



GRADUATE

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY THERAPY

**MCFT 516 -02 – Family Development
SPRING 2017**

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| Time & Day: | TH 1pm – 4 pm |
| Location: | York Graduate Center |
| Instructor: | Pilar Hernandez-Wolfe, Ph.D. pilarhw@lclark.edu |
| Office Hours: | Thurs 11 am – 1p 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

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

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.

Key historical events that have changed family life in the 1900s and 2000s (20 pts) March 2, 2016.

The purpose of this assignment is for students to learn about the impact of key historical events in the U.S. history that drastically impacted family life, the daily lives of people in their communities. Students are to explore and generate their own ideas on how family life and the family life cycle was impacted by the 20th century women’s movement, the civil rights, the gay rights (stone wall, same sex unions and DOMA), and the 21st environmental movements. Your essay should include: (1) a brief summary of the movement; (2) a timeline including other important co-occurring historical events; (3) Your own analysis of how family relationships (e.g. dating, perceptions of cohabitation and marriage, parenthood) have been impacted by the movement chosen (e.g. race relations, Queer family life; climate change); (4) an example of how you and your family have been impacted given your social location. 15 pages max, double space, APA. Two/three students per paper. Some papers will be randomly selected for a presentation on February 28.

Grading Rubric for Key historical events that have changed family life - worth 20 points

| | Under-Developed (0-3 pts) | Marginal (3-9pt.) | Appropriate (9-14pt.) | Good (14-19 pts.) | Superior (20 pts.) |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| brief summary of the movement | | | | | |
| timeline including other important co-occurring historical events | | | | | |
| analysis of how family relationships (e.g. dating, perceptions of cohabitation and marriage, parenthood) have been impacted by the movement | | | | | |
| an example of how you and your family have been impacted given your social location | | | | | |

Case Study (30 pts). April 13, 2016. Write a 10/12 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. See attached rubric at the end of the syllabus. This paper must be uploaded into taskstream.

Grade Distribution

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| A | 94-100% | B- | 75-79% |
| A- | 90-93% | C+ | 70-74% |

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| 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 |
| Class 6 2/23 | Spirituality | Ch 8 Key historical events that have changed family life essay – selected presentations Walsh: Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. Coates, Gray, Hetherington: An ecospiritual perspective: Indigenous approaches written reflection |
| Class 7 3/2 | Migration | Ch 12 written reflection |
| Class 8 3/9 | Couples and parenthood | Ch 14, 15 written reflection |
| Class 9 3/16 | Adolescence | Ch 16 written reflection |
| Class 10 3/23 | Midlife: launching children Aging | Ch17 Peluso Ch 4 Nebraska, 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

My teaching philosophy is based on engaged pedagogy (Hooks, 1994) which entails the transition from memorization and consumption of knowledge 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; and (c) to apply the theory to clinical cases and research so that their learning development involves making connections between theory, research and practice.

I strive to create a cognitive and emotional expansive and creative space in the classroom. First, an expansive cognitive space involves challenge. Students should learn by doing, and their work and understanding should extend beyond the classroom. I integrate presentations with conversation, group activities and check ins. I frequently ask questions (using the Socratic Method*). A dynamic classroom involves 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 all my students so that they can achieve their potentials, and build the skills that will carry them into the future. This requires me as a teacher to create a structure and to select

assignments incorporating multiple levels of reflection: small and larger group discussion, experiential application, and individual thinking, writing, and integration.

Constructing emotional, expansive and creative space in therapy training involves self-awareness, emotional intelligence and mindfulness. I bring mindfulness exercises into the classroom and ask students to reflect upon what they become aware of or experience. This helps create a space of intimacy and brings them out of the busy and unfocused mental space prevalent in so much of their hectic everyday lives so that they can be more present in the moment to absorb and to talk about important and meaningful issues and events. I ask them to notice their emotional reactions to topics and people, to be honest about how they feel and to address issues in or outside of the classroom. Becoming a therapist requires training in self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy and social skill across and within social groups (e.g. gender identity, class, ethnicity, nationality, etc).

My teaching style is the result of who I am as a person, my life experiences, 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, México, India, and the east and west coast of the U.S. I consider myself firmly anchored in a deep multicultural perspective. As a feminist who embraces standpoint theory, I believe that social location systematically influences our experiences by 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. 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 organizes 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 how we work as therapists.

Socratic Method*

- The professor 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," not intimidation. The professor does not have all the answers and is not merely "testing" the students.
- The primary focus is not on the participants' statements but on the value system that underpins their beliefs, actions, and decisions.