

COUN 6130
Introduction to Family and Couple Therapy
Spring 2018

Tuesdays from 4 – 6:40 pm
Cramer Hall 042

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Course Description from Marquette University's Graduate Bulletin:

Introduction to theoretical approaches and methods of family counseling. Overview of the history and current issues in family counseling. Prereq: COUN 6000 and concurrent or previous enrollment in COUN 6030.

Required Texts:

Becvar, D. H., & Becvar, R. J. (2013). *Family therapy: A systemic integration (8th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Walsh, F. (Ed.). (2012). *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity (4th ed.)*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Napier, A. Y., & Whitaker, C. A. (2017). *The family crucible: The intense experience of family therapy*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Course Overview:

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of couple and family therapy. We will examine key concepts related to understanding couples and families in context, including family organization, development, functioning, and challenges. We will also explore the major theoretical orientations and methods of couple and family therapy. We will consider these concepts using several overarching themes, including multicultural and diversity issues, ethical considerations, and research on couples and families.

This course will be taught as a seminar, and will combine lecture, discussion, experiential exercises, presentations, and demonstrations.

Student-led presentations constitute a key component of this class. There are several advantages to this learning method. First, it promotes active learning – often, the best way to

learn is to teach someone else. Second, students gain opportunities to practice important professional skills (e.g., identifying learning resources, understanding key concepts, working collaboratively in groups, and facilitating discussions). Third, students and I get to learn from each other, which adds variety to the course.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

- Understand key concepts related to family development, organization, and functioning.
- Describe the major theoretical approaches to couple and family therapy.
- Apply basic skills for the conceptualization and treatment of couples and families.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the profession of couple and family therapy.

Please see the end of this syllabus for a detailed description about how this course's learning objectives, assignments, and activities map onto current CACREP and AAMFT standards.

Student Expectations:

My goal as an instructor is to foster a community that is conducive to learning, open to new ideas and ways of thinking, and respectful of each other as professionals and colleagues. In the spirit of this collegiality, students are expected to meet the following expectations:

- Arrive to class on time and fully prepared with all relevant readings and class assignments completed.
- Actively listen and fully participate during class.
- Put cell phones and all other technology on silent during class periods. We will take a 10 minute break during each class period; during that time, you are welcome to check email, return phone calls or texts, or surf the Internet.
- Strive to be multiculturally competent counselors-in-training, and exercise cultural sensitivity during all class discussions and assignments.
- Some assignments and discussions in this course will entail self-exploration of your family background. Choose what you would like to self-disclose regarding your family and relationship history, and understand that you are not required to share any aspects of your life.
- Confidentiality is required. Please keep all personal and/or clinical information shared within the course private.

Instructor Expectations

As the instructor of this course, it is my responsibility to foster an inclusive and effective classroom environment; provide educational materials and course content; facilitate class time; provide timely feedback on assignments; and serve as a resource for you. Please utilize my office hours or make an appointment with me to ask questions about course materials, assignments, or grades.

If at any time you feel I am not meeting your expectations as an effective instructor, please speak with me directly so I can work to address your concerns. I will also provide a mid-semester feedback opportunity so you can share your input on the strengths and growth areas of this course.

Attendance:

Full attendance is vital to achieving success in this course. Students are expected to attend all class sessions; absences should occur only in serious situations of illness or emergency. Please email me in advance if you will be absent. Students who miss a session (regardless of the reason) will be required to complete a short reflection paper on the assigned readings for the week.

Course Materials:

The materials for this course are located on Marquette's D2L website (<https://d2l.mu.edu/d2l/loginh/>).

Grading Scale:

94 – 100	A
90-93	A-
86 – 89	B+
82-85	B
78-81	B-
74-77	C+
74 or less	C

Grades on individual assignments will be made available on D2L throughout the semester.

Late Policy:

Course assignments are expected to be turned in by the start of class on the assignment's due date as noted on the syllabus. Assignments that are turned in late will be assessed a 10% penalty for each day late.

Disability Accommodations:

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact me within the first two weeks of the semester so we can appropriately address your learning needs. Documentation of your disability from Marquette's Office of Disability Services will be required.

