

Divorced and Remarried Families

PC 3133
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Course Description

Divorced and remarried families are now a North American cultural norm. This course focuses on understanding these complex families from sociocultural, developmental, theological, and family process perspectives. The course will focus on effective models of family therapy and congregational care for divorced and remarried individuals and families.

Goals

By the end of the semester, participants will be able to:

- 1) Articulate a broad, multicultural understanding of divorced and remarried families in the United States, particularly as these relate to religious heritage, cultural identity, ethnicity, class, and gender expectations (**SLO 1a & b, SLO 2**);
- 2) Describe developmental, emotional, legal and systemic processes related to families shaped by divorce and remarriage in the United States (**SLO 1a & b, SLO 2, SLO 3**);
- 3) Articulate a multicultural and interreligious theological frame for care of divorced and remarried families (**SLO 1a, SLO 4**);
- 4) Demonstrate the ability to assess and develop a treatment plan for a counseling case in which divorce, single parenting or remarriage is a primary presenting problem (**SLO 3, SLO 4**).

Requirements

1. Discussion Leadership (20% of grade; see attached grading rubric)

Each participant will work with a partner to prepare a class presentation addressing one of the class topics designated in the class schedule. Leaders for the day will be expected to...

- Provide an outline of material to be presented.
- Be creative, interactive, and engage the class in critical discussion/analysis.
(See grading rubric for assignment for more details)

2. Literature Review (30% of grade; see attached grading rubric) Due First Monday after Spring break.

- Select an area of therapeutic (or pastoral care) concern you might experience in practice (for instance children's grief in divorce; the effect of post-divorce parental conflict on children, integrating a new parent into a formerly single-parent family, remarried couple conflict, etc.),
- Conduct a literature review (relevant books, articles, etc.) to investigate this issue/problem (focus on understanding the dynamics, systemic ramifications, interaction with cultural factors, and on implications for practice Be sure to attend carefully to multicultural factors such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.).
- Write a 7-10 page summary of what you learned about theory and practice from the literature review.
- Write a 2 page theological analysis/reflection about this issue and what you have learned from your study. See rubric for more details.

3. Interactive Interview (20% of grade; see attached grading rubric) Due last day of class.

- Recruit a conversation partner who is divorced, divorcing, has been divorced, or is remarried.
- Show your conversation partner the informed consent form, explain it to them and ask them to sign it.
- Talk to your conversation partner about their experience with careful attention to:
 - Emotional processes,
 - Legal processes,
 - Feelings about the experience they had (or are having),
 - Impact on others (friends, family, children, etc.),
 - Interaction of cultural, ethnic, gendered, sexual orientation issues,
 - What they wished counselors and pastors knew about divorce and/or remarriage, and
 - Other topics you feel are relevant without intruding on the interviewee's boundaries of privacy.
- Write a 5 page summary of your experience and what you learned from your conversation about divorced and remarried families.
 - Be sure to use concrete examples, but protect your interviewee's confidentiality.
 - Include a concluding section that specifies (1) what you learned about therapy or pastoral care with divorced, divorcing or remarried couples; (2) religious, spiritual and theological concerns, issues or insights that were highlighted by the interview.

4. Case Study (30% of grade; see attached grading rubric) Due last day of finals.

Follow directions in “How to Write an Intake Evaluation and Case Study.” Complete your case study with the following steps:

