

Seton Hall University
Professional Psychology and Family Therapy
CPSY 7620-Advanced Seminar in Marriage and Family Therapy
Spring 2017
(3 credits)

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Office hours: Wednesday 4-5pm; Thursday 12-2pm; or by appointment (e-mail the instructor)

Class day, time, and room: Thursday, 2-4:10pm, JH460

Course description

In this course, students will review foundational, contemporary, and evidence-based approaches to the treatment of clinical problems in marriage and family therapy (MFT). They will participate in in-depth discussions of the theoretical principles that guide case conceptualization and treatment planning in MFT, compare the various MFT approaches to the treatment of clinical problems, and learn about common factors in MFT. Students will begin to identify and formulate their own theoretical approach to psychotherapy with individuals, couples, and families.

Prerequisite

Participation in CPSY 7620 requires that students have *passed* CPSY6601. Consult your academic advisor if you have questions about this prerequisite.

Course objectives

In this course, students will:

- 1) Gain a working knowledge of the major theoretical approaches to marriage and family therapy.
- 2) Be able to identify differences and similarities across the major theoretical approaches to marriage and family therapy.
- 3) Be able to use the major theoretical approaches to marriage and family therapy to understand how couple and family dynamics contribute to client distress, to conceptualize clinical cases, and to formulate treatment goals.
- 4) Identify and articulate their own theoretical approach to assessment and treatment in psychotherapy with individuals, couples, and families.

These objectives are consistent with the core MFT competencies 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.2.3, and 3.1.1. They also support student's progress towards the objectives of the MFT program (see program outcome #1 and student outcomes #2).

Required books

Jacobson, N. S., & Christensen, A. (1996). *Acceptance and change in couple therapy: A therapist's guide to transforming relationships*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Reiter, M. D. (2014). *Case conceptualization in family therapy*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Sexton, T. L. (2011). *Functional Family Therapy in clinical practice: An evidence-based treatment model for working with troubled adolescents*. New York: Routledge.

Required readings (available on Blackboard)

Sprenkle, D. H., Davis, S. D., & Lebow, J. L. (2009). *Common factors in couple and family therapy: The overlooked foundation for effective practice* (Chap. 3 & 4, pp. 34-59). New York: Guilford Press.

Colapinto, J. (1982). Structural family therapy. In A. M. Horne & M. M. Ohlsen (eds.), *Family counseling and Therapy*. Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock.

Hoyt, M. F. (2008). Solution-focused couple therapy. In Gurman, A. S. (Ed.), *Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy* (pp. 259-295). New York, NY: Guilford.

Johnson, S. M. (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy* (2nd ed., Chap. 1, 2, & 3, pp. 1-52). New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Johnson, S. (2008). Emotionally focused couple therapy. In Gurman, A. S. (Ed.), *Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy* (pp. 107-137). New York, NY: Guilford.

Keim, J. (1998). Strategic family therapy. In F. M. Dattilio (Ed.), *Case studies in couple and family therapy: Systemic and cognitive perspectives*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families & family therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chap 3 & 5)

Satir, V. (1967). *Conjoint family therapy*. (Part III: Theory and practice of therapy.) Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.

Ulrich, D. N. (1998). Contextual Family Therapy. In F. M. Dattilio (Ed.), *Case studies in couple and family therapy: Systemic and cognitive perspectives*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends* (Chap. 1 & 2). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Student performance evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on their performance in the following four areas:

- 1) *Class participation (27 points)*: prior to each course students will complete all assigned readings and use the knowledge they have gained to complete the "Principles of Psychotherapy Theories" handout. The handout is due at the beginning of each class on week 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15. Students will receive 2 points for each handout completed and submitted on time (within the first 5 mn of the class). The instructor will evaluate the students' efforts to translate the readings into clearly articulated principles of psychotherapy. The grading rubric as well as an example can be found in the "Principles of Psychotherapy

Theories” handout. Students will receive a total of 9 points for participating in class discussions.

- 2) *Student-led discussions (23 points)*: A student will facilitate the class discussions on week 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11. This will involve using the “Principles of Psychotherapy Theories” handout and:
 - Discussing what the student thinks the principles of the MFT theory are and asking the class for feedback: Do other students think the same? What are similarities and differences? What are areas that need clarification? (5 points)
 - Discussing the student’s personal reactions to the theory: What are the student’s thoughts and feelings about the theory? Is this a theory the student would use in clinical practice? Why or why not? This is the student’s opportunity to show self-awareness and critical thinking. The student will invite the class to share their own reactions and will facilitate a discussion that compares and contrasts the reactions of the class. (5 points)
 - Using the theory to understand a fictional client: The student will identify a fictional couple or family from a movie, TV show, etc. The student will describe the couple or family (who they are, their history, social and cultural background, present living situation) and show a video clip that illustrates how they interact with one another (2.5 points). The student will draw a map of the couple or family interactions (2.5 points) and then invite the class to discuss how they would apply the theoretical principles discussed above to understand the couple or family system. The student will facilitate the discussion at the same time as he or she offers a theoretical conceptualization of the case (3 points).
 - Identifying the limitations of the MFT theory: Is this a theory that is relevant to various clinical problems and diverse populations? The student will examine and discuss whether the MFT theory supports sensitivity and responsiveness to gender, cultural, and class-related differences in particular. (5 points)
- 3) *Midterm paper (25 points)*: Describe, compare, and contrast two MFT theories reviewed thus far. The description of each MFT theory should include information about: a) the major contributors that developed the theory, b) the principles of the theory, c) the basic concepts of the theory, d) the assessment and treatment techniques unique to the theory, e) the role of the therapist, and f) the therapeutic goals. The description of each theory should be concise and clear, about 3 pages in length, and double spaced. The paper should also include a brief 2-page discussion of the similarities and differences that connect and distinguish these two theories. A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard.
- 4) *Final paper (25 points)*: Identify and describe your own theory or model for assessing, conceptualizing, and treating individual, couple, and family systems. This theory or model may be one you create by integrating the principles and techniques of two or more approaches to systemic therapy. Discuss your reasons for using this theory or model. The description of your approach to psychotherapy should indicate how you integrate considerations of developmental processes and human differences (e.g., gender, cultural diversity) in the case conceptualization. The instructor will provide detailed guidelines and a grading rubric on Blackboard. The final paper is 10 pages in length.

