



**CPY 550**  
**Dynamics of Marriage, Relationship, and Family Systems**  
Fall 2012

**Course Schedule:** August 27, 2012 – December 3, 2012  
Monday, 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm  
Cornell Social Sciences, Room 229

**Instructor:** Leigh D. DeLorenzi, Ph.D.  
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**Course Description**

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 social forces upon the family system is explored.

**Course Knowledge and Skill Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will demonstrate the ability to do the following:

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 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 and 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, and 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 Texts:**

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention* (3rd ed.). New York: Norton. ISBN: 978-0-393-70509-6, Retail: \$27.00, Used: \$20.25.

Nichols, M.P. (2011). *The essentials of family therapy* (5th ed.). ISBN: 978-0-205-78723-4, Retail: \$118.25, Used: \$88.75.

**Recommended Texts:**

Gehart, D.R. & Tuttle, A.R. (2003). Theory-based treatment planning for marriage and family therapists. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. ISBN 0-534-53616-6

**Required Films:** (available for viewing in Olin Library)

*A Thousand Acres*. Touchstone Pictures. (106 minutes)

*Ma Vie en Rose* (My Life in Pink). Alain Berliner, Producer. Sony Pictures. (89 minutes)

**Additional required reading will be made available during the semester.**

**E-Reserves or BlackBoard Documents:**

Gerson, R. (1995). The family life cycle: Phases, stages, and crises. In R. H. Mikesell (Ed.), *Integrating family therapy: Handbook of family psychology and systems theory* (pp. 91-111). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Laszloffy, T. A. (March/April 2005). Multiracial families. *Family Therapy Magazine* (pp. 38-43). Alexandria, VA: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Luepnitz, D. A. (1988). *The family interpreted*. USA: Basic Books. Chapter 10.

Mock, M. R. (1998). Clinical reflections on refugee families: Transforming crises into opportunities. In: M. McGoldrick (Ed.). *Re-visioning family therapy* (pp. 347-359). New York: Guilford

Norsworthy, K. L. (2000). Multicultural feminist expansion in family therapy theory and practice: The search for relevance. In Press.

Wylie, M. S. (May/June 2005). Maestro of the consulting room: At 83, Salvador Minuchin is still reflecting on clinical wisdom. *Psychotherapy Networker*, 29(3), 41-50.

## Required Assignments and Learning Experiences:

This course will consist of the following major activities:

- 5 Points – **Class Participation & Discussion**
- 10 Points – **Family Theory TV Challenge**

Students will apply the theoretical concepts, terms, and constructs of any **two** family theories to a television episode of their choosing. TV episodes should depict families (or roommates) interacting in such a way where dynamics and roles are easily observable and applicable to the theories discussed in class. Students will then write two 2-page papers (**1 paper per episode, 4 pages total**) where they (a) briefly summarize the episode, characters, and events, (b) list and describe 4 key terms from their chosen theories (**bolded** in each text chapter) that apply to the scene of focus, and (c) describe theory-based family dynamics evident based on family roles and/or interactions within the episode. ***These papers will be submitted directly into Blackboard under “course documents.”***
- 5 Points – **Reflection: “We Are Family” Class Experiment**

Students will form and role-play mock-families in the classroom. Each “family” will be provided a variety of family characteristics by the professor at random. Once families and characteristics are established, each family will engage in one family outing over the course of the semester where they extend their role-play into the public (i.e., family dinner, shopping, leisure activities, etc.) Each student will submit a reflection after the outing and comment on observations, reactions, and theoretical dynamics that emerged during the experiment. ***This reflection will be submitted directly into Blackboard under “course documents.”***
- 30 Points – **Genogram Project**

A family genogram project, as outlined in this syllabus, will be completed after reading the assigned materials. Genograms will be brought to class, and narratives ***will be submitted directly into Blackboard under “course documents.”***
- 25 Points – **Theory Application Paper** – based around *Ma Vie en Rose (My Life in Pink)*
  - ***Submitted directly into Blackboard under “course documents.”***
- 25 Points – **Comprehensive Final Exam**

Part One: Take Home (10 Points)  
Essay and short answer – correctly apply theories to *A Thousand Acres*

Part Two: In Class (15 Points)  
Objective questions and short answers – assess student’s knowledge and understanding of theoretical principles, concepts, and issues presented in both readings and in class, throughout the term.

