

**LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE**



**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELING  
SUMMER, 2015**

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Place: York, Room 217

Time & Day: 5:30pm – 9pm Tuesdays

Summer 2015: 5/12/2015 – 8/04/2015

Instructor: Maru Serricchio LMFT, ATR

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact: maru@lclark.edu

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course includes an overview of the foundational concepts and approaches in marriage, couple, and family therapy (MCFT). The course emphasizes history and trends in the field along with contemporary research and debates. Students will apply systems, social constructionist, and critical social thought to work within their chosen professional fields. A critical contextual understanding of how intersecting identities/social locations (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, nation of origin) and societal/global systems of privilege and oppression shape family well-being is emphasized throughout.

COURSE PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the history of marital, couple, and family therapy; the primary professional state, national, and international associations; and the core competencies (as defined by AAMFT) required to practice family therapy. (PM; KS 02)
2. Understand principles of theory construction and model building and how these influence the extent to which theories and models developed within particular cultural contexts are applicable for clients from contrasting cultural contexts. (PM)
3. Consider the dynamics of power and social location relative to developing, researching, and applying field knowledge and theory, with attention to how family therapy has the potential to contribute to social inequities and social control. Recognize issues of power and privilege relative to own and clients' social locations and how these influence therapy, problems and solving problems. (NASP 2.5) (PM)
4. Understand concepts and theories that are foundational to the practice of marriage, couple, and family therapy, as well as trends in the field. These include: first and second order cybernetics; patterns of interaction; Bowen's core systems concepts; Minuchin's

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structural approach; MRI problem formation/principles of brief therapy; feminist critique of general systems theory; social constructionist/post-modern paradigm; and critical theory and family therapy. (CC 1.1.1; KS 01, 05, 06)

5. Develop a beginning knowledge of marital, couple, and family life cycle dynamics, healthy family functioning, family structures and development in a multicultural society and world, with particular attention to how systems of power and privilege influence family life. (NASP 2.6 and 2.8) (CC 2.1.1; KS 11; PM).
6. Learn and practice several methods (e.g., sculpting, genograms, structural maps) for assessing family dynamics, family of origin/intergenerational influences, history, and cultural heritage to identify patterns, understand belief systems, and identify strengths/resilience. (CC 2.3.8; TS 2.01, 2.03, 2.06, 2.12, 3.12)
7. Gain an understanding of couple and family healthy functioning and life cycle development across cultural contexts, life worlds, and family forms. And apply principles of family and couple life cycle development from culturally and contextually situated perspectives. (CC 2.1.1; KS 11)
8. Practice skills in conceptualizing problems systemically, developing therapeutic alliance with multiple members of a system, and interviewing from a relational perspective (e.g., using relational questions, identifying verbal and nonverbal relational patterns, enacting communication between systems members. (CC 1.3.6, 4.3.5; TS 1.01)
9. Explore, compare, and contrast in depth the theory and interventions associated with at least two major models of family therapy. (KS 06; CC 4.1.1)
10. Develop understanding of Systems Theory and Communication Theory as they relate to MCFT through active knowledge and application of vocabulary and key concepts using practical examples. (KS 05; CC 1.1.1)

### PARTICIPATION IN THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Students are required to attend and actively participate in all scheduled class meetings. This includes being on time, being prepared, following through on group projects, and otherwise engaging with colleagues as fellow professionals. **Becoming a family therapist involves looking closely at ourselves, our values, beliefs, and biases. This can be a very personal, and sometimes emotional, process.**

Treating colleagues with respect, listening deeply to their experiences, and being open to diverse world views encourages a collaborative milieu of care in which we can all challenge ourselves and each other to critically examine and develop our skills and perspectives. In order to prepare for each class, students should carefully read and study all assigned materials to be ready to discuss, debate, and apply the content of readings. Class discussion and interaction with colleagues are fundamental to the process of learning to be a therapist and all sessions include necessary information. Therefore, if you must miss a class, fellow students and the instructor may ask you to contribute to the learning community in another way. For example, you may be asked to write a brief summary about, and personal reactions to, the required readings and/or provide abstracts from additional related readings for course participants. According to the Lewis & Clark Counseling Psychology attendance policy, missed class periods may result in lowered final grades and students who miss two class periods may be failed.

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### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.

