



College of Education and Human Development  
 Counseling & Development  
 4400 University Drive, MS 1H1, Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
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<http://gse.gmu.edu/counseling/>

**EDCD 658.001 Couples and Family Counseling (3:3:0)**

**Fall 2015**

**Monday, 7:20 pm – 10:00 pm**

**Krug 107**

**Instructor:** Judy A. Stone, Ed.D.

**Office hours:** By appointment

**Office location:** TBA, Fairfax campus

**Email address:** [jstoned@gmu.edu](mailto:jstoned@gmu.edu)

**Course Description:**

**A. Prerequisites/Corequisites:**

Admission to Counseling and Development program; EDCD 603, 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 couples and 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 Texts:**

Nichols, M. P. (2013). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods* (10<sup>th</sup> Edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon (Pearson).

McGoldrick, M., Giordan, J., & Garcia-Preto, N. (Eds.). (2005). *Ethnicity & family therapy* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Guilford.

**Recommended Texts:**

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, Sueli. (2008) *Genograms assessment and intervention* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Norton, W. W. & Company, Inc

Schwartz Gottman, J. (Editor). (2004). *The marriage clinic case book*. Norton, W. W. & Company, Inc.

Gottman, J., DeClaire, J., Schwartz Gottman, J. (2007). *Ten lessons to transform your marriage; America's love lab experts share their strategies for strengthening your relationship*. Potter/Ten Speed/Harmony.

**Recommended Supplemental Readings and Resources:**

Beitin, B. K., & Allen, K.R. (2005). A multilevel approach to integrating social justice and family therapy. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 24, 19-34.

Bernstein, A. (2000). Straight therapists working with lesbians and gays in family therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 26(4), 443-454.

Boyd-Franklin, N. (1993). Race, class and poverty. In F. Walsh (Ed.). *Normal family processes* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Brinkmeyer, M. Y., & Eyberg, S. M. (2003). Parent-child interaction therapy for oppositional children. In A. E. Kazdin & J. R. Weisz (Eds.) *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* (pp. 204-223). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Constantine, M. G. (2001). Examining multicultural counseling competence and race-related attitudes among white marital and family therapists. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(3), 353-62.

Dankoski, M. E. (2001). Pulling on the heart strings: An emotionally focused approach to family life cycle transitions. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(2), 177-187.

Dolan-Del Vecchia, K. (1998). Dismantling White Privilege with Family Therapy. In M. McGoldrick (Ed.). *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture and gender in clinical practice*. (pp. 159-175). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

- Falico, C.J. (1998). The cultural meaning of family triangles. In McGoldrick, M. (Ed.). *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture and gender in clinical practice*. (pp. 37-40). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Gerson, R., Hoffman, S., Sauls, M., & Ulrici, D. (1993). Family-of-Origin frames in couples therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 19, 341-354.
- Haddock, S. A., Zimmerman, T. S., & MacPhee, D. (2000). The power equity guide: Attending to gender in family therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 26(2), 153-70.
- LaSala, M. (2000). Lesbians, gay men, and their parents: Family therapy for the coming-out crisis. *Family Process*, 39(1), 67-82.
- Magnuson, S., & Shaw, H.E. (2003). Adaptations of the multifaceted genogram in counseling, training, and supervision. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 11, 45-54.
- McGoldrick, M., & Carter, B. (2001). Advances in coaching: Family therapy with one person. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(3), 281-300.
- Nelson, K. W. & Brendel, J. M. (2001). Therapist perceptions of ethnicity issues in family therapy: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(3), 363-373.
- Peplau, L. A., & Fingerhut, A. W. (2007). The close relationships of lesbians and gay men. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 405-424.
- Rait, D. S. (2000). The therapeutic alliance in couples and family therapy. *Psychotherapy in Practice*, 56, 211-224.
- Rastogi, M., & Wampler, K. S. (1998). Couples and family therapy with Indian families: Some structural and intergenerational considerations. In U. P. Gielen and A. L. Comunian, (Eds.), *The Family and Family Therapy in International Perspective* (pp.257-274). Milan, Italy: Edizioni Lint Trieste.
- Santisteban, D., Coatsworth, J., Perez-Vidal, A., Mitrani, V., Jean-Gilles, M. & Szapocznik, J. (1997). Brief structural/strategic family therapy with African-American and Hispanic high risk youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 25(5), 453-471.
- Simon, G. M. (1995). A revisionist rendering of structural family therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 21(1), 17-26.
- Vatcher, C. A., & Bogo, M. (2001). The feminist/emotionally focused therapy practice model: An integrated approach for couple therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(1), 69-83.
- Wetchler, J. L. (1995). A conservative response to Simon's revision of structural family therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 21(1), 27-31.

