

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION
COURSE OUTLINE
APCE 665 – FAMILY SYSTEMS

Fall 2023

PROFESSOR: Dr. Ken Parnell
Licensed Psychologist

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CREDIT HOURS: 3 semester hours

Nov 17-19 & Dec 1-3

OFFICE HOURS: For appointments please request in advance. Hours posted on the APCE listserv early in the semester.

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

Instructor Qualifications: Dr. Kenneth Parnell earned his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Nebraska and a MS in Couple and Family Therapy from the University of Maryland. His research interests and areas of specialization include intimate relationships, help-seeking, and therapy process and outcome.

Required Textbook: Irene Goldenberg, Mark Stanton, and Herbert Goldenberg. (2017). *Family Therapy: An Overview* (9th edition). Cengage

Assigned readings from the textbook are included in the class schedule at the end of this syllabus. It is important that you review the material **prior** to class to be prepared for class discussions and leadership activities.

Suggested Books:

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petri, S. (2008) *Genograms: Assessment and intervention*, 3rd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company

Gurman, A. S., Lebow, J. L., & Snyder, D. K. (Eds.). (2015). *Clinical handbook of couple therapy*. Guilford Publications. *Fifth Edition*

Cordova, J. V. (2014). *The marriage checkup practitioner's guide: Promoting lifelong relationship health*. American Psychological Association.

Dattilio, F. M. (2009). *Cognitive-behavioral therapy with couples and families: A comprehensive guide for clinicians*. Guilford Press.

Johnson, S. M. (2012). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*. Routledge.

Zimmerman, J. L., & Dickerson, V. C. (1996). *If problems talked: Narrative therapy in action*. Guilford Press.

Additional readings available on Canvas (bolded are required):

Re-Visioning Family Therapy, Third Edition : Addressing Diversity in Clinical Practice Edited by McGolderick and Hardy. Third Edition 2019
Chapter 9 and 15.

Algoe, S. B. (2019). Positive interpersonal processes. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 28(2), 183-188.

Anker, M. G., Owen, J., Duncan, B. L., & Sparks, J. A. (2010). The alliance in couple therapy: Partner influence, early change, and alliance patterns in a naturalistic sample. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 78(5), 635.

Bograd, M., & Mederos, F. (1999). Battering and couples therapy: universal screening and selection of treatment modality. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, 25(3), 291–312. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1999.tb00249.x>

Cordova, J. V., Fleming, C. J., Morrill, M. L., Hawrilenko, M., Sollenberger, J. W., Harp, A. G., ... & Wachs, K. (2014). The Marriage Checkup: A randomized controlled trial of annual relationship health checkups. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 82(4), 592.

Davis, D. E., DeBlaere, C., Brubaker, K., Owen, J., Jordan, T. A., Hook, J. N., & Van Tongeren, D. R. (2016). Microaggressions and perceptions of cultural humility in counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 94(4), 483-493.

Doss, B. D., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2009). The effect of the transition to parenthood on relationship quality: an 8-year prospective study. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 96(3), 601.

Doss, B. D., Simpson, L. E., & Christensen, A. (2004). Why do couples seek marital therapy?. *Professional psychology: Research and practice*, 35(6), 608.

Gonzalez, K. A., Rostosky, S. S., Odom, R. D., & Riggle, E. D. (2013). The positive aspects of being the parent of an LGBTQ child. *Family process*, 52(2), 325-337.

Lebow, J. L., Chambers, A. L., Christensen, A., & Johnson, S. M. (2012). Research on the treatment of couple distress. *Journal of Marital and Family therapy*, 38(1), 145-168.

Owen, J., Tao, K. W., Drinane, J. M., Hook, J., Davis, D. E., & Kune, N. F. (2016). Client perceptions of therapists' multicultural orientation: Cultural (missed) opportunities and cultural humility. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 47(1), 30.

Randall, A. K., & Bodenmann, G. (2009). The role of stress on close relationships and marital satisfaction. *Clinical psychology review, 29*(2), 105-115.

Rostosky, S. S., & Riggle, E. D. (2017). Same-sex relationships and minority stress. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 13*, 29-38.

Schacht, R. L., Dimidjian, S., George, W. H., & Berns, S. B. (2009). Domestic violence assessment procedures among couple therapists. *Journal of marital and family therapy, 35*(1), 47–59. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.2008.00095.x>

Scott, S. B., Whitton, S. W., & Buzzella, B. A. (2019). Providing relationship interventions to same-sex couples: Clinical considerations, program adaptations, and continuing education. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 26*(2), 270-284.

