



## College of Education and Human Development

Counseling & Development  
 4400 University Drive, MS 1H1, Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
 Phone: 703-993-2087; Fax: 703-993-5577  
<http://gse.gmu.edu/counseling/>

**Graduate Program in Counseling and Development**  
**ECD 797.05: Special Topics: Advanced Marital and Family Counseling**  
**1 Credit, Spring Semester, 2016**

**Meeting Day/Times:**

**Monday, January 25 (4:30 PM – 7:20 PM)**  
**Monday, February 8 (4:30 PM – 7:20 PM)**  
**Saturday, Feb 20 (10:00 AM – 4:00 PM)**  
**Monday, March 28 (4:30 PM – 7:20 PM)**

**Locations: Thompson Hall – Room 018 Lower Level (1/25, 2/8, & 2/20)**  
**Thompson Hall – Room 013 Lower Level (3/28)**

**Professor:** Name: Mark R. Ginsberg, Ph.D.  
 Office Hours: By Appointment  
 Office: Thompson Hall 2103  
 Office Phone: 703-993-2004  
 Email: [mginsber@gmu.edu](mailto:mginsber@gmu.edu)

**Course Description:**

**A. Pre-requisites/Co-requisites:**

Admission to Counseling and Development Program  
 ECD 602, 603, 609 & and 658 OR Permission of the Instructor

**B. University Catalog Course Description:**

Advanced study of selected topics in education for students who have been admitted to the Counseling and Development program

**C. Expanded Course Description:**

This elective course will focus on the development of advanced level skills and competencies in the practice of family counseling/therapy. Family-systems based models for practice in a complex, multi-cultural society will be explored and both current and emerging contexts for associated clinical practice will be studied.

The course will include consideration of historic approaches to family counseling/therapy as well as more recent approaches and also will include review of video examples and opportunities for applied practice and case consultation both of which will be the focus of the Saturday course session.

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

Face to face and weekly blackboard discussions

### **Learner Outcomes or Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, student will be able to:

1. Consider the “context” of family in relation to family structure, function, roles and responsibilities and in relation to the need for counselors/therapists to demonstrate “cultural competence.”
2. Compare and contrast major theoretical models in systems-based marital and family counseling/therapy.
3. Enhance their skills in applying a variety of approaches for and techniques of marital and family counseling/therapy.

### **Confidentiality**

In order to provide a safe learning environment for students in the class, and to protect the confidentiality of “practice clients” (including class members), students will maintain confidentiality and discuss case material and others’ personal information, reactions, etc. ONLY while in class or privately with other current class members.

### **Professional Standards**

This course is a “special topics” course and meets the requirement that all masters students in the Counseling and Development academic program take 2 credits of special topics course work. This 1-credit course will contribute to counseling and development graduate students’ knowledge of a particular population of clients who are challenged by a specific set of issues.

This course fulfills the following requirements:

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:**

- A selection of readings will be available on the Blackboard Site for this course and include selections from recent books and journals

In addition, it strongly is encouraged that students interested in extending their knowledge, skills and abilities in the field of marital and family counseling/therapy purchase and read the following book (several of the readings for the course will be from this book):

- Sexton, T. L. and Lebow, J. (2016). *Handbook of family therapy* (Second Edition). New York: Routledge.

### **Encouraged Supplemental Readings and Resources:**

- Nichols, M. P., (2013). *Family therapy: concepts and methods* (10<sup>th</sup> Edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon (Pearson).
- Napier, A. Y. and Whitaker, C. A. (1978). *The family crucible*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Bray, J. H. and Stanton, M. (2013). *Handbook of family psychology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Todd, T. and Bryce, K. (Ed.). (March/April 2014). Diverse Families. Special Issue of the *Journal of Family Therapy*, 13(2). Washington, DC: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.
- McGoldrick, N., Gerson, R. and Petry, S. S. (2008). *Genograms: assessment and intervention*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (On Reserve at the Fenwick Library)
- McGoldrick, M. (2011). *The genogram journey*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. (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 Assignments and Examinations:**

- **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
  - Students are obligated, as part of the class participation requirement, to post AT LEAST ONE comment per week during the period of the course (January 28 – March 28) and participate activity in the On-Line Dialog that will be hosted as part of the Blackboard Site for this course
  - It is expected that students will read all assigned readings and reference encouraged and supplemental readings.
  