100 Points Possible

## Schedule of Classes and Assignments

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic Area</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments Due</b>
1	8/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Introductions Collaborative Definition of Family</li> <li>Review course and requirements</li> <li>Introduction to Systems Theory</li> </ul>	
	9/3	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY, NO CLASS	<u>Assignment Due in Blackboard</u> <b>Upload baby picture to blackboard</b>
2	9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation &amp; Evolution of the Field (PP #1)</li> <li>Basic Stages &amp; Techniques of Family Therapy (PP #2)</li> <li>“We Are Family” Experiment family assignments during class.</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapters 1, 2, 3 <u>Blackboard Article</u> Gerson (1995)
3	9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundamental Concepts of Family Therapy (PP#3)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapter 4
4	9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Therapy 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PP#4)</li> <li>Multicultural and feminist considerations (PP#4)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapter 11 <u>Blackboard Articles</u> Laszloffy (2005) Luepnitz (1988) Norsworthy (2000) Mock (1998) <u>Assignment Due in Blackboard:</u> <b>Family Theory TV Challenge paper # 1</b>
5	10/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genograms - video</li> <li>Strengths and Resiliency Model (PP #5)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry (ENTIRE BOOK)
6	10/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genogram Project – Discussion</li> <li>Family Development Models</li> </ul>	<u>Assignment Due</u> <b>Genogram Project</b> <b>(Visual aid due in class, written narrative due in Blackboard)</b>
7	10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowen Family Systems Therapy (PP #6)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapter 5
8	10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Family Therapy (PP #7)</li> <li>Structural Family Therapy (PP #8)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapters 6 & 7 <u>Blackboard Article</u> Wylie (2005) <u>Assignment Due in Blackboard:</u> <b>“We Are Family” Reflection</b>
9	10/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiential Family Therapy (PP #9)</li> <li>Psychoanalytic Family Therapy (PP #10)</li> <li>Cognitive-Behavioral Family Therapy (PP #11)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapters 8, 9, & 10 <u>Assignment Due in Blackboard</u> <b>Family Theory TV Challenge paper # 2</b>
10	11/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post Modern / Social Constructionism</li> <li>Solution Focused Therapy (PP #12)</li> <li>Narrative (PP #13)</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapter 11, 12, & 13
11	11/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative (DVD)</li> <li>Catch Up/Review</li> </ul>	<u>Assignment Due in Blackboard:</u> <b>Theory Application Paper</b>

12	11/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrative Therapy (PP #14)</li> <li>• Comparative Analysis</li> <li>• Research on Family Intervention</li> <li>• Distribute Final Exam: Part I</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapter 14
13	11/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FINAL EXAM TRIVIA!</li> <li>• Course Evaluation</li> </ul>	<u>Text</u> Nichols, Chapters 15 & 16
14	12/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Exam: Part II</li> </ul>	<u>Assignment Due in Blackboard:</u> <b>Final Exam: Part I –</b>

## Description of Learning Activities and Evaluation Criteria

### Genogram Project

The Genogram Project will be an opportunity to explore yourself within a multigenerational, multicultural, and socio-political context. This project is a typical, traditional part of a family therapy training program. One goal of this project is for you to learn, practice, and understand the value of the genogram as a useful assessment and therapeutic tool. Another goal is to provide you with an opportunity to personally explore who you are as a counselor in relation to your work with clients.

**Index Person:** In constructing the genogram, identify yourself as the index person and complete the genogram on your family. This approach is the preferred focus of your genogram project. As an alternative, you may choose to ask someone else to be the index person and construct the genogram on his or her family.

**Focus:** The focus of this genogram will be on *family strengths and resilience*. That said it is likely that some personal/familial issues and concerns may be discovered and described.

DO NOT make the genogram problem-focused even though McGoldrick, Gerson, and Petry (2008) describe its use from this perspective in their book.

**Construction:** Construct the genogram as described in McGoldrick, Gerson, and Petry (2008). 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 too should be included in the genogram. 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 McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry (2008) indicate the nature of many 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 might be facilitated by reviewing for yourself (or the index person you choose) the questions from the section on “The Genogram Interview” as you construct the genogram. You (or the index person you are working with) may wish to call, write, or interview other family members to obtain the information necessary to complete this assignment; however, this is

optional. *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 the information in McGoldrick et al as a guide for interpreting and understanding your family. 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 (or who the index person is) in the context of the family based on the discussions on race/ethnicity, class, gender, spiritual tradition, sexual orientation, family life cycle, etc. as presented in the assigned readings and class discussion.

## Genogram Project: Written Narrative

Using your genogram and your accompanying analysis as described above, write a paper about your interpretation following the outline below (*10 to 20 pages typed, double-spaced; using APA style formatting*):

- I. Briefly introduce your 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 any other variables that might be useful in understanding the present day situation. (*Do NOT spend a lot of time and paper space describing demographic details that can be observed on the genogram.*)
- II. Use the data gathered in your genogram, the analyses of the genogram, AND suggestions in McGoldrick, Gerson, & Petry, 2008, as a guide to facilitate your comprehensive understanding of the genogram. In the development of our paper present your **analysis of the genogram** and respond to the **questions below**.
  - A. What do you understand about yourself in the context of this multigenerational family?
  - B. What impact does the historical, cultural (race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual tradition, etc.), and idiosyncratic aspects of the information gathered have on your self-understanding?
  - C. Do you notice any family lifecycle issues in the past or currently that may have influenced your family and/or that interface with question D?
  - D. 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.***

**Note:** Please remember that you are in charge of what you choose to disclose in this project. You do not have to reveal any information that you choose not to reveal. I consider any information that you do disclose confidential.

