

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Graduate Program in Counseling and Development
EDCD 658 Sec 001: 3 Credits
Fall Semester, 2012

Couples and Family Counseling

Meeting Day/time: Mondays 4:30 PM – 7:10 PM

Location: Thompson Hall, Room L019

Professor: Mark R. Ginsberg
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office: Thompson Hall 2103
Office Phone: 703.993-2004
Email: mginsber@gmu.edu

Course Description:

This course provides a broad overview of principles, theories and methods of family counseling/therapy. The focus of the course will be on developing an understanding of family functioning and processes across the life-cycle and models for intervention with families. The course will be both didactic and experiential consisting of lectures, consideration of case studies, viewing of video segments and experiential activities.

Course Objectives:

- Gain an understanding of family structures, process and functioning across the life cycle,
- Gain an understanding of functional and dysfunctional family challenges, processes and behaviors,
- Become familiar with the historical legacy and rich history of the field of family counseling/therapy,
- Become familiar with the concepts, theories and methods reflective of the major systemically-linked approaches for intervention with families,

Readings:

- Nichols, M.P., 2010. *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon (Pearson).
- Napier, A.Y and Whitaker, C.A. 1978. *The Family Crucible*. New York: Harper and Row.

Course Requirements -- NOTE THAT LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

- **Class Participation (20% of Course Grade)**
 - As this course is BOTH didactic AND experiential, it is essential and required that students attend AND participate actively in each class session – if you will need to miss a class session, please notify the instructor in advance of the class session
- **Readings**
 - There are two (2) required textbooks for this course – it is expected that students will read BOTH of these books as well as other supplemental readings that may be assigned – class presentations and discussions will be supplemental to the assigned readings
- **Personal Genogram (of your own family of origin) -- DUE on October 22 (10% of Course Grade)**
 - You are to complete a personal genogram of your own family of origin of at least three (3) generations. Include in your genogram pertinent data such as sex, age, ethnicity, place of birth and significant life-cycle events. In addition to the graphic depiction of your family of origin genogram, you also are to prepare a narrative of NO MORE THAN 5 PAGES that describes your family including: family roles, structures and processes (rules). In addition, provide an overview of how you (as a family counselor/therapist) would view the significant issues and challenges your family of origin faces together with a glimpse of your initial goals, objectives and intervention plan for working with your family.
- **Paper -- DUE ON NOVEMBER 19 (40% of Course Grade)**
 - Prepare a paper of no more than 10 pages in length that provides a review of a central issue, theory or method in the family counseling/therapy field. You should review the relevant historical literature and recent research, provide a thorough discussion of the selected issue and suggest directions for future study and/or research. In addition, as part of your paper, describe a fictional “case study” of how the chosen model is applied within the context of a family-focused intervention.
- **Final Examination -- DISTRIBUTED ON NOVEMBER 26 AND DUE ON DECEMBER 3 (30% of Course Grade)**
 - There will be a take-home final examination for the course, which will be due at the final class session on December 3

Grades:

Assignment	Points
Class Participation	20
Personal Family of Origin Genogram	15
Paper	40
Final Exam	25
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	100

Total Points and Grade Matrix:

- A = 90-100**
- B = 80-89**
- C = 70-79**
- D = 60-69**
- F = Below 60**

Relationship to Course and Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

EDCD 658 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations:

1. Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual and family counseling.
2. Virginia Department of Health Professions requirement that Licensed Professional Counselor candidates complete graduate study in theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy.
3. 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.
4. American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

Counseling & Development Program Professional Dispositions:

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

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Please note that:

- Plagiarism encompasses the following:
 1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
 2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment:
(from Mason Honor Code online at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>)
 - Paraphrasing involves taking someone else's ideas and putting them in your own words. When you paraphrase, you need to cite the source.
 - When material is copied word for word from a source, it is a direct quotation. You must use quotation marks (or block indent the text) and cite the source.
 - Electronic tools (e.g., SafeAssign) may be used to detect plagiarism if necessary.
 - Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary actions.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
 - Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
 - Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
 - Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students'S personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Class Schedule and Assignments

DATE	TOPIC	READING & ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
Aug 27	Course Introduction Course Expectations Family Development Across the Life Cycle Family Structures and Processes	Acquire Textbooks and Begin Reading
Sept 3	NO CLASS – Labor Day	NONE
Sept 10	Historical Roots and Legacy of Family Counseling/Therapy Systems Theories and Concepts	Nichols Chapter 1 & 4
Sept 17	Rosh Hashanah – CLASS WILL BE HELD YET WILL NOT BE REQUIRED Family of Origin Family Assessment Beginning Phase of Family Intervention & Treatment Genograms and Their Role in Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 2 & 3
Sept 24	Structural Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapter 7
October 1	Strategic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapter 6
October 8	NO CLASS Work on Genogram Project	

October 15	NO CLASS	
October 22	Experiential Models of Family Counseling/Therapy Genogram Project DUE	Nichols Chapter 8 Napier and Whitaker, <i>The Family Crucible</i>
October 29	Bowenian and Psychodynamic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 5 & 9
November 5	Solution Focused Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapter 12
November 12	Behavioral and Educational Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 10 & 11
November 19	Contemporary and Emerging Models of Family Counseling/Therapy Paper DUE	Nichols Chapters 13
November 26	Integrative Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 14, 15 & 16
December 3	Convergence and Conclusion Take Home Final DUE	