UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
COURSE OUTLINE
APCE 665 – FAMILY SYSTEMS

Fall 2015
Denver

PROFESSOR: Dr. Lia Softas-Nall, Professor of Counseling Psychology
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CREDIT HOURS: 3 semester hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Study general systems theory of family development and interactions. Structural, communication, behavioral and postmodern approaches to family therapy will be examined, as well as ethics, legal issues, and current research


Required readings from Blackboard (check under assignments):
The Myth of Equality
Ethnicity and family therapy
Satir reading
Emotionally Focused Therapy
Gottman reading

Recommended readings: Chapters and Articles (referred to in class)


**COURSE CONTENT:** This course is designed to meet the CACREP 2009 Standards for Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling and APA Benchmarks. This course provides an introduction to general systems theory of family development and interactions, developmental family cycles, as well as providing an overview of the history of family therapy. Students will be introduced to a variety of family systems theories (i.e. Communications Theory, Transgenerational approaches, Analytic, Symbolic-Experiential, Structural Theory, Strategic Family Therapy, Social Learning Theory, Postmodern & Constructivist Approaches), evidence-based interventions, and multicultural and ethical considerations for working with couples and families. This course also qualifies as a Family Studies course for licensure purposes.

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OUTCOMES:** Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Understand family strategies for working with and advocating for diverse populations, including multicultural competencies (CACREP II.G.2.d).
2. Understand theories of family development and transitions across the life span (CACREP II.G.3.a).
3. Understand a systems perspective that provides an understanding of family and other systems theories and major models of family and related interventions (CACREP II.G.5.e).
4. Understand the use of research to inform evidence-based practice (CACREP II.G.8.e).
5. Recognize the importance of family, social networks, and community systems in the treatment of mental and emotional disorders (CACREP CMHC.C.8).
6. Know the history, philosophy, and trends in marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.1).
7. Know the roles and functions of marriage, couple, and family counselors in a variety of practice settings and in relation to other helping professionals (CACREP MCFC.A.3).
8. Know the professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.4).
9. Understand a variety of models and theories of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.5).
10. Understand family development and the life-cycle, sociology of the family, family phenomenology, contemporary families, family wellness, families and culture, aging and family issues, family violence, and related family concerns (CACREP MCFC.A.6).
11. Understand the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on marriages, couples, and families (CACREP MCFC.A.7).
12. Understand issues of marriage, couple, and family life-cycle dynamics; healthy family functioning; family structures; and family of origin and intergenerational influences in a multicultural society (CACREP MCFC.C.1).
13. Recognize specific problems (e.g., addictive behaviors, domestic violence, suicide risk, immigration) and interventions that can enhance family functioning (CACREP MCFC.C.2).
14. Understand professional issues relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling, including recognition, reimbursement, and right to practice (CACREP MCFC.C.4).
15. Understand how living in a multicultural society affects couples and families (CACREP MCFC.E.1).
16. Understand marriage, couple, and family assessment tools and techniques appropriate to clients’ needs in a multicultural society (CACREP MCFC.G.2).
17. Understand the impact of addiction, trauma, psychopharmacology, physical and mental health, wellness, and illness on marriage, couple, and family functioning (CACREP MCFC.G.3).

Knowledge of all standards is evaluated by the midterm and final.
METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: This class is taught in a lecture/discussion/activity format. Students will be involved in learning in a variety of ways (lectures and discussion, video/DVD cases and group processing of cases). This course is intended to be comprehensive and is therefore intense and fast-paced.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Two exams (30% each)  
Presentation or paper (10%)  
Attendance and active participation (10%)  
Self-Reflection (10% per weekend)

Please note active participation is expected throughout the course and needs to be meaningful in relation to your professional development as a counselor in training and your future career. There are three possibilities for the presentation or paper option, choose one: genogram, or interview, or current topic in family therapy.

EXAMS: Multiple choice; about 70 questions. Guidelines will be given in class to assist you in preparing for the midterm. All assigned chapters need to be read to be prepared for the exam. In addition, there might be short essays. Grading will include identification of possible issues related to gender, ethnicity, family developmental stages, accuracy of model reflected in depth of integrating case and conceptualization, goals, stages, counseling techniques and role of therapist.

PAPER or PRESENTATION of ONE OF THE FOLLOWING (interview, or topic, or genogram): Will be discussed the first day of class in more detail. Papers are expected to be 4-5 typed pages, double spaced, regular font, grammatically correct, with a title page (not counted on the total number of papers) which includes name, name of professor, class title and number, and a creative title of the project. To receive paper back you may attach a self-addressed envelope. Criteria for grading include thoroughness, level of insight, depth, connection to family systems and timely completion. For those presenting, adherence to timelines, clarity, eye contact with audience, creativity and enthusiasm are important.

Topic: Choose a topic impacting family systems and write a formal paper – APA style with a minimum of three references. Topics may include but not be limited to the following: Infertility and couples, Divorce and children, Schools and families, ADHD and families, Extramarital affairs, Military families, Ethnicity and family therapy etc. Include an informal paragraph in the end describing what has been useful for CIT in relation to career/training. Topics must be pre-approved by instructor. Topics can use the literature appearing on this syllabus.