- Do one of the following—
 - If you are in practicum, select a client with whom you are working around divorce and remarriage issues to complete the case study. Be **ABSOLUTELY SURE** you follow all informed consent rules required by practicum policies and that you protect your client by using pseudonyms, etc.
 - If you are not in practicum, enlist volunteers to role play one of the client problems provided in class vignettes (distributed later in semester).
 - Conduct and videotape (or digitally record) a 30-50 minute counseling session with the client(s). If you are using a vignette, the “client(s)” will role play seeking help from you for the problem described in the vignette you choose. Note that your client must be free to improvise and develop this problem as fits them. It will be your job to be a good counselor for the client(s).
- A.** At the end of one session, talk with your client(s). Ask them:
- a.** How well you “connected” with them.
 - b.** How well you understood their “problem.”
 - c.** How you did with keeping conversation going using open ended questions, summaries, paraphrases, and your body language.
 - d.** How well and appropriately were you able to respond to their concerns and any spiritual/religious dimensions to their concerns.
 - e.** Did they feel the session was helpful?
 - f.** Would they come back to see you after the first session?
 - g. Write a brief summary of the feedback you received.**
- B.** After the session, review the videotape/digital recording. After watching yourself on the recording. **Write a critical analysis of what you did well, what you think you accomplished in the session, and what you would do differently for the next session with particular attention to:**
- a.** Joining with the client(s) and facilitating the session,
 - b.** How you addressed and managed issues related to your study of divorced and remarried families,
 - c.** Attention to cultural, sexual, gender, race, and other diversity issues,
 - d.** Identifying, clarifying, or working on goals.
- C.** The final step of the case study is a case analysis and write-up. You will find “How to Write an Intake Evaluation and Case Study” (posted on CAMS) helpful. (If you are in practicum, use the standard case study outline required for practicum evaluation and your SIE.) Specifically:
- a.** What was the presenting problem (no more than three sentences)

- b. What is your assessment of the client's present functioning (use tools presented in class)? Be sure to be clear and precise about what you see and how you evaluated it.
- c. What is an appropriate goal for counseling? (One sentence: At the end of counseling the client will.... Limit yourself to one goal.)
- d. Make a case for what the next step should be. Remember to keep your context in mind—parish counseling, agency counseling, etc.

D. Case study--what to turn in for a grade:

- a. Your video recording
- b. Summary of what client's feedback
- c. Your own written analysis of your work as observed on video
- d. Case analysis/assessment (no more than 5 pages)

Texts

Required texts:

- Dowd, N. (1997). *In defense of single-parent families*. New York: New York University Press. ISBN: 0-8147-1869-8
- Marquard, E. (2005). *Between two worlds: The inner lives of children of divorce*. NY: Crown. ISBN: 0-307-23710-9.
- Townsend, L. (2000). *Pastoral care with stepfamilies: Mapping the wilderness*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press. ISBN 0-8272-2966-6
- Wallerstein, J., Lewis, J, and Blakeslee, S. (2000) *The unexpected legacy of divorce*. New York: Hyperion. ISBN: 0786863943
- Whitehead, Barbara. (1997). *The divorce culture*. New York: Alfred Knopf. ISBN 0-679-43230-2

Required reading from (Library reserve)

- Nichols, J. A. (Ed). (2011). *Marriage and divorce in a multicultural context*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dickerson, B. J. (Ed.). (1995). *African American single mothers: understanding their lives and families*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Browning, D., Miller-McLemore, B, Couture, P., Lyon, K. and Franklin, R. (1997). *From culture wars to common ground: religion and the American family debate*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Grading Rubric: Divorced and Remarried Families

