



**LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY THERAPY**

**MCFT 516 – 03 – Family Life Cycle
SPRING 2022**

Time & Day: Mondays 9 am to 12 pm
Location: York Graduate Center, Room 107
Instructor: Justin Rock, LPC rock@lclark.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

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.

Wall Kirmmerer. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teachings of plants*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions.

Required readings:

Barsigian, L. L., Hammack, P. L., Morrow, Q. J., Wilson, B. D. M., & Russell, S. T. (2020). Narratives of gender, sexuality, and community in three generations of genderqueer sexual minorities. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 7(3), 276–292.
<https://doi-org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1037/sgd0000384>

Budge, S. L., Belcourt, S., Conniff, J., Parks, R., Pantalone, D., & Katz-Wise, S. L. (2018). A grounded theory study of the development of trans youths' awareness of coping with gender identity. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. Advance online publication.
<http://dx.doi.org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1136-y>

Butler, C., Beavis, J., Aldallal, F., Nelson-Hall, S., & Shah-Beckley, I. (2021). Gender variance: Children, adolescents, parents. *Journal of Family Therapy*. Advance online publication. <https://doi-org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1111/1467-6427.12348>

Capous-Desyllas, M., & Barron, C. (2017). Identifying and navigating social and institutional challenges of transgender children and families. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 34(6), 527-542. <http://dx.doi.org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1007/s10560-017-0491-7>

Hammack, P. L., Frost, D. M., & Hughes, S. D. (2018). Queer intimacies: A new paradigm for the study of relationship diversity. *Journal of Sex Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi-org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1080/00224499.2018.1531281>

McGuire, J. K., Kovalanka, K. A., Catalpa, J. M., & Toomey, R. B. (2016). Transfamily theory: How the presence of trans* family members informs gender development in families. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 8(1), 60–73. <https://doi-org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1111/jftr.12125>

Pain, E. (2019). Queer polyfamily performativity: Family practices and adaptive strategies among lgbtq + polyamorists. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi-org.library.lcproxy.org/10.1080/1550428X.2019.1596858>

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

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

Required audiovisual:

Nebraska

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

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation (20 pts)

- Full attendance to class is required for a passing grade
- Give attention to the instructor and/or other students when they are making a presentation.
- Demonstrating the ability to recognize and use subtle non-verbal communication cues to assess your impact on your peers and participate in class.
- Demonstrating the 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 discussion 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 the 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.

Assigned reading reflections (35 pts) (1 to 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, and struggles with particular points of view with a rationale, ethical implications, and practical applications.

Additional assignments will be introduced in class to follow up on case studies and the development of clinical hypotheses.

Braiding Sweetgrass life cycle reflection (15 pts) (10 pgs). Paper due on Feb 16/17

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to think about life cycles from a biocentric perspective and use some of the main concepts of the book to analyze a family's life cycle. First, identify a family life cycle transition using as a guide the course's textbook. Then choose one or two metaphors from Braiding Sweetgrass to discuss the family life cycle's transition in terms of mutuality, reciprocity, gratitude, interdependence, and the transformation of death. Finally, answer the following questions.

1. ‘Asters and Goldenrod’ (pp. 39-47) delves into Kimmerer’s question of the relationship between these flowers. She discovered a “lived reciprocity” between asters and goldenrod—“the pairing of purple and gold”. How can you use her concept of interdependency to understand and explain human life cycle transitions?
2. If you truly focus on the Earth that will be left for your grandchildren, how would you live differently?
3. Revisit your list of steps from last term relative to becoming Indigenous to place: identify each step and explain where you are at with it; identify your misuse or abuse of white privilege or any other kind of privilege as it may apply.

Case Study (30 pts). 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. Due on March 25, 2022

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

Class 1 1/10	Introduction, an overview of the course	Ch1 (no assignments)
Class 2 1/17	Gender: women, men, and the life cycle	Barsigian et al Butler et al Capous-Desyllas, M., & Barron Budge, S. L., Belcourt, S., Conniff, et al written reflection
Class 3 1/24	Social class	Ch 4, 5 written reflection
Class 4 1/31	Sexuality	Ch 6 written reflection Hammak et al (2018) Pain et al (2019)

		Peluso, Ch 2, 6
Class 5 2/7	LGBT & the family life cycle	Ch 7 written reflection
Class 6 2/14	Spirituality	Ch 8 Walsh: Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. Braiding Sweetgrass, 303-384; Paper due written reflection
Class 7 2/21	Migration	Ch 12 written reflection
Class 8 2/28	Couples and parenthood	Ch 14, 15 written reflection
Class 9 3/7	Adolescence	Ch 16 written reflection Film: The legacy of unresolved loss
Class 10 3/14	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 the 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.