Whitton, S. W., Nicholson, J. M., & Markman, H. J. (2008). Research on interventions for stepfamily couples: The state of the field. *The international handbook of stepfamilies: Policy and practice in legal, research, and clinical environments*, 455-484.

Whisman, M. A. (2007). Marital distress and DSM-IV psychiatric disorders in a population-based national survey. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 116*(3), 638.

Whisman, M. A., & Baucom, D. H. (2012). Intimate relationships and psychopathology. *Clinical child and family psychology review, 15*(1), 4-13.

COURSE CONTENT: This course is designed to meet the CACREP 2016 Standards for Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling. 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, and 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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
2. Understand theories of family development and transitions across the life span (CACREP II.G.3.a).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation

4. Understand the use of research to inform evidence-based practice (CACREP II.G.8.e).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
5. Recognize the importance of family, social networks, and community systems in the treatment of mental and emotional disorders (CACREP CMHC.C.8).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
6. Know the history, philosophy, and trends in marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.1).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
8. Know the professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.4).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
9. Understand a variety of models and theories of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.5).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
11. Understand the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on marriages, couples, and families (CACREP MCFC.A.7).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
13. Recognize specific problems (e.g., addictive behaviors, domestic violence, suicide risk, immigration) and interventions that can enhance family functioning (CACREP MCFC.C.2).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
15. Understand how living in a multicultural society affects couples and families (CACREP MCFC.E.1).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
16. Understand marriage, couple, and family assessment tools and techniques appropriate to clients' needs in a multicultural society (CACREP MCFC.G.2).
Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation
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).

Met through: readings, topic paper, in class activities, and experiential presentation

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: Methods include and are not limited to readings, lecture, discussions, presentations, and group activities discussing cases. Students will be involved in learning in a variety of ways (lectures and discussion, video/DVD cases and group processing of cases). The course is intended to be comprehensive and is therefore intense and fast-paced. It is highly recommended/required that students have read the assigned material before class. It is required that you have watched the cases in advance and be prepared to answer questions included in the modules. Continued efforts in different modalities will be made to integrate readings, lectures, with cases and discussions. Six Modules will be posted on CANVAS. Class will be held on Zoom and will have components of group work via Breakout rooms and working on you own. The class schedule at the end of this syllabus includes the dates for the Modules.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION

PARTICIPATION (50 points). Attend class and actively participate in class discussions. 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 the class another time. If you become aware of a possible conflict, please communicate that as soon as possible to the instructor. Repeated tardiness in coming back from breaks or any other tardiness will result in a total course grade reduction of at least one letter grade.

It is expected that you participate in a professional manner and your interpersonal interactions are respectful to others, as well as you maintain a professional attitude. Self-awareness (e.g. self-assessment, self-care, openness to feedback) will also be needed to actively participate in class. In accordance with the student handbook, the “Professional Counseling program faculty members systematically review the progress of each student each semester” and doctoral students are evaluated every year. You should expect that your performance and professional conduct related to this class to be incorporated into the review process. 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.

The instructor will ask questions in class related to the course readings (both chapters and articles) it is expected that students will be able to readily respond to the questions and to engage in a discussion when called upon. This is a graduate level course. The expectation is that students will have thoughtfully read the material, have insights, and share them during class. If it is apparent that you have not studied the material, this will impact your participation grade.

Additional instructor expectations: • It is expected students actively seek and deserve equity of voice by taking risks to be heard. It is expected students are willing to talk about sensitive issues which at times may be out of their comfort zone. • It is expected students work to appreciate the strengths and contributions of others, and bring good energy to class work. • It is expected students listen for understanding and respect of different perspectives. • It is expected students take responsibility for their learning and are active agents in their personal growth. • It is expected students make wise choices about their class performance.

PREPARATION (7 x 10 = 70points)

Yes, I am giving you the opportunity to get points for doing what you probably would do anyway. On canvas you will find a “Theory Summary” document for each theory. Simply fill it out before class; define the terms and answer the prompts. One Theory Summary is to be done for each theory, or class of theories, we will be covering. It does not have to stay just one page. That being said, please try to keep it brief. Bring it to class electronically or printed out. For full credit, submit it to Canvas BEFORE class starts on the day we are to cover that theory. If you quote text from any book or article as part of your summary, be sure you put it in quotes and cite it appropriately. You will appreciate having these summaries in a couple years from now when you are preparing for the licensing exam . . .