Assignment: Class Discussion

| Dimensions | A Range | B Range | C Range and Below |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Preparation for class— outline or other material for class to use</p> <p>Points____/20</p> | <p>-Documents and other materials distributed to class demonstrate forethought, are well organized and produced in a professional manner.</p> <p>-Documents distributed are directly related to class presentation.</p> <p>-Documents attend to course goals and address key issues of divorce and remarried families in a multicultural context.</p> <p>-Documents reflect appropriate use of class reading, etc.</p> | <p>-Documents show some forethought, but lack adequate organization or professional presentation.</p> <p>-Documents are mostly related to class presentation.</p> <p>-Documents are related to class readings, but miss or ignore important elements of class reading.</p> | <p>-Documents do not show adequate forethought, are disorganized and/or lack professional presentation.</p> <p>-Documents are unrelated or tangentially related to class reading.</p> |
| <p>Presentation Content</p> <p>Points____/40</p> | <p>-Presenters demonstrate thorough knowledge of material presented.</p> <p>-Presentation covers all major points of subject matter of the day.</p> <p>-Presenters demonstrate attention to critical analysis of material—pros and cons, etc.</p> <p>-Presenters attend to diversity and multicultural issues contained in presentation material.</p> | <p>-Presenters demonstrate general knowledge of material presented.</p> <p>-Presentation covers most major points of subject matter but misses important dimensions.</p> <p>-Presentation attends to key elements, but lacks critical analysis.</p> <p>-Presenters miss major diversity and multicultural issues.</p> | <p>-Presenters demonstrate superficial understanding of material presented or miss major points.</p> <p>-Critical analysis is absent.</p> <p>-Presenters do not attend to diversity or multicultural issues central to the discussion.</p> |
| <p>Classroom presentation</p> <p>Points____40</p> | <p>-Presenters use media or presentation style that holds interest and engages the class.</p> <p>-Presenters stimulate discussion and encourage questions and debate.</p> <p>-Presenters attend to diversity and multicultural issue present among class members.</p> <p>-Presenters manage class time effectively and complete the presentation of all major parts of the presentation.</p> | <p>-Presenters use little media or present in a way that marginally engages the class.</p> <p>-Presenters encourage some discussion, but do not create opportunities for debate or questions.</p> <p>-Presenters show little awareness or attention to diversity within the class.</p> <p>-Presenters manage time somewhat well and cover much of the expected material.</p> | <p>-Presenters do not use engaging media or find ways to hold the interest of the class.</p> <p>-Presenters do not encourage discussion or debate about key issues.</p> <p>-Presenters do not attend to diversity within the classroom.</p> <p>-Presenters mismanage time and cover only parts of the expected material.</p> |

Divorced and Remarried Families Grading Rubric

Assignment: Literature Review

| Dimensions | A Range | B Range | C Range and Below |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Statement of problem or question to be researched</p> <p>Points____10</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Problem statement or issue is clearly defined in one topic sentence. -Topic sentence clarifies the general area of research and at least one specific problem or issue to be investigated. -Problem, statement or issue is stated in a way that gives direction to the investigation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Problem statement or issue is stated, but is unclear in the topic sentence. -Topic sentence suggests multiple problems to be investigated or fails to envision a specific problem in a larger context. -Problem statement is written in a way that will hinder investigation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Problem statement or issue is vague or absent. -Topic sentence is unclear and fails to give direction for the investigation. |
| <p>Quality of search procedure</p> <p>Points____30</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Write-up demonstrates use of multiple data bases. -Write-up demonstrates attention to clarity in search that weeds out irrelevant sources. -Write-up demonstrates use of source bibliographies to track down important supporting material. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Write-up demonstrates simplistic use of data bases or use of single database. -Write-up demonstrates some clarity in search, but shows numerous irrelevant sources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Write-up shows minimal database use, or simplistic use of uncritical online resources. -Write-up shows little clarity in search and/or numerous irrelevant sources. |
| <p>Quality of research summary</p> <p>Points____/40</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates appropriate use of research sources -Includes critical analysis of sources used, including analysis of multicultural and diversity factors -The summary speaks directly to research question without spurious tangents -Draws appropriate conclusions based on analysis of literature -Articulates limitations of the research reviewed and the research summary -Demonstrates how conclusions of the summary apply to clinical practice or pastoral practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Demonstrates mostly appropriate use of research sources -Includes minimal critical analysis of sources used, including analysis of multicultural and diversity factors -The summary speaks to research question but does so incompletely or with spurious tangents -Draws some appropriate conclusions based on analysis of literature -Does not articulate limitations of the research reviewed and the research summary -Demonstrates how conclusions of the summary apply to clinical practice or pastoral practice in a vague or inconsistent way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Does not demonstrate appropriate use of research sources -Critical analysis of sources is absent or ineffective, including analysis of multicultural and diversity factors -Summary fails to speak directly to research question or is characterized by spurious tangents -Conclusions are inappropriate to analysis of literature -Does not attend to limitations of the research reviewed or the research summary -Conclusions of the summary are not applied to clinical practice or pastoral practice or make no practical sense |
| <p>Writing is clear and follows APA form</p> <p>Points____20</p> | <p>Student uses clear paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting arguments. Student's review and analysis follows a logical flow with statements and critique supported by effective quotations, propositions, and statements. Clear structure to the paper, including introduction, body of text that makes clear points, and effective summary</p> | <p>Student uses clear paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting arguments. Analysis shows logical flow, but may not be supported adequately by quotes, propositions, or statements. Introduction and conclusion may be unfocused or unclear.</p> | <p>Student has difficulty with clear paragraphs, or topic sentences may lack clarity. Supporting arguments are incomplete, lack coherence, or lack relevance. Analysis lacks logical flow and is not supported well with quotes, propositions, or statements. Introduction and/or conclusion are missing or not well formed.</p> |