Course Objective	MCFT Student Learning Outcomes	AAMFT Core Competencies	Evaluated by
Demonstrate knowledge of the biological, psychological, and sociological theories of human development.	SLO1.2	1.1.1; 2.1.1; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions, case study final paper
Show knowledge of the constant interplay between cultural factors and child development.	SLO1.1 SLO 1.2 SLO 2.2	1.2.1; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions
Understand both micro- and macro-social forces, as well as intra-and inter-personal dynamics that affect development.	SLO1.1 SLO 2.2	2.3.6; 2.3.8	Class participation and weekly reactions, family life cycle and older adults paper
Recognize the theoretical underpinnings of the life cycle/stage paradigm and the life course paradigm.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3	1.1.1; 2.2.3; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions Final case study
Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of possible developments across the life span.	SLO1.1 SLO 2.2	1.11; 1.2.1;	Class participation and weekly reactions
Acknowledgesocial constructionist influences on social location issues and how they affect development.	SLO1.1	1.2.1	Class participation and weekly reactions
Comprehend how systemic issues affect the life course.	SLO1.1	1.2.1	Class participation and weekly reactions
Contrast the interplay of the therapist's development with that of the clients'.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3	3.4.5	Weekly reactions; case study final paper
Understand how families cope with normative and non-normative changes across the life span.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3		Case study final paper

Describe later life issues and apply gerontological theories to clinical work.	SLO 1.2 SLO 4.3	2.3.6; 2.3.8; 4.1.1	Family life cycle and older adults paper
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Appendix

Family life cycle and older adults

Nebraska. Woody Grant is found walking in traffic and stopped by a police officer. He is picked up by his son, David, who learns that Woody wants to go to Lincoln, Nebraska to collect a \$1 million sweepstakes prize he has won. When David sees the sweepstakes letter, he realizes that it is mail fraud to make a person purchase magazine subscriptions. He returns Woody to his home, where Woody insisting on collecting his money annoys David's mother Kate. This happens again with David being disrupted at his job as a stereo sales clerk. He and his brother Ross, a local news anchor, discuss putting Woody in a retirement home. David is paid a visit by ex-girlfriend Noel, who is returning his things, refusing to move back in. Their conversation is cut short by a call from David's mother reporting that his father has left yet again. David retrieves Woody and decides to drive him to Lincoln, much to Kate's dismay.

While in Rapid City, South Dakota, Woody goes on a drinking bender and returns to their motel room and falls, hitting his head. David takes him to the hospital for stitches where they realize Woody has lost his dentures. They retrace Woody's steps and find them. While Woody was in the hospital, David notified their family that they would be passing through Woody's hometown of Hawthorne, Nebraska and plans were made to stay the night with them. Woody is against the idea. The following day, they arrive in Hawthorne and stay with Woody's brother Ray and his family. Woody and David visit a mechanic shop Woody once owned and then a local bar. When David brings up Woody's alcoholism and problems within the family—with Woody implying that he did not love his wife nor really want children—they get into an argument. Woody mentions winning the money and the customers of the bar give him a toast. The next morning, they learn that the news has spread through the town.

Kate arrives in Hawthorne by bus and David takes her and Woody to the cemetery for Kate to pay respects. David meets a local newspaper owner who had been planning a story on Woody to tell her the truth about the "sweepstakes." He discovers that she is an ex-girlfriend of his father and learns a little more about his dad. The rest of Woody's family, including Ross, come to visit him. Woody's nephews, Cole and Bart, and others approach David and Ross about getting money that they believe Woody owed them. A fight begins, ending abruptly with Kate calling out the relatives for unpaid debts they owe. David, Kate, Ross and Woody tour Woody's childhood home.

Woody has repeatedly said he wants to buy a truck with the money. He cannot drive any more, but Woody tells his son that he also wants to leave something for his family when he passes. David says that they are not going to Lincoln, at which point Woody collapses. David takes him to the hospital. In the middle of the night, Woody abruptly leaves and starts walking, so David again agrees to drive Woody to Lincoln.

Write an APA style paper addressing the following questions (10/12 pages max) for Part 1:

1. Draw a genogram identifying relationships amongst family members
2. Describe transactional patterns unique to this family
3. Identify life cycle tasks for the parents and for the adult children
4. Identify triangles and loyalties
5. Identify contextual/ vertical stressors for this family
6. Select a family therapy model and describe this family's functioning, problems and goals for therapy based on the selected model's perspective
7. What challenges do families face when parents or caretakers are aging and suffering health issues? Specify challenges to both older and the younger generations.
8. What personal, social, economic vulnerabilities emerge in life for people who are 65+; discuss how these vulnerabilities may lend themselves to abusive situations and relationships
9. Discuss key clinical issues that you would discuss with elderly clients relative to the life cycle, vulnerability, potential abuse.