;</li> <li>• Lead a critical discussion of the strengths, liabilities, indicators and contra-indicators of the theory or model;</li> <li>• Discuss theological and spiritual implications of the theory or model;</li> <li>• Be creative.</li> </ul>	
<p>II. Write a 10-15 page double spaced, APA format (no more than 15 pages of text, excluding references—only the first 15 pages will be evaluated) paper describing your primary theory of change in your work as a therapist. Your paper should include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description of your theory and theology of change (that is, how and why do clients change in therapy?).</li> <li>• Discuss the epistemological assumptions and commitments that support your theory of change.</li> <li>• Describe how your theory(ies) and concomitant epistemological assumptions inform your actual, concrete work with clients? How do these inform your choice of therapy model? How do these inform your in-session decisions of what you do with clients? Be specific, use case examples.</li> <li>• Consider broader issues such as: What do I believe about how change takes place for individual, couples and/or families? How does therapy work?</li> <li>• Consider contextual issues, such as how cultural factors influence your epistemological and theoretical thinking.</li> <li>• Construct a creative theological framework for your theory of change. For instance, what place does religion or spirituality play in your theory of change? What does your theory of change say about the nature of the human person? What does it say about how God acts in nature and in people's lives? How do I account for biology, psychology, social/contextual factors, and the life of the spirit?</li> </ul>	

**Average score for assignment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total points:** \_\_\_\_/15

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

<i>Theories of Change Aggregated Rubric Scores 2014</i>														
	<i>Singature Assignment</i> *:	<i>I.1</i>	<i>I.2</i>	<i>II.1</i>	<i>II.2</i>	<i>II.3</i>	<i>II.4</i>	<i>III.1</i>	<i>III.2</i>	<i>III.3</i>	<i>III.4</i>	<i>III.5</i>	<i>III.6</i>	<i>III.7</i>
<i>Student</i>														
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	<i>Aggregated Score for SLOs &amp; MFTCs:</i>													
	<i>SLOs</i>	2	2	2, 4	2, 4	4	N A	2	2	2, 4	2	2	4	5
	<i>MFTCs</i>	1.1. 1 4.1. 2 4.5. 3 6.1. 1	1.1. 1 6.1. 1 2.4. 2 4.1. 2 4.5. 3 6.1. 1	1.1. 1 2.4. 2 4.1. 2 4.5. 3 6.1. 1	1.1. 1 2.4. 2 4.1. 2 4.5. 3 6.1. 1	4.1. 1 4.5. 1	N A	1.1. 1	2.1. 6 2.4. 2 3.1. 1	2.1. 6 2.4. 2 4.5. 3	3.1. 1 4.1. 1 4.1. 2	2.4. 2	2.1. 6 3.1. 1 4.1. 1	4.5. 1