Divorced and Remarried Families

Assignment: Interview Summary

| Dimensions | A Range | B Range | C Range and below |
|--|--|--|--|
| Informed Consent form completed and attached. No points. Paper receives an F without this form. | | | |
| Summary paper shows sensitivity to divorce, single parent, remarried family experience Points____20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Names key issues with attention to how they were brought up in session. -Shows good evidence of active listening. -Uses concrete examples from the interview to illustrate key experiences. -Attends to individual, family diversity as well as cultural and economic contexts. -Paper “tells a story” about those interviewed. -Paper supports and introduces details related to the conclusion/summary drawn by the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Overlooks some key issues or lacks attention to how key issues were brought up in session. -Shows some evidence of active listening. -Uses vague examples or no examples from the interview to illustrate key experiences. -Minimally attends to individual, family diversity as well as cultural and economic contexts. -The interviewee’s story is present, but lacks coherence, -Paper shows some details that support the conclusion/summary drawn by the paper. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Key issues are absent or no attention to how they were brought up in session. -Shows little evidence of active listening. -Few or no examples from the interview to illustrate key experiences. -No attention to diversity. –The “story” of those interviewed is not present. - Paper shows no support for conclusion/summary drawn by the paper. |
| Implications/learning statement Points____40 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concisely summarizes what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Clearly voices implications for counseling and care. -Concisely outlines theological or spiritual implications and/or concerns evident in interview outcome. -Practice and theological implications attend to diversity and multicultural factors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Summary wanders or is unclear in describing what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Implications about care and counseling are present but lack clarity or potential for concrete application. -Theological and spiritual implications are mostly coherent but lack critical thought. -Diversity and multicultural factors are named, but lack specificity or concrete analysis. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Summary lacks coherence in describing what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Implications about care and counseling are absent or have little potential for application. -Theological and spiritual implications are absent or superficial. -Diversity and multicultural factors are not named. |
| Implications/learning statement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concisely summarizes what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Clearly voices implications for counseling and care. -Concisely outlines theological or spiritual implications and/or concerns evident in interview outcome. -Practice and theological implications attend to diversity and multicultural factors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Summary wanders or is unclear in describing what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Implications about care and counseling are present but lack clarity or potential for concrete application. -Theological and spiritual implications are mostly coherent but lack critical thought. -Diversity and multicultural factors are named, but lack specificity or concrete analysis. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Summary lacks coherence in describing what student learned about divorced, single parent or remarried families from the interview. -Implications about care and counseling are absent or have little potential for application. -Theological and spiritual implications are absent or superficial. -Diversity and multicultural factors are not named. |
| Quality of writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student uses clear paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting arguments. -Shows logical flow with statements supported by effective quotations, propositions, and statements. -Clear structure to the paper that makes clear points and produces effective summary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student uses clear paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting arguments. -Analysis shows logical flow, but may not be supported adequately by quotes, propositions, or statements. -Introduction and conclusion may be unfocused or unclear. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Student has difficulty with clear paragraphs, or topic sentences may lack clarity. -Supporting arguments are incomplete, lack coherence, or lack relevance. -Analysis lacks logical flow and is not supported well with quotes, propositions, or statements. -Introduction and/or conclusion are missing or not well formed. |