Genogram:  
Diagram: dates, occupations, causes of death, etc. You will be given a model (Strauss Family). Make it large enough for class to see, highlight who you are. (For paper option can be one page.)  
- Significant family events (3 to 4)  
- Related gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, family development stage issues, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual, and disability issues-patterns.  
- Three Family Themes/Issues  
- Psychological impact of 2 and 3  
- What would you keep the same in your family?  
- Reframe an experience
What would you change in your family? What would you want different?
What from this family information may impact you as a counselor/therapist, both in terms of vulnerability and strength? What have you learned that is useful to your future career?

Note: Students may ask professor to review an article on the Ethical Considerations of conducting the Family Genogram as a class project. Review the article and decide for yourself how much you want to disclose; sensitive topics include: Substance abuse, incest, sexual abuse, AIDS, and domestic violence. Protect your privacy and of those close to you. Evaluation is contingent upon all questions answered, visible diagram and adherence to timeline. Other outlines for presentations will be given in class, ie gender genograms, cultural/ethnic genogram, spiritual genogram etc.

Genogram paper instead of presentation: You can choose to write a paper on your genogram instead of the presentation. It needs to be double spaced, maximum 5 pages. One page for the diagram – genogram, highlight who you are, answer all questions. Bring self-addressed, stamped envelope to receive papers back.

Presentation: 12-15 minutes, depending on how many students are in class. Instead of paper students may present their genogram or an interview or a topic on a current issue in Family Systems. Decisions will be made the first couple days of class.

MA Students Self-reflection: A five page paper self-reflecting what has been useful about the material learned and how to apply this in counseling with individuals, couples and families. Outline will be discussed in class.

PAPERS ARE DUE: All papers due the Friday of the second weekend at 4.

PARTICIPATION: 10 points. Attend class and actively participate in course discussions. Please be present when class starts and ends (and for all that happens in between). There is a lot to cover. If you think you must miss any of this class consider taking it another time. Repeated tardiness or an unexcused absence (excused is only for cases of emergency with instructor permission) will result in a total course grade reduction of at least one letter grade. Class content is expected to be relevant and meaningful to your professional training, which implies your continued active engagement with the material and taking responsibility to fit materials into your area of future expertise. Cases will be given for at least half of the classes and students are expected to be prepared to discuss case in depth during the next class period. Be prepared to lead a group discussion and/or be chosen as the spokesperson for the case.

EVALUATION-GRADING SCALE:

A 93% to 100%
A- 90% to 92%
B+ 87% to 89%
B 83% to 86%
B- 80% to 82%
C+ 77% to 79%
C 73% to 76%
C- 70% to 72%
D+ 67% to 69%
D 63% to 66%
D- 60% to 62%
F Below 60%
**ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** Cheating on examinations, submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment to expulsion from the University. Student Handbook: http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:** Students are expected to adhere to the appropriate code of ethics for their particular program. Any behavior which is deemed unethical will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

**ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT:** Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT:** The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within CEBS will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY:** The University of Northern Colorado prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. UNC is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence). If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to UNC’s Title IX Coordinator. “Disclosure” may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text message, or through in/out of class assignments. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact the UNC Counseling Center (970-351-2496) or the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (970-351-4040). If you would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, please visit www.unco.edu/sexualmisconduct.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** All cell phones and pagers are to be turned off during class time. No texting during class. If a student has a particular need (is on-call for work or has children at home) he or she is expected to notify the instructor prior to the beginning of class so that accommodations can be made. Computers are welcomed as long as students are using them only for note taking, no surfing the web or e-mailing will be allowed. Due to numerous student complaints, any student found misusing his or her computer will be asked to shut it down.

**COURSE CONTENT AND DEADLINES:**

**SAVE A COPY OF ALL SYLLABI FOR YOUR RECORDS AND FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE SUBMISSION TO LICENSURE BOARDS.**

**TEXTBOOK COURSE CONTENT:**
It is expected you have read the chapters assigned before each weekend and worked on review questions.

**First weekend of class:**
**Part 1: Fundamentals of Family Psychology**
Adopting a Family Relationship framework Ch-1
Family Development: Continuity and Change Ch-2
Gender, Culture, and Ethnicity Factors in Family Functioning. Ch-3
Interlocking Systems: the individual the family and the community Ch-4

**Part 2: The Development and Practice of Family Therapy**
Growth of Family Therapy Ch-5
Professional issues and Ethical Practices Ch-6
Sunday afternoon Midterm

Second weekend of class:
Genogram and other topic presentations and all papers due
Structural Family Therapy. Ch-10
Strategic Family Therapy. Ch-11
Behavioral/Cognitive. Ch-12
Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Ch-13
Narrative Therapy Ch-14
Overview
Evaluations

Sunday afternoon Final

665 Review Questions Mid term, Dr. Softas
This is a guide to help you focus your studying. It is not required to complete, it is optional if you think it can be helpful to prepare for the midterm. If you choose to work on the questions please remember this is homework and not to be filled out during class. I am kindly requesting that you put away during class time. It will be noted if you work on it during class and your grade will drop by a level.