### **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**

- Attendance and active participation is required at every class. Please make sure you have read the assigned readings for the week and that you come to class prepared to discuss and critique them. You will be evaluated on the quality of your class participation and the clinical skills and theoretical knowledge you display in role-plays. Students are expected to attend each class on time and remain for its duration, unless otherwise agreed to in advance by professor and student. Frequent tardiness and/or absences (excused or unexcused) will result in a reduction in letter grade for the class. *More than two absences (excused or unexcused) will result in a failing grade or request to withdraw from the course.*

- **Readings**

- There are two (2) required textbooks for this course – it is expected that students will read all 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)**

- 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.
- Please identify the following on your genogram:
  - Names, dates of marriage/births/deaths/separations/divorces (month & year), cultural/ethnic/religious affiliations for all significant family members.
  - Other information like immigration, occupation, education, city/state of residence, illnesses, substance abuse, mental health. Add descriptive information that clarifies relationships as needed (e.g. drug use, in jail, etc.) You may create a “legend” if additional explanation is warranted.
  - Show schematically the nature of key relationships (e.g., closeness, distance, conflicts).

Previous students have found that having interviews/conversations with family members around these areas provide new insight. Students are encouraged to contact siblings, parents, uncles/aunts, grandparents for corroborating information. Relatives' responses to such requests can be very informative.

If necessary, you may use a sheet of paper larger than 8.5”X11.” The use of different colors for relational lines, etc. may enhance the presentation of the information. Please do not use pencil (smears too easily).

\*This information is intended for both academic mastery of one form of family assessment, but also self-reflection for the student. *Disclose only the information that you feel comfortable sharing.* Your professor will keep the information you share confidential.

- **Paper (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 7 AND DUE ON DECEMBER 14 (25% of Course Grade)**

#### 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**

#### ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Every student registered for any Counseling and Development course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment to Blackboard (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 Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor

reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard 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 16.

### **George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students:**

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- Office of Disability Services – 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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

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

### **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/>.**

**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](http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.htm)

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### Class Schedule and Assignments

DATE	TOPIC	READING & ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
Aug 31	Introductions/Expectations Family Development Across the Life Cycle; Family Structures and Processes	Acquire Textbooks and Begin Reading
Sept 14	Historical Roots and Legacy of Family Counseling/Therapy  Systems Theories and Concepts	Nichols Chapter 1 & 3 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 BBoard)
Sept 21	Family of Origin Family Assessment Beginning Phase of Family Intervention & Treatment	Nichols Chapters 2 Bray and Stanton (opt) Bray, J. H.: Couple and Family Assessment Pages 151-164.
Sept 28	Genograms and Their Role in Family Counseling/Therapy	McGoldrick text
October 5	Structural-Strategic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapter 5-6
October 13 (TUESDAY)	Experiential Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapter 7
October 19	Introduction to Couples Counseling; Gottman's research; Imago Therapy	Gottman Texts (opt) Harville Hendrix (opt) <b>Genogram Project DUE</b>
October 26	Bowenian and Psychodynamic Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 4 & 8 Magnavita, J.J. Psychodynamic Family Psychotherapy: Toward Unified Relational Systematics. Pages 240-257.
November 2	Solution Focused and Brief Therapy Models of Family Counseling/ Therapy	Nichols Chapter 11
November 9	Behavioral and Educational Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 9 Gordan, K.C., Dixon, L.J., Willett, J.M. & Hughes, F.M. Behavioral and Cognitive- Behavioral Therapies. Pages 226-239.
November 16	No class (BBoard work and discussion). Details to be provided.	McGoldrick Text <b>Paper DUE</b>
November 23	Culturally Diverse Families Integrative Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	McGoldrick Text Nichols Chapters 12,13
November 30	Contemporary Models of Family Counseling/Therapy	Nichols Chapters 10 Gottman texts (opt) Final Exam accessible via BBoard
Dec 7	Wrap up; Final Exam discussion.	Final Due on Dec 14, 10:00pm via BBoard

++Syllabus & schedule remains open to adjustments based on needs of the class++



**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR THE PAPER (Due on November 16 and to be Uploaded to Taskstream):**

<b>Criteria</b>					<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>
<b>Review of Literature &amp; Research</b>	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	<b>10 Points Maximum</b>
<b>Discussion of Topic</b>	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	<b>10 Points Maximum</b>
<b>Identification of Directions for Future Study</b>	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	<b>5 Points Maximum</b>

<b>Fictional Case Study</b>	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.	<b>15 Points Maximum</b>
	5 Points	10 Points	13 Points	15 Points	