Divorced and Remarried Families Grading Rubric

Assignment: Case Study

| Dimensions | A Range | B Range | C Range and below |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1. Feedback from partner summary Points: ____10 | Comprehensive summary of feedback from partner. Shows good listening to partner and how feedback can be used | Records feedback in general form. Does not attend to how feedback can be used. | Does not record feedback or feedback is discussed in vague and general way. |
| 2: Concise presenting problem Points: ____15 | Presenting problem is identifiable, precise, concise and reflects clients' description of what brings them to therapy. Few wasted words; reader can quickly determine why clients came to therapy. | Presenting problem is stated in vague or unclear terms; client's voice may not be clear, but is present. Presenting problem may be obscured by lengthy descriptions or explanations. | Presenting problem is absent or very vague; problem statement demonstrates that counselor does not yet understand what brings the client to counseling. |
| 3. Summary of critical viewing of videotape Points: ____20 | Reflects and observes how well student did with basic elements of counseling: Establishing contact with client, good verbal following, summarizing, open ended questions. (Note: performance does not have to be excellent on tape, but critical self evaluation is necessary) Observes where counseling went well and where it did not. Evaluates the difference between what worked and what did not. Pays attention to details of the session in a critical way | Reflect on counselor's action in session in uncritical way. Tells what happened, but does not evaluate it, or is unrealistic in evaluating the session. Shows evidence of "all good" counselor or "all bad" counselor. | Evaluation is absent or very general. Does not attend to details of session or interactions between counselor and client. |
| 4, Written assessment of client and client problem. Points: ____30 | -Assessment relates directly to client presenting problem and/or history. -Assessment attends to issues of diversity and a multicultural framework. Assessment write-up shows a coherent strategy. Uses tools presented in class. -Assessment reflects appropriate use of counseling theories introduced in class. -Attends to both practical life problems and spiritual/religious issues. -Conclusion provides a clear statement of what the "client problem" is that can be translated into a treatment plan and expected outcome of therapy | Assessment is present but lacks a coherent strategy or direct relationship to client problem or history. Guiding theories are present, but confused. -Assessment attends to issues of diversity and a multicultural framework, but is superficial or simplistic. Assessment write-up is present, but lacks adequate description of procedures, sufficient logical coherence, or clear summary upon which a treatment plan can be easily formed. | Assessment procedures and summaries either absent or lack a consistent logic. Guiding theories unidentifiable or misunderstood. Write-up lacks description of procedures, consistent logic, or clear summary. Does not attend to multicultural factors or client diversity. |

| Dimensions | A Range | B Range | C Range and below |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>5. Clear and concise statement of goal and plan for reaching goal.</p> <p>Points: ____/15</p> | <p>-Includes a clear goal statement that is observable, measurable and “doable.”</p> <p>-Includes a concise plan for reaching goal.</p> <p>-Includes attention to any multicultural and diversity issue identified in the case analysis.</p> | <p>-Includes goal statement, but is imprecise, not observable or measurable, or confusing.</p> <p>-Plan for reaching goal lacks clarity or is absent.</p> <p>-Attention to any multicultural and diversity issues is unclear or vague.</p> | <p>Goal statements are absent or lack coherence with the case study. Plan for intervention is absent or fails to make sense in the case context. Attention to multicultural and diversity issues is absent.</p> |
| <p>6. Clear, effective writing</p> <p>Points: ____/10</p> | <p>Uses brief, well formed sentences that are direct and to the point. Each paragraph has a purpose and this purpose is accomplished with parsimony. Each topic heading is part of a “logical flow” that begins in a clear problem, shows how the problem is related to history, how problem and history stimulates and guide assessment, and how assessment culminates in a treatment plan for specific outcomes.</p> | <p>Case study makes its point, but may be too wordy trying to make a case for each section or lack sufficient information to demonstrate good clinical logic. “Logical flow” is present, but hard to follow at times. Topic areas are only loosely connected and could be improved with clearer links between sections of the paper.</p> | <p>Case study lacks organization and attention to logical flow. Sections do not connect and one cannot see a logical case for treatment built within the case study.</p> |
| Total points: ____/ 100 | | | |