- **Case Study & Presentation (40% of Course Grade)**
  - Students, in small groups (to be assigned), shall prepare a case study, preferably based on a “real” family situation they know about or a case that they have been involved with professionally.
  - The case should be related to a significant marital and/or family issue and reflect BOTH a conceptualization/formulation of the issue from a family systems perspective AND provide examples of interventions that have (or could) be used to assist and support the couple or family.
  - The case should be presented as a brief written review, or powerpoint style presentation and MUST include audio or video material illustrative of the application of counseling skills from a systems perspective either with an actual client system OR with a group (preferably other students in the class) who can simulate the client system.
  - This project is due on February 20 at the Saturday Lab Session and will be a part of a series of presentations that will be part of the day's program.

- The written document(s) (paper and/or powerpoint-type presentation) and associated audio/video materials must be turned in at the conclusion of the Saturday February 20 class session.

The document(s) must include your perspective on the formulation of the issue/challenge presented, a critique of your intervention(s) and a description of the impact of this therapeutic encounter on the client system.

- **Paper -- DUE ON March 28 at the Last Class Session (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 or actual "case study" of how the chosen model can be applied within the context of a family system focused intervention.

**Final Grade Matrix:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Class Participation	20
Case Study & Presentation	40
Paper	40
<b>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>100</b>

**Total Points and Grade Matrix:**

**A = 90-100**

**B = 80-89**

**C = 70-79**

**D = 60-69**

**F = Below 60**

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

**APA Format:** Students in Counseling & Development courses are expected to use APA style (6th ed.) for written papers.

### Electronic Devices

**Turn off and put away all electronic communication devices during class.** Cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g. iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but you must submit a request in writing to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, text, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade. **Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency situation that requires accommodation.**

### Attendance

In accordance with the policies of the Counseling and Development Program, on-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. Late arrival to class will be considered an absence. Due to the short nature of this class, **any unexcused absences will result in class failure**. Attendance is required for all classes. Excused absences are permitted for illness, religious holidays, or emergency situations only; documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. Work-related absences are not considered excused.

### Course Requirements

Each student is expected to: (1) attend each class, (2) complete all reading assignments before class, (3) arrive on time and stay for the entire class period, (4) participate in discussions and in-class work groups, (5) regularly check GMU email, and (6) submit or access documents via Blackboard as assigned.

### Assignments

Unless otherwise noted, the assignments for the course are to be **submitted in class on the due date**. Late assignments will not be accepted. Additional assignments and/or assessments may be added at the instructor's discretion.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of both the George Mason University code of honor and the expected professional dispositions of the Counseling & Development Program. The GMU English Department has developed the following statement regarding plagiarism:

“Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinion, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited.

Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writer's own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious, and what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being reader friendly.

In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers and establishes credibility, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism.”

### **TK20 Performance-based assessment submission requirement**

Not applicable for this course

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

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

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 [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].**



