



GRADUATE

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY THERAPY

**MCFT 516 -01 – Family Life Cycle
SPRING 2016**

Time & Day: Tues 9 am – 12 pm
Location: York Graduate Center
Instructor: Pilar Hernandez-Wolfe, Ph.D. pilarhw@lclark.edu
Office Hours: Wed 11:30 am to 1:30 pm and by appointment, 331 Rogers Hall

Catalog Description:

This course will focus on family systems' development through the life course. Using family systems and multigenerational developmental perspectives, this course will address challenges faced by contemporary families in the course of their development. Special attention will be given to the following areas: patterns and dynamics of family interaction within family systems; strategies employed by families to accomplish tasks; communication; intimacy; conflict management within family systems; various developmental stages such as transition from adolescence to adulthood; mate-selection and family development; transitions to marriage/civil union; parenting; parent-child relationship system over developmental stages; children during and after parental separation and/ or divorce; family tasks during middle adulthood; separation and divorce/family re-organization; single-parent household; remarriage and step-parenting; elderly-caring; and death, loss and bereavement in the family system.

Credits: 2 semester hours.

Course Description:

The purpose of this 2 unit course is to examine the various ways in which culture and social diversity affect the development of children and families. This critical course examines diverse developments across the entire life span. In order to help clients' lives, the therapist needs to have an understanding of clients' individual and family developmental processes, as well as socio-cultural and larger systemic issues that affect clients' behaviors, attitudes, and feelings. The course is designed to develop students' awareness of the common issues involved at each life stage and how social class and position partly determine the developmental process. Emphases in the class reflect the dramatic demographic changes that have occurred in recent history. The increase in life expectancy means that people will spend much more time in their families in various roles as parents, grandparents, and adult children. While this course will discuss the entire life span, a substantial portion of the class will focus on familial and systemic issues in later life.

Program learning outcomes:

SLO 1.1 Students recognize the impact of power on individuals, families, and communities.

SLO 1.2 Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, and social systems in people's lived experience.

SLO 1.3 Students apply system/relational theories to clinical case conceptualization.

SLO 2.2 Students' clinical practice demonstrates attention to social justice and cultural democracy.

SLO 4.3 Students demonstrate integration of family therapy theory, equity, and social location issues in clinical practice.

Learning outcomes

The objectives of the course are three-fold: learning theories/research about development through a cultural lens, gaining knowledge about diverse life transitions and how they are exhibited in treatment, and developing the self-of-therapist. The learning outcomes are derived from these three areas and include:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the biological, psychological, and sociological theories of human development.
- Show knowledge of the constant interplay between cultural factors and child development.
- Understand both micro- and macro-social forces, as well as intra- and inter-personal dynamics that affect development.
- Recognize the theoretical underpinnings of the life cycle/stage paradigm and the life course paradigm.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of possible developments across the life span.
- Acknowledge social constructionist influences on social location issues and how they affect development.
- Comprehend how systemic issues affect the life course.
- Contrast the interplay of the therapist's development with that of the clients'.
- Understand how families cope with normative and non-normative changes across the life span.
- Describe later life issues and apply gerontological theories to clinical work.

TEACHING METHODS

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized during this course in order to achieve the above objectives. Among those methods will be assigned readings, class discussions, experiential activities, and lectures. Please refer to my teaching statement at the end of the syllabus.

READINGS:

Readings are to be completed for the day indicated. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss the ideas and concepts discussed in the readings. You are responsible for all of the assigned readings, whether or not they are discussed in class. Please note that there are more readings assigned for some topics than for others, and that additional readings may be added during the course.

CPSY Departmental Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

REQUIRED TEXTS

McGoldrick, M., Carter, B, & Garcia Preto, N. (2016). *The expanding family cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives*. Fifth Edition. NY, NY: Pearson.

Required readings:

Peluso, P.R., Watts, R.E., & Parsons, M. (2013). *Changing Aging, Changing Family Therapy: Practicing With 21st Century Realities*. New York: Routledge. Selected chapters.

Graham, N. (2014). Polyamory: A Call for Increased Mental Health Professional Awareness. *Arch Sex Behav* 43:1031–1034 DOI 10.1007/s10508-014-0321-3
Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy.