Academic Integrity:

Students are required to abide by the university's academic integrity policy as outlined in the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://bulletin.marquette.edu/grad/policiesofthegraduateschool/>). Academic misconduct (including cheating, plagiarism, and helping others commit violations) will not be tolerated. Students who violate the university's academic integrity policy will be sanctioned according to university regulations.

Norman H. Ott Memorial Writing Center

Marquette's Ott Memorial Writing Center, located in Raynor 240, offers free one-on-one consultations for all writers, working on any project, at any stage of the writing process. The Writing Center can help you brainstorm ideas, revise a rough draft, or fine-tune a final draft. You can schedule 30- or 60-minute appointments in advance (www.marquette.edu/writing-center or 288-5542), but walk-ins are always welcome. Tutors are available on a regular schedule, which are particularly helpful for graduate students working on extended projects (e.g., major writing assignments, theses, or dissertations) or for students who wish to practice improving their writing over the course of time. The Ott Memorial Writing Center also offers free workshops and hosts writing retreats.

Course Requirements (1,000 total points):

Class Participation (100 points, or 10% of final grade). The success of this course depends on the enthusiastic engagement of all involved. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and experiential exercises. Active participation has three elements: making insightful comments that demonstrate an in-depth of the assigned readings; raising issues and questions that show a critical evaluation of course material; and respectfully appraising ideas contributed by others. Because you (and the other members of your small group) are the most knowledgeable about your level of preparation and participation, you will have the opportunity to provide input into your class participation score.

Genogram Assignment (100 points, or 10% of final grade). Draw a three-generational (or more) genogram of your family based on what you have learned about genograms in class. Write a 3 – 4 page paper applying concepts you have learned about family organization and functioning, and include a discussion about patterns you have identified. Consult the guidelines for this assignment for further details. **Date due: March 6.**

Theory of Intervention Class Presentation (200 points, or 20% of final grade). With your assigned small group, prepare a 60-minute presentation to teach the class about an assigned theory of intervention. To educate the class on your theory, you must utilize a variety of teaching methods, such as PowerPoint, videos, demonstrations, role plays, handouts or other supplemental material, experiential exercises, or class discussion. Part of class time on January 23 will be reserved for working with your small group. Consult the guidelines on this assignment for further details.

Diverse Families Class Presentation (200 points, or 20% of final grade). Choose an issue related to family diversity that interests you (e.g., divorce, single parenting, and stepfamilies; gender; the intersectionality of race and class; LGBT families; immigrant families; illness and disability; spirituality). With a small group of other students also interested in this issue, prepare a 60-minute presentation to educate the class. The presentation should include a didactic component, along with an experiential activity that demonstrates an aspect of power and privilege and/or a specific family counseling intervention relevant to the family issue under consideration. Part of class time on January 30 will be reserved for working with your small group. Consult the guidelines on this assignment for further details.

Extra Credit: Class Presentations. You may earn 10 points of extra credit by volunteering to serve as a “family member” in a role-play demonstration conducted by a small group other than your own. You may earn a maximum of 20 points of extra credit by volunteering with two different small groups.

Family Crucible Reflection Paper (150 points, or 15% of final grade). In APA style, write a 5-page paper critiquing Whitaker and Napier’s treatment of the Brice family. Use at least two scholarly sources other than your textbooks to inform your paper. Consult the guidelines on this assignment for further details. **Date due: April 10.**

Final Exam: Case Study Analysis (250 points, or 25% of final grade). The final exam will consist of three case studies. For each case study, write a 5-page paper that illustrates your assessment of the family, conceptualization of the problem, ethical considerations, diversity and contextual issues, and intervention ideas. This final exam assignment will be a culmination of the material covered in this course, and you will be expected to integrate key concepts and course readings into your analysis. **Date due: Monday, May 7 by 12 noon**

Course Schedule, Topics, and Assigned Readings (subject to change)

January 16

- Introduction to the course
- Basic concepts in family therapy

January 23

- Basic concepts in family therapy (cont.)
- History of family therapy
- Becvar & Becvar, chapters 1 – 4

January 30

- Family normality
 - Walsh, chapters 1 and 2
- Family life cycle, resilience, and transitions
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 5
 - Walsh, chapters 16 – 18