### ABSENCES

Please notify professor. Missing any class time results in an additional class assignment at the discretion of the professor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the professor to discuss the make-up work. **Missing two classes may result in failure to complete class** (any exceptional circumstances may be considered by the instructor).

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Because of the nature of classroom work and group dynamics it is expected that "personal" information shared by students will be kept in confidence. Students are not required to share personal information as part of the classroom dynamics, or as a requirement for any evaluation or for grading purposes. Students are asked to be intentional about what they choose to share with other students in the class during classroom-activities.

### LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES

Due to the experiential nature of the class laptops may be used only when designated by the instructor. Cell phones must be silenced and text messaging is not allowed during class time. If there is an emergency you may exit the class to use your cell. Please be prepared to take hand written notes. If an alternate learning ability requires the use of a laptop please let the instructor know at the beginning of the semester.

### TEXT

Gehart, D. (2010). *Mastering competencies in family therapy: A practical approach to theory and clinical case documentation*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Luepnitz, D. A. (1988). *The family interpreted*. New York: Basic Books.

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. & Jackson, D. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication: A study of interactional patterns, pathologies, and paradoxes*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Additional Readings per Course Schedule Below: Most readings can be found full text on-line through the Lewis & Clark library. Methods for obtaining copies of book chapters and other readings not available on-line will be discussed in class.

ASSIGNMENTS:

**ASSIGNMENT 1 Family of Origin Project**

General instructions: This assignment requires you to apply the concept and theories we will study to your family of origin. It is understood that this assignment can be emotionally difficult for some students in that it might require focus on issues they are not prepared to address, or they may feel uncomfortable in exposing personal information to the instructor. If you feel you cannot complete this assignment please make an appointment to talk with the instructor and an alternative assignment will be arranged.

Interviews: In order to complete this assignment you will need to conduct *at least* two interviews of family members. You may interview parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, or cousins. You will cite these interviews in your bibliography in section 3. Please discuss confidentiality with your interviewees, get permission to use the interview material, and offer to change names if they so desire. You may include pieces of transcript in your paper only with expressed permission of your interviewee.

Instructions for papers: Papers should be professionally written, double spaced, 12pt font, organized into sections with appropriate headings, and referenced (only section 3) according to APA 6th Edition guidelines. PLEASE DO NOT GO OVER THE PAGE LIMIT. The Lewis & Clark Writing Center has prepared a brief guide to APA referencing:  
[http://www.lclark.edu/dept/wstudio/objects/apa\\_style.pdf](http://www.lclark.edu/dept/wstudio/objects/apa_style.pdf)

- Section one: (One page) Produce a detailed genogram of your family of origin covering at least three generations (going back to your grandparents). The genogram may be hand drawn or you can use a genogram software program (please look up yourself).

**DUE: WEEK 3**

- Section two: (2-4 pages) In narrative form, write a systemic analysis of your family of origin, referring back to the genogram. Issues you should cover include: boundaries (within the family as well as between the family and the world), hierarchies, subsystems, alliances, rules (spoken and unspoken), feedback loops, adaptability, cohesion, power, attachment styles, cutoffs, family myths, significant losses, communication style and patterns, triangles, homeostatic regulation, inclusion and intimacy. You must give specific behavioral examples to back up your analysis. Don't just say, for example, that there were strong intergenerational boundaries; discuss the specific behaviors that demonstrated that those boundaries existed.

**DUE: WEEK 7**

- Section three: (6-8 pages) Choose a theory (different than the theory you will be presenting with your group) and focus on some of the issues/themes that you identified in section

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two within your family of origin. Write a narrative treatment plan (interventions, goals, etc.) that takes the family from beginning to end of treatment. Below are some examples of themes/issues:

- The effects of alcoholism or addiction on the family.
- Emotional milieu within the family.
- The effects of violence or abuse.
- Family secrets.
- Cultural themes.
- Models of marriage.
- Blended family issues.
- Single-parent family.
- Poverty and the family.
- Legacies of loss.
- The effects of mental or physical illness on the family.
- Enmeshment and disengagement.

In completing this section you will need to cite at least five scholarly articles and/or books that address the theory and issues/themes you are discussing. Attach a bibliography citing all references using APA reference style (one page). List all interviews, including person interviewed, date of interview, and length of interview and mode of interview (phone, in person, email).