Walsh, F. (2010). Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. *Family Process*, 49(3), 330-348. DOI 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2010.01326.x

Coates, J. Gray, M. & Hetherington, T. (2006). An ecospiritual perspective: Finally a place for Indigenous approaches. *British Journal of Social Work*, 36(3), 381-399. DOI 10.1093/bjsw/bcl005

Required audio visual:

Nebraska

Paul Kivel: 13 short videos

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL341889CF0E8F4D49>

Additional reading and audio visual resources may be added during the course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Participation (25 pts)**

- Full attendance to both days of class is required for a passing grade
- Giving attention to the instructor and/or other students when they are making a presentation.
- Demonstrating ability to recognize and use subtle non-verbal communication cues to assess your impact on your peers and participate in class.
- Demonstrating ability to be open about discussing the impact of your comments on your peers.
- Coming to class prepared (having read the assignment for the day)
- Contributing to in-class discussion based on the topics of discusses and the readings assigned. Contributions may include how you feel about the material but merely articulating your feelings is not sufficient. You are expected to put those feelings in context of your thoughts and analysis of the material.
- Engaging in group discussions with attention and energy.
- Asking questions of the instructor and/or other students regarding the material examined in that class.
- Providing examples to support or challenge the issues talked about in class.
- Making comments or giving observations about topics in the course, especially those that tie in the classroom material to "real world" problems, or try to integrate the content of the course.
- Dealing with other students and/or the instructor in a respectful fashion.
- Active listening. Students will be asked questions related to the course's readings randomly in class by other students and by the instructor. Your participation in small group discussions is also required.

Assignments are due on the due date unless there is a documented emergency. Three points will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late. All written material should be typed and printed clearly.

Assigned reading reflections (25 pts) (2 pages typed and due at the beginning of each class)

After completing the readings for each class, identify two themes or ideas that stood out for you. Select and provide a quote illustrating each theme that stood out for you. Offer your own reflection about what these ideas mean to you: you may discuss dilemmas, resonance with your life experience, agreement/disagreement with a rationale, impact in your views, emerging questions, struggles with particular points of view with a rationale, ethical implications and practical applications.

Life cycle symbol (20 pts) February 16 2016. In this exercise you have the opportunity to choose a symbol that depicts your life cycle thus far or a specific life cycle transition. This is an artistic endeavor requiring you to use symbolic imagery to communicate a larger narrative of your life cycle. You may use any medium to create this symbol (drawing, painting, clay, etc); write a one/two page narrative explaining (1) what the symbol means relative your life cycle and (2) what it means to you as an evolving family therapist. You will present it in small groups. Example of what you can do include: a painting, a poem, a musical composition, an essay.

Grading Rubric for Childhood Expression and Reflection- worth 20 points

| | Under-Developed (0-3 pts) | Marginal (3-9pt.) | Appropriate (9-14pt.) | Good (14-19 pts.) | Superior (20 pts.) |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Symbol: thoughtfulness, complexity, meaning | | | | | |
| Explanation of symbol in context of life cycle | | | | | |
| Explanation of symbol as an evolving family therapist | | | | | |

Case Study (30 pts). March 29, 2016. Write a 8/10 page case study based on a clinical vignette dealing with life course issues, including aging. You should integrate the ideas, concepts, theories, and interventions as discussed in class and the readings.

| | Marginal (1pt) | Proficient (2 pts) | Accomplished(3/3.5 pts) | Total pts: 40 |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|---------------|
| Content of Case Study | Describes one family life transition in global fashion; limited integration of the readings; omits aging issues | Identifies two transitions in the family life cycle and addresses issues of aging; integration the course’s readings is descriptive | Identifies two or more transitions in the family life cycle and addresses issues of aging; life transitions are for the whole family and each individual are described and discussed using the course’s readings; outlines intergenerational patterns | 3 |
| Linking theory to therapy | Limited links between theory and therapy; global interventions without a link to theory | Clear links between theory and practical interventions based on the course’s readings and discussions; identifies theoretical perspectives and | Discussion of clear links between theory and practical interventions based on the course’s readings and discussions; identifies theoretical perspectives and research; identifies specific interventions | 3 |

