

SYLLABUS

CPY 550
Dynamics of Marriage, Relationship, and
Family Systems
Fall Semester, 2009
CLASS SESSIONS: Tuesdays, 4 – 6:30 P.M.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION (FROM CATALOG)

This course examines theoretical approaches including major systems theories, strategies, and techniques of family and relationship therapy. A survey of the development of family and relationship counseling and proponents of the field are studied. Issues of conflict and ethical considerations are examined. The impact of cultural and societal forces upon the family system are explored. Prerequisite: CPY 530 or permission.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

This first course in family and relationship counseling will offer you an opportunity to explore the field of family and couples counseling from a multicultural/social justice, theoretical, developmental and historical perspective. We will begin by examining the criteria necessary for culturally/socio-politically grounded theories of family development and family/couples therapy. After contextualizing the evolution of the field and the major theories, we will study cybernetics and systems theory, the major contemporary theories of family therapy, and legal/ethical factors in family therapy. Students will construct their own family genograms and explore their own family contexts in order to prepare themselves to function effectively as culturally competent, effective family counselors.

Class sessions will be devoted to guided group discussions and activities, lecture, video presentations and demonstrations. The goals of the course are to 1) increase your understanding of systems theory; 2) increase your conceptual knowledge of the major theories of family counseling and therapy; 3) centralize multicultural and social justice values, experience, and knowledge in family therapy theory; 4) challenge and expand your knowledge and internal norms regarding the behavioral, social, and emotional functioning of families and their members; and 5) provide a supportive and challenging environment in which you can process thoughts and feelings about class activities and outside readings/experiences.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Articulate awareness of the historical roots and development of the field of family therapy (CACREP II.G.3.a).
2. Understand a systems perspective and the important tenets, concepts, models, and therapeutic processes of the major theories of family/relationship functioning (CACREP II.G.3.a and CACREP II.G.5.e).

3. Compare, contrast, and critique important assumptions and concepts of major theories (CACREP II.G.5.e).
4. Conceptualize contemporary models of family and relationship development within a multicultural and socio-political context (CACREP II.). G.3.a
5. Recognize the nature of biases, prejudices, processes of intentional and unintentional discrimination, and other culturally supported behaviors that are detrimental to the growth of relationships and families (CACREP CMHC-E.1& CMHC-E.2).
6. Advocate for socially just practices in order to facilitate wellness and growth in individuals, relationships, and families (CACREP II.G.2.e).
7. Challenge and expand personal norms, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and awareness regarding the behavioral, social, and emotional functioning of families and their members (CACREP II.G.2.a).
8. Evaluate and apply theories of family and couples therapy in analysis of case material from a multi-faceted, multicultural and social justice perspective (CACREP II.G.2.d, II.G.5.e, & CMHC-F.3).
9. Consider and appreciate the needs of families through various developmental stages and transitions across the life-span (CACREP II.G.3.a).

REQUIRED READINGS AND FILMS

TEXTS:

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S.. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention (3rd Ed.)*. New York: Norton.

Nichols, M.P. with Schwartz, R.C. (2007). *The essentials of family therapy (3rd. Ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Readings for you multicultural course.

FILMS: The Namesake & Ma Vie en Rose (on reserve at Olin behind circulation desk)

E-RESERVES* – Required (Olin Library webpage):

Almeida, R. V., Dolan-DelVecchio, K., & Parker, L. (2008). *Transformative Family Therapy: Just Families In a Just Society*. USA: Pearson Education. **Excerpts.**

McGoldrick, M. (Ed.). (1998). *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture, and gender in clinical practice*. New York: Guilford. **Excepts.**

*** Path to e-reserves: www.rollins.edu/olin -> Advanced Catalog Search (->reserves) ->Search for “Norsworthy” and then select “Lookup Items on Reserve by Instructor -> Norsworthy -> CPY 538 -> Select an article “Details” -> A Look Inside URL -> Password: MAC**

OPTIONAL TEXT:

Gehart, D. R., & Tuttle, A. R. (2003). *Theory-based treatment planning for marriage and family therapists*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Exams.** Three exams will be administered during the semester. Exams include objective items and short/longer discussion questions aimed at assessing students' knowledge and understanding of theoretical principles, concepts and issues presented in readings, class discussions and lectures.
2. **Genogram.** Each student will complete a family genogram project as outlined on pages 7 & 8 of this syllabus. References: McGoldrick, Gerson, & Shellenberger: *Genograms: Assessment and intervention (3rd Ed)* and all readings preceding due date. **Due date: Oct. 27.**
3. Students will form two film teams during the semester. During a designated class meeting, a team will bring a genogram of the film family and lead ongoing discussions regarding the multicultural, diversity, and social justice dimensions we will need to consider when understanding the film family's functioning, strengths, resources, issues, and challenges. The team members will take the lead in describing how they see the theoretical concepts/dynamics, cultural factors, sociopolitical context, other identity variables, and any additional ideas from the course readings represented at various points in the film. Students will be evaluated based on level of leadership, participation, and knowledge demonstrated during class discussions about the assigned film.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Exam 1	25 points
Exam 2	25 points
Exam 3	20 points
Genogram	25 points
Film analysis assignments	<u>5 points</u>
Total	100 points

