

FAMILY THERAPY: THEORY AND PRACTICE
CPSY 504
Fall, 2006

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Catalogue Description:

Overview of the fundamental assumptions and ideas of general systems theory and the basic premises of theoretical orientations within family therapy. Participants explore the application of course material to their work setting or training track. This course is not clinical in nature and is not designed to train or prepare participants to conduct family therapy.

Prerequisite: None.

Credit: 3 semester hours.

Purpose:

It has been said that all therapy is family therapy. Even when working with individuals we are dealing with the internalized community of others that shaped them and continue to influence their every thought and feeling. This will be a survey course designed around the concept of family as a system that powerfully influences, and is influenced by, the behavior of individuals within that system. The fundamental concepts of general systems theory will be applied to the interactional patterns within families and the major theories of family therapy will be explored. Selected topics, controversies, themes, and trends in the field of family therapy will be discussed.

Because each student in this class is also a member of a family that has shaped his or her assumptions about reality and relationships, as well as career choices, it is essential that the student recognize and understand the ongoing influence of family of origin on his or her thoughts, feelings and behavior. Therefore students will be required to examine their own experiences in their family of origin and their taken-for-granted assumptions about family as an essential prerequisite to being able to understand, and intervene in, the systemic interactions of other families.

The course will be a combination of theoretical and clinical material. This course is an introduction and is not designed to prepare the student to do family therapy. The hope is that students will be excited enough by the powerful possibilities of family therapy that they will pursue further training and coursework in the field.

The purpose of this class will be best accomplished within a classroom milieu that encourages critical thinking and discussion, open debate, experiential learning, and fun.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this class, the student will be able to:

1. Describe a family as a system using appropriate concepts and language.
2. Discuss the similarities and differences among the various schools of family therapy and apply these theories to specific cases.
3. Describe his or her own family of origin in systemic terms and identify how family of origin influences the student's current behavior and relationships.
4. Identify how contextual factors of culture, race, social class, gender, and developmental stage affect families and family members.
5. Identify how individuals internalize family and recognize the reciprocal influence of individuals and systems.

Related Authorizations:

Successful completion of this course is necessary for fulfillment of degree requirements for any of the specialty areas in the Counseling Psychology Department. This course is also necessary for gaining access to licensure as a professional counselor, school psychologist, or school counselor.

Instructional Methods:

The class will combine didactic and experiential methods. Class periods will include discussion of the readings, lecture, role plays, demonstrations, video, experiential exercises and debates.

Required Texts:

Goldenberg, I. & Goldenberg, H. (2004) *Family Therapy: An Overview*, 6th Edition
Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson, Brooks/Cole.

Two reading packets to be purchased in the Counseling Psychology office, Rogers 301.

Course Requirements:

1. Active engagement in class through asking questions and participation in discussions, role plays, and exercises.
2. Attendance is mandatory. One excused absence will be allowed without penalty. Each absence beyond one will result in five points being deducted from the grade. Late arrival is disruptive and should be avoided unless cleared in advance with the instructor.
3. Completion of all assigned readings. Readings will be discussed in class and your comments and questions should reflect a thoughtful consideration of the material.
4. Family of Origin Project (see below).

5. Group Project (see below).
6. Final Exam: The final will be a take home case study. Instructions and case material will be presented two weeks prior to the due date.

Evaluation:

Grades will be assigned based on points earned as follows:

Class Participation	75
Family of Origin Project	100
Group Project	75
Final Exam	50
Total Possible Points	300

Grading scale: 280-300 = A
270-279 = A-
260-269 = B+
250-259 = B
240-249 = B-
230-239 = C+
220-229 = C

Class Schedule:

September 11:

Introduction to class.
Group assignments.
Course overview.
Systems theory.

September 18:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapters 1 and 4

Reading Packet One:

Pendergast & Sherman, *A guide to the genogram family systems training.*
McGoldrick & Gerson, Chapter 1, *Why genograms?*
Chapter 2, *Constructing genograms*

September 25:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg, Chapter 2

Reading Packet One:

Tannen, *Different words, different worlds.*

Hazan, *The essential nature of couple relationships*

Resnikoff, *Teaching Family Therapy: Ten key questions for understanding the family as patient.*

Reading Packet Two:

Philpot and Brooks, *Intergender communication and gender-sensitive family therapy.*

October 2:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 5

Reading Packet One:

Pittman, *Wet cocker spaniel therapy; an essay on technique in family therapy.*

Part One of Group Project Due

October 9:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 6

.Reading Packet One:

Imber-Black, *Ghosts in the therapy room.*

Reading Packet Two:

Ducommun-Nagy, *Contextual therapy*

October 16:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 7

Reading Packet Two:

Lawrence, *The humanistic approach of Virginia Satir.*

Johnson, *Emotionally focused family therapy*

Group One Presents

October 23:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 8

Reading Packet Two:

Kerr, *Theoretical base for differentiation of self in one's family of origin.*

Group Two Presents

October 30:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 9

Reading Packet One:

Kent, *Remarriage: A family systems perspective.*

Weltner, *A structural approach to the single parent family.*

Reading Packet Two:

Kemenoff, Jachimczyk, & Fussner, *Structural Family Therapy*

Group Three Presents

November 6:

Goldenberg and Goldenberg: Chapters 10 & 11

Reading Packet Two:

Prevatt, *Milan Systemic Therapy*

Treadway, *The ties that bind.*

Schwartz & Perrotta, *Let Us Sell No Intervention Before Its Time.*

Group Four Presents

November 13:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapters 13 and 14

Reading Packet One:

Strong, *DSM-IV and describing problems in family therapy.*

Tomm, *Externalizing the problem and internalizing personal agency.*

Reading Packet Two:

White, *The externalizing of the problem and the re-authoring of lives and relationships*

Group Five Presents

November 20:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg: Chapter 12

Reading Packet One:

Levy & Orlans, *Creating and repairing attachments in biological, foster and adoptive families.*

Diamond & Stern, *Attachment-based family therapy for depressed adolescents.*

Schachner, Shaver & Mikulincer, *Adult attachment theory, psychodynamics and couple relationships*

November 27:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg, Chapter 15 & 16

Family of Origin Project Due

Final Exam Distributed

December 4:

Goldenberg & Goldenberg, Chapters 17 & 18

Reading Packet One:

Gottman, *Why marriages fail*

Schnarch, *Inside the sexual crucible*

Giordano & Carini-Giordano, *Ethnic dimensions in family therapy*

December 11:

Goldenberg and Goldenberg: Chapters 3 and 19

Reading Packet Two:

Markowitz, *Understanding the differences.*

Scrivner & Eldridge, *Lesbian and gay family psychology*

Final exam due

Family of Origin Project

General instructions: This assignment requires you to apply the concept and theories we will study to your family of origin. In order to complete this assignment you will need to conduct at least two interviews of family members. You may interview parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, or cousins. You will cite these interviews in your bibliography. Please discuss confidentiality with your interviewees, get permission to use the interview material, and offer to change names if they so desire. You may include pieces of transcript in your paper only with expressed permission of your interviewee.

Instructions for paper:

Section one: (One page) Produce a detailed genogram of your family of origin covering at least three generations (going back to your grandparents). The genogram may be hand drawn but I prefer that you use a genogram software program. A number of programs are available to download for free. (One good program is available at www.genopro.com but many other are also available, enter “free genogram software” on Google for an extensive list.) You may use an extra large sheet of paper if you wish.

Section two: (4-6 pages) In narrative form, write a complete systemic analysis of your family of origin, referring back to the genogram. Issues you should cover include boundaries (within the family as well as between the family and the world), hierarchies, subsystems, alliances, rules (spoken and unspoken), feedback loops, adaptability, cohesion, power, cutoffs, family myths, significant losses, communication style and patterns, triangles, homeostatic regulation, inclusion and intimacy. You must give specific behavioral examples to back up your analysis. Don't just say, for example, that there were strong intergenerational boundaries, discuss the specific behaviors that demonstrated that those boundaries existed.

Section three: (6-8 pages) Select a theme of your choice to research and apply to your family of origin. You may create your own theme or select from the following list:

1. The effects of alcoholism or addiction on the family.
2. Blended family issues.
3. Single-parent family.
4. The effects of violence or abuse.
5. Family secrets.
6. Legacies of loss.
7. The role of ritual in the family.
8. Birth order.
9. Cultural issues in the family.
10. The effects of mental or physical illness on the family.
11. Trans-generational transmission of gender roles.
12. Family stories and the construction of meaning.
13. Models of marriage.
14. Enmeshment and disengagement.

15. Emotional milieu within the family.

In completing this section you will need to cite at least three scholarly articles and/or books that address the theme you are discussing. You will also need to give specific behavioral examples to illustrate your theme as it plays out in your family of origin.

Section four: (One page) Attach a bibliography citing all references using APA reference style. List all interviews, including person interviewed, date of interview, length of interview and mode of interview (phone, in person, email).

This paper is due November 27. Papers may be handed in before that date but no late papers will be accepted. Paper must be double-spaced, using 12 point font.

Grading:

Writing conventions (spelling, grammar, organization)	5 points
Genogram (completeness, neatness, clarity)	15 points
Systemic analysis (completeness, depth, grasp of concepts)	30 points
Selected theme (depth, originality, insight, quality analysis)	45 points
Bibliography (APA style, documented interviews)	5 points

Total possible 100 points

Extra Credit: Up to four students may volunteer to present their Family of Origin Projects in class. Students who do this will receive 10 points of extra credit on this assignment.

It is understood that this assignment can be emotionally difficult for some students in that it might require focus on issues they are not prepared to address, or they may feel uncomfortable in exposing personal information to the instructor. If you feel you cannot complete this assignment please make an appointment to talk with the instructor and an alternative assignment will be arranged.