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|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | research; identifies specific interventions | | |
| Social location (intersectionalities) | Description includes information about what these dimensions mean in a family's context; case study omits diversity issues (race, class, gender, sexual orientation) | Description discusses how these dimensions impact a family's context; case study includes diversity issues (race, class, gender, sexual orientation) as connected with the family life cycle | Description discusses how these dimensions impact a family's context; case study includes diversity issues (race, class, gender, sexual orientation) as connected with the family life cycle | 3 |
| Significant family members and issues impacting the presenting issues in counseling; | General description of family context: identifies issues (strengths and problems) impacting client | Detailed description of family context: identifies and analyzes issues impacting client | Detailed description of family context: identifies and analyzes issues impacting client | 3 |
| Current school or occupational context | General description of school or occupational context: identifies sources of strength and problems | Detailed description of school or occupational context: identifies sources of strength and problems; discusses impact on client | Detailed description of school or occupational context: identifies sources of strength and problems; discusses impact on client and counselor | 3 |
| Personal, familial and community strengths; | General list of strengths | Specific list of strengths with a discussion about how they might be helpful in the counseling setting | Specific list of strengths with a discussion about how they might be helpful in the counseling setting and outside. | 3 |
| Comparison of client's social location with therapist's | Provides some discussion of identified areas in need of attention: misuse of privilege, overidentification, missing relevant information/areas of intervention | General discussion of some areas in need of attention: misuse of privilege, overidentification, missing relevant information/areas of intervention | Discusses with depth all identified areas in need of attention: misuse of privilege, overidentification, missing relevant information/areas of intervention | 3 |
| Identify key concepts in a therapy model(s) | Identification of model(s) with limited rationale in regards to goodness of fit | Identification and analysis of model(s) with rationale for goodness of fit | Identification and analysis of model(s) with rationale for goodness of fit integrating social context and social location | 3 |
| Interventions | Identification of complex interventions | Identification of complex interventions with Rationale (limited to counseling theories and not addressing social context) | Identification of complex interventions with rationale explaining goodness of fit and integration of social context and social location | 3 |
| APA Format: Professional | Some run-ons or fragments. Limited | Uses simple compound, and | Consistent variety of sentence structure | 1 |

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|--|--|--|---|---|
| writing: sentence fluency, punctuation, grammar. | variety in sentence structure; some errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling. | complex, sentences; few to no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling. | throughout; no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling. | |
| Headings | Does not follow APA guidelines for heading organization | Does not follow APA guidelines for heading organization | Follows APA guidelines for heading organization | 1 |
| Citations | Does not follow APA guidelines for citations with consistency | Few errors in APA guidelines for all citations | Follows APA guidelines for all citations | 1 |

Grade Distribution

| | | | |
|----|---------|----|-----------|
| A | 94-100% | B- | 75-79% |
| A- | 90-93% | C+ | 70-74% |
| B+ | 85-89% | C- | below 65% |
| B | 80-84% | | |

Course Outline

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|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Class 1 1/19 | Introduction, overview of course | Ch1 (no assignments) |
| Class 2 1/26 | Gender: women, men and the life cycle | Ch 2, 3 written reflection |
| Class 3 2/2 | Social class | Ch 4, 5 written reflection |
| Class 4 2/9 | Sexuality | Ch 6 written reflection Graham: Polyamory Peluso, Ch 2, 6 |
| Class 5 2/16 | LGBT & the family life cycle | Ch 7 written reflection Life cycle symbol |
| Class 6 2/23 | Spirituality | Ch 8 Paul Kivel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8s586xYa80 Walsh: Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. Coates, Gray, Hetherington: An ecospiritual perspective: Indigenous approaches written reflection |

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|------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Class 7 3/1 | Migration | Ch 12 written reflection |
| Class 8 3/8 | Couples and parenthood | Ch 14, 15 written reflection |
| Class 9 3/15 | Adolescence | Ch 16 written reflection |
| Class 10 3/29 | Midlife: launching children Aging | Ch17 Peluso Ch 4 Nebraskda written reflection |

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.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

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.