Grading Scale

94-100	A	90-93	A-
87-89	B+	84-86	B
79-82	B-	76-78	C+
73-75	C		

Students' Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- (1) Attending all classes. If unable to attend all classes for medical or other reasons, please email the instructor to discuss the situation prior to the scheduled absence. Students may not miss more than 2 classes. Students who miss more than 2 classes will not receive full credit for class participation; 5 points will be deducted from the final grade.
- (2) Completing and submitting their assignments on time (late assignments will not receive full credit – 5 points will be deducted from the final grade).
- (3) Participating in class and group discussions. **NOTE:** Class and group discussions may involve self-reflection and self-disclosure.

Because these behaviors constitute evidence of professionalism, they are a requirement for passing this course.

Important Notes

Students with Disabilities: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students at Seton Hall University who have a visual, hearing, physical, and/or learning disability, may be eligible for accommodation in this course. Should a student require such accommodations, he or she must contact the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 67, Duffy Hall, at 973-313-6003. The student will work with DSS to develop a plan for accommodations. For more information, visit <http://www.shu.edu/offices/disability-support-services/getting-started.cfm>

Academic Integrity & Dishonesty: According to the Graduate Bulletin, “all forms of dishonesty whether by act of omission, included, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and knowingly furnishing false information to the University are prohibited and may elicit University sanctions of suspension or expulsion.” I will contact students suspected of being academically dishonest and consult with the Program Director and Department Chair regarding further actions.

Cell Phone/Pager Policy: When class begins, please turn your cell phone and/or pager to the off or mute position. Loud beeps, sounds, songs, and rings from these devices are disruptive. However, I understand that emergencies can occur, so if you are expecting to be contacted during our class time, please advise me of this before class, turn your volume to ‘low’ or vibrate, and seat yourself near the exit of the room, so you can be excused without disturbing the class.

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact me or another student to obtain materials missed.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
Week 1 01-12	Introduction & orientation to the course Learning outcome assessment (pre-) Principles of psychotherapy theories	
Week 2 01-19	Foundational theories of MFT: Bowen family systems	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 3) See www.thebowencenter.org Principles of Bowen family systems DUE
Week 3 01-26	Foundational theories of MFT: Contextual therapy	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 4) Ulrich (1998) Student-led discussion #1 (Chana) Principles of contextual therapy DUE
Week 4 02-02	Foundational theories of MFT: Structural family therapy	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 9) Minuchin (Chap. 3 & 5) Colapinto (1982) Student-led discussion #2 (Nicole) Principles of structural family therapy DUE
Week 5 02-09	Foundational theories of MFT: Strategic family therapy	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 7) Keim (1998) Student-led discussion #3 Principles of strategic family therapy DUE
Week 6 02-16	Foundational theories of MFT: Satir growth model	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 5) Satir (1967) Student-led discussion #4 (Stephanie) Principles of Satir growth model DUE
Week 7 02-23	Common therapeutic factors in marriage and family therapy Choosing a therapeutic approach: Considerations	Reiter (Chap. 1, 12-19) Blow & Sprenkle (2001) Mid-term paper DUE

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments
Week 8 03-02	Post-modern theories of MFT: Narrative therapy	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 11) White & Epston (Chap. 1 & 2) Student-led discussion #4 (Yessenia) Principles of narrative therapy DUE
Week 9 03-09	Spring break – No class	
Week 10 03-16	Post-modern theories of MFT: Solution-focused brief therapy	Reiter (Chap. 2 & 10) Hoyt (2008) Also see SFBT manual Student-led discussion #5 (Simon) Principles of SFBT DUE
Week 11 03-23	Evidence-based treatment models for working with couples and families: Emotionally focused couple therapy	Johnson (Chap 1, 2, & 3) Johnson (2008) Student-led discussion #6 (Yamilka) Principles of ECFT DUE
Week 12 03-30	Evidence-based treatment models for working with couples and families: Integrative behavioral couple therapy	Jacobson & Christensen (Chap. 1-9) Principles of IBCFT DUE
Week 13 04-06	Evidence-based treatment models for working with couples and families: Integrative behavioral couple therapy (Cont'd)	Jacobson & Christensen (Chap. 1-9)
Week 14 04-13	Holy Thursday – No class	
Week 15 04-20	Evidence-based treatment models for working with couples and families: Functional Family Therapy	Sexton (Section I and II) Principles of FFT DUE
Week 16 04-27	Evidence-based treatment models for working with couples and families: Functional Family Therapy	Sexton (Section I and II)
Week 17 05-04	Final paper DUE by May 4	