CASE PRESENTATIONS (Presentations 50 x 2 =100 AND Paper 3 x 25 = 75 POINTS):

At the beginning of the semester, you will be introduced to the family (movie) you will be working with over the semester. You will have two case presentations on the last weekend of class using an assign theory. For example, on **the second** Friday, your group will have prepared a conceptualization of the case through a structural lens, a transgenerational (Bowen) lens, or a CBT lens (I will assign your theory for the presentation). On the second Saturday you will present your case using Narrative, Solution Focused, or EFT/experiential. ***The group will be graded on preparedness, and thoroughness of the conceptualization (“thoroughness” suggests the appropriate use of terms and appropriate application of concepts to the case).*** Case presentations will take approximately 30 mins. Discussion afterwards may last longer.

In addition, your **group** will give the instructor written conceptualizations of the case from three (your choice) of the primary theories covered in class (structural, transgenerational, CBT, EFT/experiential, narrative, and solution focused). *No more* than 2 pages single spaced per theory (not including genograms when relevant). On the last Sunday you will upload roughly 6-8 pages (2 pages from each lens). Please be sure to include every group member’s name on the page.

GENOGRAM PRESENTATION (100 points)

The genogram is intended to examine one’s family of origin and gain awareness, as well as understand family systems concepts in greater depth. The experience of exploring one’s family may enhance understanding of working with families and couples in therapy, family issues, as well as individuals in counseling who are facing family systems concerns. Self-disclosure in class or in the assigned paper regarding sensitive information is voluntary. Any identifying family information may be disguised or omitted, and disclose only what you are comfortable disclosing. Makes sure you understand the implications of disclosing sexual misconduct. Contacting one’s family of origin is completely optional in relation to this assignment. The following are required for the paper or presentation. Ethical considerations can be reviewed in class and are also covered below. Construction of a genogram will be presented in class. Below information on construction.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUbfMufq2uo> Use of Genopro on how to construct a genogram diagram in 4 minutes. See also the brief article in canvas.

Diagram: dates, occupations, causes of death, etc. Make it large enough for class to see if presenting, highlight who you are. The diagram needs to include grandparents, parents, your generation, and any children or grandchildren. Presentation in class will be about 5 mins please address the first three bullet points in bold. For your two page summary you may also consider addressing the other bullet points.

- **Give an overview of the family, highlight who you are**
- **Three Family Themes/Issues**
- **What from this family information may impact you as a counselor/therapist/psychologist, both in terms of vulnerability and strength?**
- Cover gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, family development stage-please cover your stage or any other pertinent family cycle to your genogram, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual, and disability issues-patterns.
- Psychological impact of significant family events and/or themes
- What would you keep the same in your family?
- What would you change in your family? What would you want different?
- What have you learned that is useful to your future career?
- Within time limit of about 5 minutes

Note: Students may ask professor to further review on the Ethical Considerations of conducting the Family Genogram as a class project. Decide how much you want to disclose; sensitive topics include: Substance abuse, incest, sexual abuse, AIDS, and domestic violence. Use your judgment in protecting your privacy and of those close to you. Be sure to understand Title IX information included in this syllabus. Evaluation is contingent upon all questions answered, visible diagram, highlighting who you are, and adherence to timeline. Diagram can be on a large enough poster or on a ppt slide and projected via share screen.

There will be a group processing at the end of all genograms (not processing of individual ones). The diagram needs to be large enough for the whole class to see, highlight who you are. Give an overview and answer all questions in about 15 minutes. Evaluation will be based in answering all questions, ready diagram and highlighting who you are, and within time limits. Answers are expected to be meaningful, sensitive and respectful.

SUMMARY POINTS VALUE:

Preparation: Theory Summaries (7 X 10 = 70 Points)

Film Family Case Presentation (2 X 50 = 100 Points)

Film Family Written Case Conceptualizations (3 X 25 Points 75 Points)

GENOGRAM PRESENTATION/Paper (100 Points)

PARTICIPATION (55 Points)

Total Possible Points 400

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% |

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

| Date | Topics | Readings | Meetings & Due Dates |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1 st Fri | Introduction to Systems | Ch. 1-4 Bograd, M., & Mederos, F. (1999). Schacht et al Owen et al 2016 | |
| 1 st Sat | Bowen Structural | Ch. 8, 10, 11 Whisman & Baucom 2012 | |
| 1 st Sun | CBT Solution Focused | Ch. 12, 13 Falconier et al 2016 Re-Visioning Family Therapy CH 9 | |
| 2 nd Fri | Narrative | Ch. 6 & 14 Rostosky & Riggle 2017 Re-Visioning Family Therapy CH 11 | First case presentations |
| 2 nd Sat | EFT Experiential | Ch. 9 Cordova et al 2014 Algoe 2019 | Second case presentations |
| 2nd Sun | | Ch. 16 | Genogram Presentations Case conceptualizations due |