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 counselor/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 learning community in another way. According to the Lewis & Clark Counseling Psychology attendance policy, missing 3 or more hours of a 1 credit course may result in a failing grade. For this course, any absence of more than one hour requires a makeup assignment. If you must be absent or late, please email the instructor at least several hours prior to class.

TEACHING STATEMENT

I believe that education is a dialogic process: a drawing out, not a putting in. Knowledge is not simply transmitted from teacher to students, but is actively constructed by the learner through

dialogue, reflection, and hands-on activities. Students construct their own knowledge base by integrating new information with their life experiences. My teaching philosophy is based on engaged pedagogy (Hooks, 1994) which entails the transition from memorization, consumption of knowledge, uninformed opinions (or lacking rationale), and simply stating how one feels about something towards critical awareness and engagement with the knowledge, theories and research offered in family therapy. This philosophy has three goals: (a) to acquire awareness and knowledge of theories, research and current issues in the field of family therapy; (b) to invite students to the “scholars table” to empower them to critically examine the historical and current knowledge base through different perspectives and challenge underlying assumptions in the literature; (c) to apply the theory to clinical cases and research so that their learning development involves making connections between theory, research and practice.

My teaching philosophy is that students should be constantly challenged and learn by doing, and that their work and understanding should extend beyond the classroom. I integrate presentations with conversation, group activities and check ins and I use the Socratic Method*. Having a dynamic classroom means changing the curriculum to meet the needs of the students. In particular, all students should have the opportunity to be challenged by the difficulty of their tasks. This means I actively watch for students who are excelling, and offer them work that will challenge and motivate them. This also means I offer extra support to those who are clearly struggling by providing office hours and by encouraging group study. Ultimately, my goal is to challenge everyone so that they can achieve their potential, and build the skills that will carry them into the future.

My teaching style is the result of who I am as a person, my life experience, and my formal training and development as an educator in formal settings. I am Colombian, I identify as Latina, as a woman of Color, cisgender and able bodied. The country of Colombia is where I grew up and where my formative educational experiences occurred. English is my second language; I am bilingual and due to my real and continued life engagement in Colombia, Mexico, India, and the east and west coast of the U.S. I consider myself anchored in a deep multicultural perspective. As a feminist who embraces standpoint theory, I believe that social location systematically influences our experiences, shaping and limiting what we know. Thus, what one can know is influenced by the kind of experiences one has; what we know is learned and known from a particular standpoint (this does not make opinions equal) Knowledge is embodied rather than acquired through a universal, disembodied, rational mind. Social inequalities generate distinctive accounts of nature, and social relationships and inequalities of different social groups create differences in their standpoints.

The Transformative Family Therapy Model has substantially influenced my work as a clinical supervisor and educator. In general, I structure my classes along three motifs: (a) the intersectionality of class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender and ability; (b) ethics; and (c) the use of self in therapy. First, the intersectionality of class, sexual orientation, gender and ethnicity refers to the idea that in any society, family life is shaped by these dimensions in various ways. A key pedagogical parameter is a constant exploration of how class, ethnicity, and gender socially construct varying dimensions of social inequality, that in turn organize different forms of family life (i.e., how family structure and composition is shaped by income, ethnicity and gender). Second, theoretical approaches and clinical practices are not neutral. They conceptualize a vision of a people coexisting in community. I incorporate an ethical dimension into all my courses by invoking a sense of historical context, underlying implications and potential fallouts at micro and macro levels. Third, the use of self in therapy is built upon the idea that we are the product of the

culture and social milieu in which we were socialized. Developing awareness of the social and familial influences that have shaped who we are is key to understanding our styles as therapists.

Socratic Method*

- The teacher leads by posing thought-provoking questions. Students actively engage by asking questions of their own. The discussion goes back and forth. The aim of the questioning is to probe the underlying beliefs upon which each participant's statements, arguments and assumptions are built.
- The classroom environment is characterized by "productive discomfort." The questioning proceeds open-ended with no pre-determined goal.
- The focus is not on the participants' statements but on the value system that underpins their beliefs, actions, and decisions.