

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
OFF-CAMPUS SITE: PRINCE WILLIAM CSB**

**EDCD 797: BRIEF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY (3 CREDITS)
FALL SEMESTER 2004**

Instructor: Nancy Newport, LPC
Phone: 703-352-9005 Fax: 703-352-8999
Class: Saturdays 9:30 - 6:00
 October 2, October 16, October 30, November 13, and Nov 20, 2004
Office Hours: By appointment
Office Address: 3913 Old Lee Highway, Suite 32-A
 Fairfax, VA 22030

Course Description

Brief Marriage and Family Therapy derives from the tradition of family therapy and is influenced by the work of many family therapists including Milton H. Erickson, Virginia Satir, , Jay Haley, Cloe Madanes, Bill O’Hanlon and Michele Weiner-Davis. It is a respectful approach that emphasizes the resolution of family problems in a collaborative atmosphere that emphasizes change rather than introspection. This class will focus on the basic principles of counseling couples and families using a Solution Oriented approach.

Learning Objectives

1. To increase effectiveness in utilizing systemic thinking.
2. To develop an advanced understanding of the concept of creating change in relationships.
3. To enhance skill in being an effective agent of change in the family system.
4. To recognize, identify and interrupt problematic patterns in relationships.
5. To become familiar with specific strategies and interventions in counseling couples and families with children and adolescents.
6. To recognize and effectively work with cultural and contextual differences in families.
7. To experience supervised practice in the use of Solution Oriented strategies and interventions in working with couples and families.

Course Requirements

I. Class Participation and Practice/Experiential Learning

Students are expected to actively involve themselves in the experiential learning opportunities with classroom practice of strategies and interventions being studied. Opportunities for practice will be provided each week during class. Classroom practice sessions will be assessed using feedback/intervention tools.

It is expected that students attend every class given the importance of active participation in the class discussions and exercises. More than one unexcused absence will result in not receiving credit for the course.

II. Family Case Study

12-16 Pages

Due: November 30, 2004

Working with data from your current family or your family of origin, create a framework for you doing therapy with this family. If you prefer, you may "create" a family to work with. Select one problem area to focus on. That area will be the presenting problem. Stay specific and focused as the therapist.

Include the following in the case study:

- Presenting problem
- List family members, relationships and ages
- Each family member's own perspective (viewing) of the presenting problem Ex. Who created the problem, who perpetuates the problem, who holds the solution to the problem
- Identify problematic patterns of interaction (how the family does the problem)
- Individual and system internal and external resources
- How you joined with the family
- Goals for therapy (use behavioral terms)
- Interventions utilized
- How you interrupted the problematic patterns
- What was the response to the interventions and pattern interruptions
- Task assignments
- Resolution of the problem

NOTE: All papers are to be written according to APA format (double spaced, numbered pages). Papers will be graded by a Rubric scale.

Mail your paper in a large manila envelope with another large, self-addressed, stamped envelope. Deliver or mail to:

Nancy Newport, LPC
3913 Old Lee Highway, Suite 32-A
Fairfax, VA 22030

**Your paper must be postmarked or hand delivered to my office by November 30, 2004.
NO CERTIFIED MAIL.**

III. Group Presentation**Due November 13, 2004**

This assignment will be done in small groups. Each group will create a written relationship scenario to evaluate and present orally to the class. Focus will be on recognition and interruption of patterns of interaction and change oriented language patterns and strategies. A written summary is to be distributed to the class at presentation. Presentation should be about 15-30 minutes including questions and class discussion. Group grade will be based on:

- Assessment of relationship situation utilizing SOBT principles
- Presentation of case including written summary
- Quality of group teamwork demonstrated
- Group member assessment of each member's participation

Grading System

Case Study - 40%

Group Presentation – 30%

Experiential Practice/Class Participation and Attendance – 30%

90-100 points = A

80-90 points = B

70-80 points = C

Below 70 is = F

Required Reading- (also see Suggested Reading list)Hudson, P. and O'Hanlon, B., (1991) Rewriting Love Stories-Brief Marital Therapy.

WW Norton and Co: New York

Weiner-Davis, M. (1992) Divorce Busting, Simon and Schuster: New York.

Class schedule

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."

- Chief Seattle

Class 1	October 2	Introduction Thinking in Systems Joining with Couples and Families Future Oriented questions Viewing and Doing the Problem Weiner-Davis, <u>Divorce Busting</u> <i>Introduction, Chapters 1-6</i> Hudson and O'Hanlon, <u>Rewriting Love Stories</u> , <i>Chapters 1-4</i>
Class 2	October 16	Problematic Patterns in Families Learning to Interrupt Patterns Romantic Relationships
Class 3	October 30	Setting Goals Task Assignments Boundaries and Safety – Dealing with Destructive Behavior in Families Weiner-Davis, <u>Divorce Busting</u> , <i>Chapters 7</i> Hudson and O'Hanlon, <u>Rewriting Love Stories</u> , <i>Chapters 5-7</i>
Class 4	November 13	Group Presentations Intimacy and Sex in Couples Relationships Weiner-Davis, <u>Divorce Busting</u> <i>Chapters 8-10</i> Hudson and O'Hanlon, <u>Rewriting Love Stories</u> , <i>Chapters 8-9</i>
Class 5	November 20	Working with Children and Adolescents in Family Therapy Hudson and O'Hanlon, <u>Rewriting Love Stories</u> , <i>Chapters 10-11</i> Case Study Due (postmarked by) Nov 30, 2004

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.