February 6

- Theory of intervention presentation 1: Psychodynamic family therapy
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 6
- Culture and families
 - Walsh, chapter 11

February 13

- Theory of intervention presentation 2: Family systems therapy
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 7
- Genograms
 - Petry & McGoldrick (2004)

February 20

- Theory of intervention presentation 3: Experiential family therapy
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 8
- Diverse families presentation: Divorce, single parenting, and stepfamilies
 - Walsh, chapters 5 – 7

February 27

- Theory of intervention presentation 4: Structural family therapy
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 8
- Diverse families presentation: Gender in therapy
 - Walsh, chapter 14

March 6

- Theory of intervention presentation 5: Strategic family therapy
 - Becvar & Becvar, chapter 11
 - Diverse families presentation: The intersection of race and class
 - Walsh, chapter 12
- Genogram assignment due**

March 13

- Spring break – no class

March 20

Theory of intervention presentation 6: Communication approaches
Becvar & Becvar, chapter 10
Couple communication
Walsh, chapter 3

March 27

Theory of intervention presentation 7: Cognitive behavioral family therapy
Becvar & Becvar, chapter 12
Practicing family therapy: The basics
Nichols (2017)
Lebow (2004)
Becvar & Becvar, pages 297-307

April 3

Diverse families presentation: LGBTQ families
Walsh, chapter 8
Ethics, training, and supervision
Becvar, pages 307-319 and chapter 16

April 10

Diverse families presentation: Immigrant families
Walsh, chapter 13
In-class discussion of *The Family Crucible*
***The Family Crucible* reflection paper due**

April 17

Diverse families presentation: Illness and disability
Walsh, chapter 19
Assessment of couples and families
Becvar & Becvar, chapter 14
Walsh, chapter 21

April 24

Diverse families presentation: Spirituality and families
Walsh, chapter 15
Research on couple and family therapy
Brock, Kroska, & Lawrence (2016)
Datchi & Sexton (2016)

May 1

Kinship and foster care, adoptive families

Walsh, chapters 9 and 10

Paradoxes of family therapy; course wrap-up

Becvar & Becvar, chapter 15

Final Exam: Case Study Analysis

Due Monday, May 7 by 12 noon

Learning Outcomes and Course Activities:

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:	CACREP 2009 Standard:	Tasks and Activities:	Assessment Method:
Social and Cultural Diversity:			
Develop strategies and multicultural competencies for working with and advocating for diverse families	II.G.2.d	Lecture, class discussions, readings	Diverse families presentation, final exam
Human Growth and Development:			
Understand and apply theories of family development and family resilience	II.G.3.a II.G.3.d	Lecture, in-class activities, readings	Theory presentation, genogram assignment, final exam
Helping Relationships:			
Understand and apply a systems perspective that provides an understanding of major models of family and related interventions.	II.G.5.e	Lecture, in-class activities, readings	<i>The Family Crucible</i> reflection paper, theory presentation, genogram assignment, final exam

Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Specific Standards:			
Learn the history, philosophy, and trends in couples and family counseling	MCFC.A.1	Lecture, readings, class discussions	Class participation, theory presentation, final exam
Understand and apply the specific legal and ethical considerations of working with couples and families	MCFC.A.2	Lecture, readings, class discussions	Class participation, diverse families presentation, final exam
Use systems theory to conceptualize issues in marriage, couple, and family counseling	MCFC.D.2	Lecture, readings, class discussions and activities	<i>The Family Crucible</i> reflection paper, theory presentation, diverse families presentation, final exam
Recognize and understand how living in a multicultural society affects couples and families, specifically the impact of societal trends, power and privilege, sexism, racism, and local and national policies and laws	MCFC.E.1 MCFC.E.2 MCFC.E.4 MCFC.E.5	Lecture, readings, class discussion, in-class experiential activities	Diverse families presentation, final exam
Learn how to provide effective services and adapt existing services to be culturally appropriate	MCFC.F.1 MCFC.F.4	Lecture, readings, class discussions, in-class experiential activities	Diverse families presentation, final exam
Learn and apply basic knowledge related to assessment and case conceptualization from a systems perspective	MCFC.G.1	Lecture, readings, in-class discussions	<i>The Family Crucible</i> reflection paper, theory presentation, final exam