*Additional articles may be assigned

Equity and Inclusion Statement: The University of Northern Colorado embraces the diversity of students, faculty, and staff, honors the inherent dignity of each individual, and welcomes their unique perspectives, behaviors, and world views. In this course, people of all races, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, ethnicities, genders and gender identities, cognitive, physical, and behavioral abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, immigrant statuses, military or veteran statuses, size and/or shapes are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. Course content and campus discussions will heighten your awareness to each other's individual and intersecting identities. If you would like to report an incident or learn more about identity-based discrimination/harassment, please visit www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance

No Use of Generative AI Permitted:

AI Writing tools are not permitted for any stage of work in this class. If you use these tools, your actions would be considered academically dishonest and a violation the Academic Honesty Policy. Intellectual honesty is vital to an academic community and for my fair evaluation of your work. All work submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's academic regulations. You may not engage in unauthorized collaboration or make use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software.

Disability Resources: It is the policy and practice of the University of Northern Colorado to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that present barriers to students' inclusion or to accurate assessments of students' achievement (e.g. inaccessible web content, use of videos without captions), students should communicate about these aspects with their instructor(s). Additionally, if you have a temporary health condition or a permanent disability that requires accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible. DRC facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Office: (970) 351-2289, Michener Library L-80. Students can learn more here: www.unco.edu/disability-resource-center

Equity and Inclusion: The University of Northern Colorado (UNC) embraces the diversity of students, faculty, and staff. UNC honors the inherent dignity of each individual, and welcomes their unique perspectives, behaviors, and world views. People of all races, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, ethnicities, genders and gender identities, cognitive, physical, and behavioral abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, immigrant statuses, military or veteran statuses, sizes and/or shapes are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. Course content and campus discussions will heighten your awareness of others' individual and intersecting identities. For information or resources, contact the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, at 970-351-1944. If students want to report an incident related to identity-based discrimination/harassment, please visit www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance. Additionally, there are several cultural and resource centers across the campus that are equipped and designed to serve as caring and thoughtful centers for students, staff and faculty.

Title IX / Equal Opportunity: The University of Northern Colorado is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Students who have experienced (or who know someone who has experienced) any of these concerns should know that they are not alone. UNC has staff members in the University's **Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance** (OIEC) who are trained to support students in navigating these concerns and are able to provide on- and off-campus resources and supports, referrals to health and counseling services, academic and housing modifications, and mutual no-contact orders between individuals.

Please be aware all UNC instructors and most staff members are required to report their awareness of sexual misconduct to the OIEC. This means that if students tell an instructor about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, the instructor must share that information with the Title IX Coordinator and Equity Officer, Dr. Matt Ricke. Dr. Ricke or a trained staff member in OIEC will contact the reporting students to let them know about resources and support services at UNC as well as their options to pursue an investigation through OIEC, law enforcement, or both. Students who have experienced these types of incidents are not required to speak with OIEC staff regarding the incident. Students' participation in OIEC processes are entirely voluntary.

If students do not want the Title IX Coordinator notified, instead of disclosing this information to the instructor, students can speak confidentially with the following people on campus and in the community. They can connect you with support services and help explore options now, or in the future. UNC has confidential victim advocates available 24/7 by phone – students can contact the **Assault Survivors Advocacy Program** (ASAP) at 970-351-1490 to seek confidential guidance and support.

Food Insecurity: Knowing that food insecurity is experienced at higher rates among college students, UNC offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on-campus food pantry. The Bear Pantry is located in University Center 2166A and is open for regular hours throughout the semester. Please visit www.unco.edu/bear-pantry for more information.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to grading consequences with regard to this course and/or university disciplinary procedures through the Student Conduct and Accountability. More information about the academic misconduct process can be found in UNC's Student Code of Conduct (BEAR Code).

Clinical Procedures: All students are required to follow the clinical and/or organizational procedures.

Recording Devices: Using recording devices or recording software/apps in the classroom of any type will not be permitted (e.g., audio, video). Students audio or video recording classroom lectures must be provided prior approval from this instructor or an accommodation letter from Disability Support Services must be provided by the student prior to recording information.

Violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program. **Social Media:** There should be no information related to this course posted or shared on any social media platform or the internet in any way. Violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program.

Land Acknowledgment: The University of Northern Colorado occupies the lands in the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, Lakota and Arapaho peoples. The University acknowledges the 48 tribes that are historically tied to the state of Colorado. Thus, the land on which UNC is situated is tied to the history and culture of our native and indigenous peoples. UNC appreciates this connection and has great respect for this land. Additionally, the University community pays its respect to Elders past, present, and future, and to those who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.