Method of Evaluation and Grading – Final grades will be based on a point accumulation basis. Students earn points via exams, class presentations and projects, and the genogram assignments. Points will be converted into a percentage score. Grades will be assigned according to the following:

A	= 94-100% of total points	B-	= 80-83% of total points
A-	= 90-93% of total points	C+	= 77-79% of total points
B+	= 87-89% of total points	C	= 74-76% of total points
B	= 84-86% of total points	C-	= 70-73% of total points

ATTENDANCE, ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES, TESTS, AND INCOMPLETES

Regarding attendance, students who miss two classes (two weeks of class) will receive a letter grade deduction for the second missed class. Students missing more than two classes or substantial parts of more than two classes should drop the class and take it at a later date. Students who are chronically late will receive grade penalties.

DURING CLASS MEETINGS, PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND DO NOT TEXT OR USE COMPUTERS FOR ANY PURPOSE EXCEPT NOTE-TAKING. THESE BEHAVIORS SIGNAL THAT A STUDENT IS NOT TAKING SERIOUSLY THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION (AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS) NEEDED TO BECOME A COMPETENT COUNSELOR.

Assignment due dates: Students will receive full credit for all assignments turned in on time. Turning in assignments late will compromise your grade.

In-class tests need to be taken the day of class.

Incompletes: I do not assign incomplete grades when students simply do not turn in or complete assignments by the last day of class. Incompletes are strongly discouraged and in the event that it is warranted, the student must initiate the process verbally and in writing **before** the last day of class, following the policies and procedures outlined in the graduate catalog and the student handbook.

FINAL NOTE

I welcome and encourage feedback and discussion. If you wish to meet outside the regular class time, please feel free to schedule an appointment.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Rollins College is committed to equal access and does not discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities in its policies, procedures, programs or employment processes. The College recognizes its obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide an environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities.

If you are a person with a disability on this campus and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to participate in your classes, please make timely arrangements by disclosing this disability in writing to the Disability Services Office at (box 2613) - Thomas P. Johnson Student Resource Center, 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 32789 or call 407-646-2354 for an appointment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As graduate students I am sure that you are already aware that your code of ethics and other college policies prescribe that all of your work should be your own; that plagiarism and using others' ideas without appropriate citation is unacceptable; and that you need to follow the academic honesty policies outlined in the graduate catalog. As you know, Rollins has a college-wide honor code. Graduate Studies in Counseling adheres to this code, as well.

Rollins College Academic Honor Code

The Philosophy of the Academic Honor Code

Integrity and honor are central to the Rollins College mission to educate its students for responsible citizenship and ethical leadership. Rollins College requires adherence to a code of behavior that is essential for building an academic community committed to excellence and scholarship with integrity and honor. Students, faculty, staff, and administration share the responsibility for building and sustaining this community.

Each student matriculating into Rollins College must become familiar with the Academic Honor System. The College requires that students be able and willing to accept the rights and responsibilities of honorable conduct, both as a matter of personal integrity and as a commitment to the values to which the College community commits itself. It is the responsibility of instructors to set clear guidelines for authorized and unauthorized aid in their courses. It is the responsibility of students to honor those guidelines and to obtain additional clarification if and when questions arise about possible violations of the Honor Code.

The Honor Pledge

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. The student commitment to uphold the values of honor - honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility - particularly manifests itself in two public aspects of student life. The Rollins College Academic Honor Code is consistent, in philosophy, with the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association as well as other expectations of the profession.

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, as a student of Rollins College, graduate students are expected to show their commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in their academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in their social life and in relationships with others.

This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to the paper, quiz, test, lab report, etc., the handwritten signed statement

On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.

Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

OUTLINE OF CLASS DISCUSSION/READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS/ASSIGNMENT</u>
Sept. 8	Getting acquainted Review of course and requirements Historical roots of family therapy	Film: The Namesake (On reserve) Nichols: Ch. 1& 2; Skim Ch. 3
Sept. 15	Multicultural and social justice perspectives in family therapy	Almeida excerpts - E-reserve McGoldrick excerpts - E-reserve Readings for multicultural course
Sept. 22	Fundamental concepts Twenty first century family therapy	N & S: Ch. 4, 11
Sept. 29	Bowenian family therapy Genograms in family therapy	N&S, Ch. 5 McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry, Ch. 1
Oct. 6	Exam 1	
Oct. 13	Structural family therapy	N&S, Ch. 7
Oct. 20	Experiential family therapy	N&S, Ch. 8
Oct. 27	GENOGRAM ASSIGNMENT DUE Debrief genogram experiences Film discussion	Film: Ma Vie en Rose (On reserve-Olin)
Nov. 3	Psychoanalytic family therapy	N & S: Ch. 9
Nov. 10	Exam 2 (Covers structural, experiential, and psychoanalytic FT) Cognitive-behavioral family therapy	N&S, Ch. 10
Nov. 17	Strategic family therapy Solution focused family therapy	N&S, Ch. 6 & 12
Nov. 24	Narrative family therapy Integrative approaches Research in family therapy	N&S, Ch. 13,14, & 16
Dec. 1	Exam 3 (Covers cog.-beh., strategic, solution focused, narrative & integrative FT)	
Dec. 8	Domestic violence awareness	Handouts