Make sure you have read the material before answering the questions. It is expected you have read the assigned chapters the first weekend and worked on answering the mid term review questions. The day of the exam you will be given the questions and several answers to choose the best answer. If you feel that the mid term questions do not help you in preparing for the exam you may choose to only review the material. It is expected during group review sessions outside of class that you have read, and prepared answers if you are to discuss them with classmates. It is an individual responsibility to prepare for answers.

APCE 665 Family Systems-Study Guide-Dr. Softas Fall 2015

1. Family narratives explain:

2. Clinical theories that focus on the system emphasize:

3. From a family systems perspective, the appearance of symptoms in a family member represents the manifestation of:

4. Emotionally-Focused Couple Therapy:
5. Developmental tasks and the family life cycle:

6. Family stage markers are events in a family's life that:

7. Satir suggests that people handle their communications with one another by playing a role.

8. The Women's Project in Family Therapy:

9. A systems perspective emphasizes:

10. Most family rules are:

11. Emotionally-focused therapeutic efforts are:

12. Returned information regarding the consequences of an event is called:

13. Which of the following is not considered by the authors as a root of family therapy?

14. The approach developed by Susan Johnson is called:

15. All but one of the following to be the major founders of family therapy:

16. Family Sculpting is a:

17. In Whitaker's view of psychotherapy, both therapist and client(s):

18. The major professional organization in family counseling out of the American Counseling Association is:

19. Humanistically-oriented therapists view dysfunctional behavior as:

20. Satir called her approach:

21. The Family Life Chronology is essentially:

22. Bowen's approach may be considered a bridge between what views?

23. Which of the following is not one of Bowen's concepts?

24. In Bowen's approach triangulation by the therapist:

25. Genograms help shed light on:

26. The major professional organization of family therapists, with the largest number of members is:
27. During the New Couple stage, a major task for the couple is:

28. In couples who have adolescents and their aging parents to take care of and who feel squeezed psychologically and physically, their generation is called:

29. In working with immigrant families, therapists need to remain aware of:

30. Family therapy focuses on the________rather than the _________, which creates new and unique ways of resolving problems.

31. The result of successful separation from one’s family of origin while remaining connected is:

32. A genogram is a visual representation of a person’s family tree, going back at least three generations. It is useful in all the following ways except:

33. _______ is a frequent way of dealing with anxiety in which tension between two persons is projected onto another object/person.

34. In Bowen Family Therapy, the term for patterns and strategies of coping with stress that are passed down from generation to generation is called:

35. The major emphasis of experiential family therapy is:

36. Experiential family therapy is interested in exploring:

37. A technique in experiential family therapy in which family members are physically placed into positions symbolizing actual relationships as seen by one or more members is called:

38. Whitaker supported the idea that the ____________must be won by the therapist, while the ____________must be won by the family.

39. Although their methods were different, Satir and Whitaker agreed that the primary goal of experiential family therapy is:

40. Which of theoretical orientation would address power and gender in family relationships?

41. Emotionally-focused therapists first try to:

42. The person who continued Bowen’s work and added gender and ethnicity is:

43. Increased interest in cultural factors in family functioning has led to renewed interest in:

44. A central idea in family psychology is:
45. Systems oriented clinicians are most interested in:

46. The “identified patient” is the person in the family who:

47. From a family life cycle perspective, symptoms in a family member represent:

48. The major transition to be achieved before launching children involves:

49. A common impact of migration in families raising children is:

50. A young adult’s primary developmental task is:

51. The most significant milestone in a family’s life cycle usually is:

52. Families with an adolescent frequently must deal with:

53. In a joint legal custody arrangement/shared parental responsibilities, both parents:

54. Stepfamilies typically:

55. Lesbian parents:

56. Ethnicity and cultural tradition is an important factor in counseling because:

57. Satir helped families:

58. Outcome research in family therapy is moving in the direction of:

59. In the case of child abuse, the therapist should:

60. The newest form of experiential therapy is:

61. Humanistically oriented therapists view dysfunctional behavior as:

62. In Satir’s view symptoms:

63. Which theory is basic to Emotionally Focused Therapy?

64. Which of the following experiential therapies offers a manual for conducting sessions?

65. Emotional cutoff entails:

66. Bowen’s concept of societal regression implies:

67. In his therapeutic approach and in relation to seeing the whole family or not, Bowen:
68. The way a family organizes and maintains itself at any given time refers to its:

69. Couples and family therapy is contraindicated when:

70. Gender-sensitive family therapy:


Be prepared to answer short cases and compare/contrast conceptualization, role of therapist especially in building a relationship, process or stages of therapy, techniques, and goals, for the following approaches: Human Validation, Transgenerational, and Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy. How do these approaches overlap/differ? Be prepared to integrate how gender, ethnicity, culture, ability/disability, sexual orientation and other diversity factors that play a role in the case; family life cycle concerns and tasks; and divorce/remarriage considerations.

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