*Caution: Most students completing this project are emotionally impacted by the experience. I will be checking in during class to see how everyone is doing. Please feel free to consult or meet with me privately in the process of completing this assignment if you need further clarification or to discuss your experience in doing this project.*

...and have FUN with this assignment.

Most students report that it is a very interesting and revealing experience!

## Course Policies and Procedures

**Self Disclosure** – Although it is likely that you will be asked to disclose thoughts and feelings that are personal in nature in class, please remember that you are in charge of what you choose to disclose in front of classmates. You do not have to reveal any information that you choose not to reveal. Many students completing this class are emotionally impacted by the experience. Please feel free to consult with me along the way if you need further clarification or to process your experiences.

**Respect for Individual Differences** – The Graduate Studies in Counseling program endorses a learning climate that represents diversity and individual differences and encourages the open-minded exploration of differences among individuals. We do not expect all graduates of our program to think the same way, but we do expect that while they are students they will be accepting of differences and strive to understand how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and world views are different from their own.

**Confidentiality** – In order to provide safety for individuals in the class and to protect the confidentiality of personal disclosures students are asked to refrain from discussing personal information shared by others in class. Attending this class signifies a contract to respect one another's vulnerabilities and to avoid discussion specific classmate's disclosures outside of class (particularly with people not in the class) unless you are talking directly with the affected person.

**Instructor Availability** – If, at anytime, you wish to discuss any issue related to the class with me, particularly those related to your performance in this class, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please don't wait until it is too late to help make this course a successful and rewarding learning experience for you. Your suggestions and ideas are always welcome, both during class and outside of class. E-mail is the best method for reaching me ([Idelorenzi@rollins.edu](mailto:Idelorenzi@rollins.edu)), and you may also call my cell before 9:30 p.m. at 407-733-0038.

**Attendance Policy** – Attendance is required of all students registered and will be monitored. If it is impossible to attend class, notify me as soon as possible, prior to the class meeting. **The final grade will be lowered one half of a letter grade for each unarranged absence, and one letter grade for more than two absences.** Students are responsible for all assignments, lectures, announcements, and class discussions even when not present. Make-up assignments will not be given. Class will start on time and time agreements for class breaks will be honored. Tardiness on the part of one person disrupts the flow of learning for fellow students. Please be prepared to begin and/or resume class as agreed.

**Method of Evaluation and Grading** – Final grades will be based on a point accumulation basis. Students earn points via exams, class presentations and projects, class participation, and other assignments. Points will be converted into a percentage score. Grades will be assigned as follows:

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

Penalty for late work: Students will forfeit one letter grade (approximately 10% of the possible points) for any assignments turned in beyond the announced deadline.

**Classroom Courtesy** – Cell phones, beepers, & texting: Students are required to **turn off** cell phones or beepers while in the classroom. If an emergency situation exists which requires you to be contacted immediately, please discuss this situation with the professor prior to the beginning of class presentation.



In-class use of Laptop Computers: Students are permitted to use laptops in class for note taking purposes only. Other uses of laptops are distracting to fellow students (and the professor) and are not permitted.

Talking to fellow students: Students are expected to refrain from talking while formal instruction or student presentations are being presented.

**Evaluation for this Course** -- The grade for this course will be determined using the following criteria:

5%	Class Participation & Discussion
10%	Family Theory TV Challenge
5%	"We Are Family" Class Experiment
30%	Genogram Project
25%	Theory Application Paper (Film: <i>Ma Vie en Rose</i> )
25%	Comprehensive Final Exam Part I: Take Home - Essay and Short Answer (10%) (Film: <i>A Thousand Acres</i> ) Part II: Objective Questions and Short Answer (15%)
100%	

The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule and grading policy as needed.

**Incomplete Policy** – Students who are unable to complete course requirements within the time limitations of the semester are responsible for initiating and working out an arrangement with the professor prior to the end of the term in order to receive an "incomplete." An agreed upon plan for completion must be submitted in writing identifying a date when work will be completed. If the incomplete is not resolved by the end of the following term, the grade will turn into an "F."

**Academic Honesty and Professional Conduct** -- Students are expected to become familiar with and comply with the Rollins College Academic Honor Code as published in the Graduate Catalog and the Student Handbook, and with the ethical guidelines of our professional associations (e.g., American Counseling Association). Failure to perform in a reliable, competent and ethical manner may necessitate a review by the faculty and student remediation, suspension, or dismissal.

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. The Honor Pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to every paper, assignment and exam the handwritten signed statement:

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

Material submitted electronically must also contain the pledge implying compliance with the code.

**Students 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 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 (Campus Box 2613) - Thomas P. Johnson Student Resource Center, 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 32789; call 407-646-2354 for an appointment; or email: [gridgey@rollins.edu](mailto:gridgey@rollins.edu)