Group Project

During one of the first class periods you will be assigned to “families”. These families will remain together throughout the term and will be the subjects of the role plays we will do in class. In addition, your “family” will be your workgroup for the completion of this assignment. Your “family” will be randomly assigned an “issue” that brings you to therapy and will also be randomly assigned a theory from which to approach this issue. Two class periods will be allocated to work on your projects but you will need to do considerable work and communication outside of class in order to complete this assignment.

Part one: Meet as a group. Assign roles, deciding who will be the parents, the children, etc. Decide on the age and gender of the children. Who is the identified patient? Describe the relationships between family members. Develop an identity and history for each family member. Decide how the identified problem will play out in the family. Keep notes of your decisions. On **October 2** you will turn in a brief, 3-4 page paper describing your family, the individuals, the history of the problem, and a genogram. Only one paper is expected from each group.

Part two: In addition to a family “issue” you will be assigned a particular theory. You will need to research how your assigned issue would be addressed within this theory. For example if your issue were “alcoholism within the family” and your assigned theory was “solution-focused” you would need to research how a solution-focused family therapist would address alcoholism in the family. Your group will then do a demonstration of this approach to this problem by role-playing a family session for the class. This presentation should be no more than 30 minutes. For purposes of this demonstration, one of your group members will need to step out of his or her usual family role in order to be “the therapist”. As part of the presentation your group will do a brief (30 minute maximum) didactic presentation on your theory would address the techniques that were demonstrated and the theoretical constructs involved. Be prepared to answer questions. Dates for these presentations will coincide with the schedule of readings on each theory. You will need to hand in a bibliography citing your sources.

Part Three: Your family will be interviewed by the instructor ,at least once, at some point in the term. You will need to accurately portray the individuals and relationships as described in Part One and present a convincing systemic portrayal of the family. Each family member will write a very brief (one page max) reaction to the interview describing how his or her character responded, what they liked or didn’t like, whether he or she felt heard, etc. **This paper is due the week following the interview.**

Grading:

Part one (Family Description)	15 points
Part two (Demonstration/presentation)	50 points
Part three (Reaction to interview)	10 points
Total possible	75 points

COURSE SYLLABUS COVER SHEET

Lewis & Clark College
Graduate School of Education and Counseling

Please attach completed cover sheet to course syllabus.

Course Name	Family Therapy: Theory/Practice
Course Number	504
Term	Fall 2006
Department	CPSY
Faculty Name	Steve Berman

Catalogue Description (*copy from current catalogue*): Overview of the fundamental assumptions and ideas of general systems theory and the basic premises of theoretical orientations within family therapy. Participants explore the application of course material to their work setting or training track. This course is not clinical in nature and is not designed to train or prepare participants to conduct family therapy.

Prerequisite: None.

Credit: 3 semester hours.

Guiding Principles/Standards Addressed in Course:

(please check box to indicate which guiding principles/standards from the Conceptual Framework are addressed in this course)

Guiding Principles/Standards	
<u>Learning Environments</u> Create democratic learning communities in which caring, equity, social justice, and inclusion are practiced and diverse perspectives, supported.	X
<u>Content Knowledge</u> Integrate fundamental and emergent components of disciplinary knowledge in ways that extend learners' experience and enhance their own and students' capacity to solve problems.	X
<u>Teaching Approaches</u> Engage students and school personnel in meaningful learning experiences responsive to individual differences, interests, developmental levels, and cultural contexts.	X
<u>Connection to Community</u> Design educational activities that cultivate connections between learners and their communities and region.	X
<u>Educational Resources</u> Incorporate a wide range of teaching and technological resources from the school and community into experiences that support learning.	X
<u>Assessment</u> Assess, document, and advocate for the successful learning of all students and school stakeholders.	X
<u>Research and Reflection</u> Adopt habits of personal and scholarly reflection that examine professional practice and lead to systemic renewal.	X
<u>Leadership and Collaboration</u> Lead and collaborate with others to plan, organize, and implement educational practices and programs that confront the impact of societal and institutional barriers to academic success and personal growth.	X
<u>Professional Life</u> Pursue a professional identity that demonstrates respect for diverse peoples, ideas, and cultures.	X

Authorization Levels:

This course addresses preparation at specific authorization levels through readings and in-class discussions (indicate with an "R" in the appropriate box) and/or through a practicum experience (indicate with a "P" in the appropriate box).

Early Childhood Age 3-4 th Grade	
Elementary	

3 rd -8 th Grades in an Elementary School	
Middle Level 5 th -9 th Grades in a Middle or Junior High School	
High School 7 th -12 th Grades in Subject/Dept. Assign. in a Mid- or Sr.-High School	

*R = Readings and In-class Discussions *P = Practicum

Student Performance:

Student performance criteria appear on page(s) 3 of this syllabus (student performance includes goals, evidence, and levels of performance).