GENOGRAM ASSIGNMENT

In doing this genogram we are focusing on family strengths and resilience, though issues and concerns may be discovered and described. This genogram project will be an opportunity to more deeply understand yourself personally and as a counselor within a multigenerational, multicultural, socio-political context. This project is a typical, traditional part of a family therapy training program. I hope you will also use the assignment an opportunity to learn, practice, and understand the value of this powerful therapeutic tool.

Index Person: When completing the genogram assignment, identify yourself as the index person and complete the genogram with your family. As an alternative, you may choose to ask someone else to be the index person and construct the genogram on his/her family.

Focus: The focus of this genogram project is on family strength and resilience, though challenges and concerns may be included. **DO NOT** make the genogram problem-focused even though McGoldrick, Gerson & Petry describe its use from that perspective.

Construction: Construct the genogram as described in Chapter 2 of McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry). This will be turned in with your narrative. Please include the following:

- Two previous generations (This means the genogram will have at least three generations: The index person, his/her parents, and his/her grandparents.) If the index person has children and grandchildren, they should be included in the genogram, too. If the index person is married or in a significant relationship, the significant other and his/her immediate family (parents, siblings, children) should also be included.
- Symbols as illustrated in Chapter 2 of McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry) to indicate the nature of the relationships among family members. You may use some or all of these symbols as practice. Be sure to draw a double circle or double square to represent yourself as the index person. Do not forget to include the current date on your genogram.
- Notes on the genogram drawing about people, events, etc. next to the relevant person or generation. To complete this part, you may find it useful to review the questions in Ch. 3, *The Genogram Interview* (McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry) as you construct the genogram. You may wish to call, write, or interview other family members to obtain the information necessary to complete this assignment. *Remember to include notes (a label, a word or two) about the strengths of each family member who is known to or has a connection with the index person.*

Analysis: Once you have drawn your genogram, use Chapters 3-7 as a guide for interpreting and understanding your family map. Thoroughly review these chapters in light of the information already gathered about the family and based on what you observe when you examine the completed genogram and the information you have gathered.

Also, analyze the genogram and who you are as the index person in the context of the family based on the discussions on race/ethnicity, class, gender, spiritual tradition, sexual orientation, family life cycle,

and socio-political context as presented in the assigned writings of Almeida et al. (2008) & McGoldrick (1998).

Genogram Project: Written Narrative

Using your genogram and your accompanying analysis as described above, write a paper about your interpretation following the outline below (*15 to 20 pages typed, double-spaced; using APA style formatting*):

- I. Briefly introduce the contemporary family, beginning with the index person (if you are the index person, please use the first person “I”). Discuss the sociopolitical, cultural, economic, etc. issues for the contemporary family and its members (race/ethnicities, class, sexual orientation, spiritual traditions, ability, etc.) and any other variables that might be useful in understanding the present day situation. (*Suggestion: Do NOT spend a lot of time and paper space describing demographic details that can be observed on the genogram.*)

- II. Using the data gathered and the analyses you have made based on the above directions AND using ideas and concepts found in Chapters 4-7 (McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry) as a guide to facilitate your understanding of the genogram (do not attempt to address everything in these chapters), discuss your analysis of the genogram. Include, but do not limit, discussion of:
 - A. What do you understand about yourself in the context of this multigenerational family?
 - B. What is the impact of the historical, socio-cultural (race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual tradition, ability/disability, etc.), and idiosyncratic aspects of the information on your self-understanding and your understanding of your past and present family functioning?
 - C. What intergenerational patterns, dynamics, and/or themes have you identified that influence you or others in your contemporary family?

- III. Discuss your reflections on the process of completing this assignment. What did it mean to you? What did you learn?

➤ *Remember to base your responses on a strengths and resiliency perspective.*

FINAL REMARKS REGARDING GENOGRAM PROJECT:

Please remember that you are in charge of what you choose to disclose in this project. I consider any information that you disclose confidential.

Most students completing this project find the experience emotionally impactful. We will be checking in during class to see how everyone is doing. Please feel free to consult with me along the way if you need further clarification or to process your experience in doing this project. **And have fun!!!**