**Class Schedule**  
**Class Times are 4:30 PM – 7:10 PM (Unless Otherwise Noted)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
January 25	<p>Introduction to the Course</p> <p>Defining Family</p> <p>Reviewing Systems Concepts and Theories</p> <p>Identifying Key and Critical Intervention Models</p>	<p>Carr, A. The evolution of systems theory. In T.L. Sexton and J. Lebow (2016). <u>Handbook of Family Therapy</u>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Goldenberg, H &amp; Goldenberg, I. The revolution and evolution of family therapy and family psychology. In Bray, J.H and Stanton, M. (2013). <u>Handbook of Family Psychology</u>, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.</p> <p>Walsh, F. A family developmental framework: Challenges and resilience across the life cycle. . In T.L. Sexton and J. Lebow (2016). <u>Handbook of Family Therapy</u>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Falicov, C. J. Multiculturalism and diversity of families. In T.L. Sexton and J. Lebow (2016). <u>Handbook of Family Therapy</u>. New York: Routledge.</p>
February 8	<p>From Theory to Practice: Couple and Family Counseling/Therapy Models</p> <p>Case Study and Film Session</p> <p>Skill Development</p> <p>Case Consultation</p>	<p>Lebow. J. Integrative approaches to couple and family therapy. In T.L. Sexton and J. Lebow (2016). <u>Handbook of Family Therapy</u>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Datchi, C &amp; Sexton, T. Integrating research and practice through intervention science: New developments in family therapy research. In T.L. Sexton and J. Lebow (2016). <u>Handbook of Family Therapy</u>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Other Readings to be Assigned as Models and Theories are Identified as Focal Areas of Emphasis</p>

February 20 (Saturday 10 AM – 4 PM)	Clinical Laboratory Case Study, Presentations & Clinical Consultation	<p>Evan Imber-Black. Family Secret Implications for Theory and Therapy. Alexander Street Videos.  <a href="http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/1778748">http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/1778748</a>.</p> <p>Samuel Gladding. Family Therapy: Universal and Unique Approaches to Solving Problems. Alexander Street Videos.  <a href="http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/1857853">http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/1857853</a>.</p> <p>Jeffrey Zeig and Salvador Minuchin. The Craft of Family Therapy. Alexander Street Videos.  <a href="http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/2542823">http://search.alexanderstreet.com.mutex.gmu.edu/psychology-counseling/view/work/2542823</a>.</p> <p>Other Videos Also May Be Assigned To Be Viewed In Preparation for the Clinical Laboratory Session</p>
March 28	Couple and Family Counseling/Therapy Trends: Integrating Research with Evidence-Based Practice	Readings To Be Assigned

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR CASE STUDY AND PRESENTATION:**

The case study and presentation will be judged on the basis of the following:

Description and formulation of the Issue, Problem or Challenge Faced by the Couple/Family  
(0-10 Points)

Review of the counseling/clinical approach chosen and the reason for choosing this approach  
(0-15 Points)

Description of the counseling/clinical intervention chosen including a critique of the counseling/clinical process and its impact on and for the client system  
(0-15 Points)

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR THE PAPER:**

<b>Criteria</b>					<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>
<b>Review of Literature &amp; Research</b>	Poor Review of the Research Literature – Incomplete and Not Current.  1 Point	Marginal Review of the Research Literature – Provides a Review that is missing important elements and/or is not fully current.  2 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. 3-4 Points	Excellent and Comprehensive Review of the Research Literature that is both comprehensive and current.  5 Points	<b>5 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. 1 Point	Discussion is of interest and reasonable depth yet lacks either sufficient connection to the research literature or relevant applied examples.  2 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.  3-4 Points	Discussion is an excellent synopsis of the issue with links to the research literature and uses multiple applied examples.  5 Points	<b>5 Points Maximum</b>

<b>Identification of Directions for Future Study</b>	Presentation lacks discussion of directions for future study.	Presentation Includes limited discussion of directions for future study that are NOT consistent with the research literature and/or not highly relevant.	Presentation 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.	Presentation 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.	<b>5 Points Maximum</b>
<b>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 evidence-based theories and methods. Case study is not fully relevant to the topic AND not sufficiently comprehensive to be fully applicable, illustrative or relevant to the topic and method.	Good case study with modest applied examples of the application of evidence-based theories and methods. Case study is relevant to the topic yet not sufficiently comprehensive to be fully applicable, illustrative or relevant to the topic and method.	Excellent case study with clear and well-formulated applied examples of the application of relevant theories and methods.	<b>5 Points Maximum</b>
	1 Point	2 Points	3-4 Points	5 points	
	1 Point	2 Points	3 - 4 Points	5 Points	