**DUE: Section 3 WEEK 12**

- Section four: (1-2 pages) Self-reflection.

**DUE: Section 4 – WEEK 13**

### ASSIGNMENT 2 – Group Project

During one of the first class periods you will be randomly assigned to a group and a theory that you will be presenting to the class in the coinciding week. Below are some guidelines (see under “grading”) and questions to guide you:

Model formation/Introduction to the theory:

- *From which social context(s) did each model emerge?*
- *How do you think their relative contexts of origin influence their core assumptions?*
- *Who were/are the primary contributors? What is the social location of the contributors?*
- *What are the implications of social context on family life?*

Model mechanics:

- *What are the underlying assumptions about problems and solutions?*
- *What are the core concepts of each model?*
- *What are the major interventions of each?*
- *How are goals set, and what are expected therapeutic outcomes?*
- *How has each model evolved over time to its contemporary form?*

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- *What evidence-based or other types of research has been completed for each model?*

Model approach:

- *How does each model approach racial, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, class, nation of origin and other differences? Power? Social equity?*

### GRADING:

#### **Grading for Family of Origin Project:**

Writing conventions (spelling, grammar, organization)	5 points
Genogram (completeness, neatness, clarity)	10 points
Systemic analysis (completeness, depth, grasp of concepts)	25 points
Selected theory (APA style, depth, insight, quality analysis)	45 points
Self-reflection (depth, insight, reflection)	10 points
Bibliography (APA style, documented interviews)	5 points
Total possible	100 points

#### **Grading for Group Project:**

Make it interactive!!!	10 points
1 hour long (-+15 minutes)	
Introduce the theory	15 points
Terminology	20 points
Treatment Goals	15 points
Interventions	20 points
Structure of Therapy (beginning, middle and end phase)	20 points
1 page handout (required)	
Total possible	100 points

#### **Grading for Overall Class Grade:**

Assignment 1	100 points
Assignment 2	100 points
Participation in class	35 points
Attendance (every class is 5 points)	65 points
Total possible	300 points

93-100 = A	83-87 = B	73-77 = C
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-
88-89 = B+	78-79 = C+	

“A” grades will be reserved for particularly outstanding work. Grades on the border may be determined by attendance and demonstration of completing readings prior to each class session.

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### COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – May 12: Review of Syllabus

WEEK 2 – May 19: Intro to Family Therapy: Assessment/Genograms

Readings:

McGodrick & Gerson, Genograms in family Assessment, Chapters 1 & 2

Gehart Chapter 1

WEEK 3 – May 26: Initial Interview, competencies in Family Therapy and Systems

Readings:

Pragmatics 1- 4 (one chapter will be assigned to present)

Luepnitz Chapter 11

**DUE: Part one (genogram)**

WEEK 4 – June 2: Communication Theory - Integrating Systems & CT into Practice/  
Intergenerational Legacies- Bowen **GROUP 1 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 3

Pragmatics 5-7 (one chapter will be assigned to present)

Gehart Chapter 7

Luepnitz Chapter 3 and 12

WEEK 5 – June 9: Structural Family Therapy **GROUP 2 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 5

Luepnitz Chapter 5

WEEK 6 – June 16: Strategic & Systemic Family Therapy **GROUP 3 & 4 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 4

Luepnitz Chapter 7

WEEK 7 – June 23: Experiential Family Therapy **GROUP 5 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 6

Luepnitz Chapter 4 & 8

**DUE: Part two**

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### WEEK 8 – June 30: Solution-Focused Family Therapy **GROUP 6 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 9

### WEEK 9 – July 7: Social Constructionist Paradigm & Narrative Family Therapy **GROUP 7 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 10

### WEEK 10 – July 14: Cognitive Behavioral Family Therapy **GROUP 8 PRESENTS**

Readings:

Gehart Chapter 8

### WEEK 11 – July 21: Trauma-Focused CBT/Transformative Family Therapy

Readings:

Hernandez, P., Almeida, R., & Dolan-Del Vecchino, K. (2005). Critical consciousness, accountability & empowerment: Key processes for helping families heal. *Family Process, 44*, 105-115.

### WEEK 12 – July 28: Jeopardy/Theory of Choice

Readings: TBD

**DUE: Part three**

### WEEK 13 – August 4: Enneagrams/Termination process

Readings: TBD

**DUE: Part four**