

Lewis & Clark  
Graduate School of  
Education and Counseling



**MCFT563: Treatment Issues in MCFT: Spirituality  
Spring, 2018**

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Meeting times and dates: Saturday and Sunday, Feb 17 & 18, 2016; 9am-5:30pm

Course completion: Final assignment due March 5, 2018

Place: TBD

Instructor: Teresa McDowell, Ed.D.

Office hours: Call CPSY office 503-768-6060 to schedule an appointment

Contact Information: [teresamc@lclark.edu](mailto:teresamc@lclark.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course integrates spirituality and religion into the practice of family therapy. Special attention is paid to spiritual/religious/non-religious self-of-the-therapist awareness; developing competence and spiritual/religious fluency; and integrating spirituality and religion into the practice of family therapy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Participants will

1. Explore self of the therapist relative to spirituality and/or religion
2. Become more familiar with assessing spirituality/religion with clients
3. Better understand spiritual and religious diversity
4. Practice introducing spirituality and/or religion in therapy sessions
5. Deepen connection between spirituality and/or religion, resilience, change, strengths, and solutions
6. Be better prepared to integrate spirituality/religion into family therapy

ASSIGNMENTS

**1) Class Preparation – Readings (Due Feb 17 & 18, 2018)**

Participants are expected to complete the assigned readings and to synthesize and apply them in class. Classroom discussions are an opportunity to bring up questions about the assigned readings, deepen one's understanding of the issues under study, and integrate course material with one's own personal and professional experience. **(10 points)**

**2) Interview Assignment (Due March 5, 2018) (90 points)**

The final assignment requires you to complete an interview with a non-clinical couple or family about their spirituality and/or religious beliefs. The interview should take about an hour to an hour and a half. In class you will work with colleagues to prepare questions for your interview. During the interview you will explore various areas including:

- ✓ How each person in the family identifies relative to spiritual and/or religious beliefs/non-beliefs.

- ✓ Spiritual genograms, eco-maps or life maps for the adults in the family.
- ✓ Differences between family members and the impact of these differences in both family-of-origin and current family/couple relationships.
- ✓ The impact of beliefs on resilience; how has spirituality and/or religion helped family members and relationships between family members be resilient?
- ✓ The impact of beliefs and/or religious experience that were or are experienced as oppressive or harmful in any way to any family members or relationships.
- ✓ Anything else you or the couple/family want to explore about religion and/or spirituality.

You will write a paper based on the interview. The paper should include the following:

1. Description of the couple/family including how they identify relative to spirituality/religion **(10 points)**
2. A spiritual genogram, eco-map or life map for each adult interviewed along with a short narrative that explains what you discovered as a result of using the tool **(20 points)**
3. Transcriptions of five of the questions you asked and the answers given. This does not need to be transcribed from a recording, but should give the reader a sense of what you asked and how interviewees responded to your questions **(10 points)**
4. Analysis of the impact of religion and/or spirituality on the family members and their relationships **(50 points)**. Here you need to include references to the literature. Grading for this section will be broken down as follows:
  - a. Comprehensive analysis of relational dynamics relative to spirituality and/or religion (10 points)
  - b. Effects of beliefs on strengths and resilience as individuals and relationships (10 points)
  - c. Effects of religious/spiritual oppression on individuals and relationships (10 points)
  - d. Referencing main points using at least resources from the class as well as at least three additional resources from the literature (10 points)
  - e. APA style writing, structuring of paper, and referencing (10 points)

#### GRADING

A = 93-100

B = 83-87

C = 73-77

A- = 90-92

B- = 80-82

C- = 70-72

B+ = 88-89

C+ = 78-79

***NOTE: Late assignments will be graded down 5 points per day.***

#### CPSY Department Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected and required. 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.) For this weekend course, missing one day constitutes failing the class. 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.

**Disability Services Statement**

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS
<p><b>Feb 17, AM – Topics</b> Introductory mindfulness exercise; relationship between mindfulness and religious practices Brief overview Religion, spirituality and resilience Religion, spirituality and self-of-the-therapist</p>
<p><b>Feb 17, PM - Topics</b> Spiritual genograms, eco-maps, and life maps Religious and spiritual rituals in communities and families Using rituals in therapy Closing ritual</p>
<p><b>Readings (all available via library)</b> Aponte, H. (1998). Love, the spiritual wellspring of forgiveness: An example of spirituality in therapy. <i>Journal of Family Therapy</i>, 20(1), 37-58.</p> <p>Martella, M. &amp; Brock, L. (2008). Religion and spirituality as a resource in marital and family therapy. <i>Journal of Family Psychotherapy</i>, 19(4), 330-344.</p> <p>Rivet, M. &amp; Street, E., (2001). Connections and themes of spirituality in family therapy. <i>Family Process</i>, 40(4), 459-69.</p> <p>Walsh, F. (2010). Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. <i>Family Process</i>, 49(3), 330-348 DOI: 10.1111/j.1545-5300.2010.01326.x.</p>

**Feb 18, AM – Topics**

Opening mindfulness ritual  
When religion or spirituality cause harm  
Overcoming religious trauma  
When non-religious certainty causes harm  
Therapists being open to not knowing

**Feb 18, PM – Topics**

Integrating spirituality and religion into therapy  
Spiritual and religious diversity  
Discussion, interventions and practice  
Ethics of including spirituality and/or religion in therapy  
Preparation for interview assignment  
Closing ritual

**Readings (all available via library)**

Bowland, S., Foster, K., & Vosler, A. (2013) Culturally competent and spiritually sensitive therapy with lesbian and gay Christians. *Social Work*, 58 (4), p321-332.

Gehart, D. & Paré, D. (2008). Suffering and the relationship with the problem in postmodern therapies: A Buddhist re-visioning. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 19(4), 299-319.

Springer, P., Abbott, D. & Reisbig, A. (2009). Therapy with Muslim couples and families: Basic guidelines for effective practice. *Family Journal*, 17(3), 229-235. DOI: 10.1177/1066480709337798.

**Suggested books and articles for future reading:**

Ren, Z. (2012). Spirituality and community in times of crisis: Encountering spirituality in indigenous trauma therapy. *Pastoral Psychology*, 61(5/6), 975-991. DOI:10.1007/s11089-012-0440-5

Weatherhead, S. & Daiches, A. (2015). Key issues to consider in therapy with Muslim families. *Journal of Religion & Health*. Dec2015, Vol. 54 Issue 6, p2398-2411. 14p. 2 Charts. DOI: 10.1007/s10943-015-0023-8.

Spirituality and Family Therapy (Journal of Family Psychotherapy)  
by Martin John Erickson and Thomas Carlson

Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy  
by Froma Walsh