

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Graduate Program in Counseling and Development
EDCD 658 Sec 001: Couples and Family Counseling
3 Credits, Fall Semester, 2014
Meeting Day/time: Wednesday's 4:30 PM – 7:10 PM
Location: Thompson Hall 1020

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

Course Description:

A. Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Admission to Counseling and Development program; EDCE 609 (may be taken concurrently)

B. University Catalog Course Description:

Introduces major approaches to counseling couples and families. Uses case studies and simulations to facilitate transition from theory to practice.

C. Expanded 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:

This course is designed to enable students to:

- 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, and
- Become familiar with the concepts, theories and methods reflective of the major systemically-linked approaches for intervention with families.

Professional Standards

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.

Required Readings

- Nichols, M.P., (2013). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods (10th Edition)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon (Pearson).
- Napier, A.Y and Whitaker, C.A. (1978). *The Family Crucible*. New York: Harper and Row.

Encouraged Supplemental Readings and Resources:

Bray, J.H and Stanton, M. (2013). *Handbook of Family Psychology*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Diverse Families (March/April 2014), Special Issue of the Journal of Family Therapy. Washington, DC: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

McGoldrick, N., Gerson, R. and Petry, S.S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and Intervention*. New York: Norton. (On Reserve at the Fenwick Library)

McGoldrick, M. *The (2011) Genogram Journey*. New York: Norton. (On Reserve at the Fenwick Library)

Streaming Video Resources:

Available through George Mason University's Fenwick Library
Alexander Street Press
Psychology/Counseling Series

A large collection of video may be streamed to your computer – search the Fenwick Library collection of videos by searching on “family therapy.” During the semester, specific videos may be assigned for viewing while others may be recommended.

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

- **Class Participation (25% 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
 - Students are obligated, as part of the class participation requirement, to post AT LEAST ONE comment per week and participate activity in the class On-Line Dialog that will be hosted as part of the Blackboard Site for this course,

- **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 15 (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 19 AND DUE ON DECEMBER 3 (25% of Course Grade)**

- There will be a take-home final examination for the course, which will be due no later than the final class session on December 3.

Final Grade Matrix:

| Assignment | Points |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Class Participation | 25 |
| Personal Family of Origin Genogram | 10 |
| 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

TASKSTREAM REQUIREMENTS

Every student registered for any Counseling and Development course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

The performance-based assessment for this course is the PAPER that is due on November 19.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>).
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.

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).

c. 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.

d. 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' personal experience and academic performance (See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).

e. 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/>).

f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

g. 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/>).

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

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

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website <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 | Historical Roots and Legacy of Family Counseling/Therapy Systems Theories and Concepts | Nichols Chapter 1 & 4 Milhausen, R & Neustifter, R. Diversity in Today's Families, (March/April 2014), <u>Diverse Families</u> . Special Issue of the Journal of Family Therapy. Washington, DC: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. (on blackboard site) |
| Sept 10 | Family of Origin Family Assessment Beginning Phase of Family Intervention & Treatment | Nichols Chapters 2 & 3 Bray and Stanton Bray, J. H.: Couple and Family Assessment Pages 151-164. |

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| | Genograms and Their Role in Family Counseling/Therapy | |
| Sept 17 | Structural Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapter 7 |
| Sept 24 | Rosh Hashanah Holiday NO CLASS Participate in On-Line Dialog | |
| October 1 | Strategic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapter 6 |
| October 8 | NO CLASS Work on Genogram Project, Participate in On-Line Dialog & Other Assignments | |
| October 15 | Experiential Models of Family Counseling/Therapy Genogram Project DUE | Nichols Chapter 8 Napier and Whitaker, <i>The Family Crucible</i> |
| October 22 | Bowenian and Psychodynamic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapters 5 & 9 Bray and Stanton Magnavita, J.J. Psychodynamic Family Psychotherapy: Toward Unified Relational Systematics. Pages 240-257. |
| October 29 | Solution Focused and Brief Therapy Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapter 12 Bray and Stanton Cheung, S: Solution-Focused Brief Therapy |
| November 5 | Behavioral and Educational Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapters 10 & 11 Bray and Stanton Gordan, K.C., Dixon, L.J., Willett, J.M. & Hughes, F.M. Behavioral and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies. Pages 226-239. |
| November 12 | Contemporary and Emerging Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapters 13 |

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| | Paper DUE | |
| November 19 | Integrative Models of Family Counseling/Therapy | Nichols Chapters 14, 15 & 16 |
| November 26 | Thanksgiving Recess NO CLASS | |
| December 3 | <p>LAST CLASS PERIOD</p> <p>Convergence and Conclusion</p> <p>Take Home Final DUE</p> <p>NOTE – The Date and Time for the Actual Last Course of the Fall (2014) Semester May Be Changed from December 3 to a New Date (To Be Determined)</p> | |

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR THE PAPER (Due on November 19 and to be Uploaded to Taskstream):

| Criteria | | | | | TOTAL POINTS |
|--|--|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| Review of Literature & Research | Poor Review of the Research Literature – Incomplete and Not Current. 2 Points | Marginal Review of the Research Literature – Provides a Review that is missing important elements and/or is not fully current. 5 Points | Good Review of the Research Literature – Provides a Review that is Comprehensive and Complete, yet is missing one or more key and critical elements and perspectives. 8 Points | Excellent and Comprehensive Review of the Research Literature that is both comprehensive and current. 10 Points | 10 Points Maximum |
| Discussion of Topic | Discussion is superficial and without depth. It is not linked sufficiently to the research literature or provides useful, relevant applied examples. 2 Points | Discussion is of interest and reasonable depth yet lacks either sufficient connection to the research literature or relevant applied examples. 5 Points | Discussion is of sufficient depth, is linked to the research literature and cites applied examples – at least 1 key element is missing from the discussion. 8 Points | Discussion is an excellent synopsis of the issue with links to the research literature and uses multiple applied examples. 10 Points | 10 Points Maximum |
| Identification of Directions for Future Study | Paper lacks discussion of directions for future study. 0 Points | Paper Includes limited discussion of directions for future study that are NOT consistent with the research literature and/or not highly relevant. 2 Points | Paper includes a good discussion of directions for future study that are linked sufficiently to the research literature yet lacks clarity and is incomplete or does not use sufficient logic. 4 Points | Paper includes an excellent and comprehensive discussion of directions for future study that are linked fully to the research literature and are clear and complete in its logic. 5 points | 5 Points Maximum |

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| Fictional Case Study | Poorly conceived case Study. (If Case Study is Not Included in the Paper, 0 Points for this Section) | Acceptable, yet marginal, case study with some limited applied samples of the application of Couples and Family Counseling theories and methods. Case study is not fully relevant to the topic AND not sufficiently comprehensive to be fully applicable, illustrative or relevant to Couple and Family Counseling topic and method. | Good case study with modest applied examples of the application of Couples and Family Counseling theories and methods. Case study is relevant to the topic yet not sufficiently comprehensive to be fully applicable, illustrative or relevant to Couple and Family Counseling topic and method. | Excellent case study with clear and well-formulated applied examples of the application of relevant Couples and Family Counseling theories and methods. | 15 Points Maximum |
| | 5 Points | 10 Points | 13 Points | 15 Points | |