

EDCD 797: Impact of Divorce (1 credit)
Instructor: Carol A. Sprang, MA, LCPC
Spring 2010

Course Meets: Tuesdays (February 23, March 2,March 16) 7:20 – 10:00 p.m. and
Saturday, March 27, 10:00-4:00
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Office hours: By appointment only, before class

Course Description

Special Topics course, EDCD 797: *The Impact of Divorce on Adults and Children*, provides students with an overview of the emotional and relational challenges facing children and adults who have experienced separation and divorce. The role of school and community counselors working with these individuals and families will be explored.

Course Objectives/Student Outcomes

1. Understand the physical, psychological, socio-cultural, and relational impact of separation and divorce on children, adolescents, and adults.
2. Examine your own and other's beliefs about divorce.
3. Examine the relationship of culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status on impact.
4. Gain an understanding of the mental and emotional impact from children's perspective.
5. Gain an understanding of intervention strategies to effectively counsel clients.
6. Acquire an awareness of the importance and development of prevention and intervention strategies and programs to address the issues of couples struggling with their relationship.
7. Understand the role of the counselors working with students, individuals, and families.
8. Gain awareness of literature, websites, and other resources available to assist clients dealing with divorce.

Relationship to Course and Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDCD 797 is a special topics course and meets the requirement that all Masters level students take 2 credits of special topics course work. This 1-credit course will contribute to the counseling student's knowledge of a particular population of clients.

EDCD 797 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations:

- Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual counseling.
- Virginia Department of Health Professions requirement that Licensed Professional Counselor candidates complete graduate study in theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy.
- Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core requirement described in Section II.K.e: Helping relationships: An understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
- American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

Suggested Readings: List to be distributed at first class (No required text)

Professional Performance Criteria (Effective February 25, 2003).

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The Counseling and Development Program in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to the dispositions found on the C & D Homepage at: http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.htm

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

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://www.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.

Course Structure:

A variety of reading material and experiential activities will be provided during the five sessions of the course. Students should come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussion and activities. Class activities will include lecture, small group work, experiential exercises, and videos.

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance and Active Participation (15 points)

Students are expected to attend all classes and come to class prepared having completed all reading and written assignments. Students are encouraged to share resources and information with others.

2. Website Exploration. (15 points). Due March 2

Students are expected to use the internet to explore divorce information and resources. By the second class meeting students should locate, explore, and download documents from at least three websites. To be shared in class.

3. Professional Library and Bibliotherapy [35 points]. Due March 16

- **Professional Library:** Read a book concerning any aspect of Divorce you choose. Write a **two-page** review of the book. Include, summary of information; identify the audience for this book, and discuss its strengths and weakness.

AND

- **Bibliotherapy (maximum length 1-2 pages):** Read and review two books to be used with children. The following information should be submitted for each book selected: Title, author, publisher of the book and a short synopsis of the book, including a recommended audience, and strategies for using each book.

4. Small Group Presentation (35 points)

Work in groups of three. The presentation will be 25-30 minutes in length on the last day of class concerning your focus (to be discussed during first class). Presentation is to incorporate

interviews (adults and/or children as related to topic), research (at least 3 Journal articles), audio/visuals, and recommendations. Students will prepare a 2 page handout, or a trifold, that includes a summary of the focus or issue, resources, and references. Bring copies of the handout for each classmate. Include the handout, notes from interviews and copies of articles in a packet you turn in to instructor. Each student is to write a one page reflection about what you have learned and what are the implications for counselors. **[35 points]**

Summary of Grading System & Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation	15 points
Website Exploration	15 points
Library and Bibliotherapy	35 points
Group presentation & handout	35 points
TOTAL:	100 points

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend all classes, to come on time and stay for the entire class. Given that this is a 1-credit elective and only meets 4 times, students who miss any class session will not be permitted to complete the class.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, working, speaking, or hearing. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability please inform your instructor at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible, so that arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center (703) 993-2474 for information and the required documentation.

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:

A	96-100	points
A-	92-95	points
B+	87-91	points
B	82-86	points
C	76-81	points
F	75	points and below

Course Agenda

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE
2/23/10	Orientation: Introductions Syllabus Choosing a focus for Presentation Causes of Divorce	Personal Reflection (in class)
3/02/10	Preventive Programs Emotional & Relational Impact Case Studies Websites Discussion of readings	DUE: Website exploration & documents Readings
3/09/10	SPRING BREAK	
3/16/10	Impact on specific groups Case studies Discussion of readings	Due: Library and Bibliotherapy Readings
3/27/10 Am & PM	Role of Counseling Student Sharing/Presentations Video Course Evaluation	Due: 1. Presentations 2. Personal Reflections