PSY568 Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy

Reformed Theological Seminary–Orlando
Mondays, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 3 credit hours
Fall Semester, 2011
Instructor: Scott Coupland, Ph.D.
Office Hours: By appointment
Telephone: (407) 366-9493, ext. 238
Email: scoupland@rts.edu

PURPOSE
This course is designed to familiarize the student with a family systems framework and a broad range of established family systems models that have shaped the practice of couple and family therapy. Theory and technique will be reviewed to assist the development of process skills necessary for addressing the multiple dynamics associated with counseling couples and families. It will provide opportunities to increase the student’s personal and professional growth.

OBJECTIVES
As a result of the completion of this course, students will:
1. Develop a systemic perspective in understanding and assessing family dynamics.
2. Become familiar with basic concepts and techniques of established models of family therapy.
3. Demonstrate skills pertinent to family counseling.
4. Examine his/her family experience through genogram and paper sculpture construction and interpretation.
5. Feel more confident in his/her ability to identify family dynamics and effectively work with families.

LEARNING FORMAT
Lecture, small group interaction, case study reviews, genogram and paper sculpture construction, and reading.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/29</td>
<td>Systems theory and concepts</td>
<td>N.*, Ch. 1-2; N., Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/6</td>
<td>No class, Labor day</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>Systems theory and concepts</td>
<td>N.*, pp. 60-76; N., Ch. 2-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>Genogram construction and interpretation</td>
<td>N., Ch. 4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>The family life cycle</td>
<td>N.*, pp. 76-80; N., Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>No class, Spring break,</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>Family therapy process and techniques</td>
<td>N.*, Ch. 3; N., Ch. 7-8</td>
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REQUIREMENTS

1. Finish all assigned reading.
2. Construction and presentation of your family genogram with interpretation.
   You will receive instructions in class on how to construct your family genogram. You will present your genogram and your interpretation of it in your process group.
   a. Construct a three-generation genogram of your family with Genopro software. (If you are or were married, do not include your present or former spouse’s family of origin.) This software is free but only works on PC computers, not on MAC computers. If you do not own a PC computer, the Genopro software is installed on the computers in the library. Use 3 or more “layers” to underscore different family patterns and issues. This will make the genogram more clear and help in the interpretative process.
   b. An interpretation of your family genogram. Use the interpretative format described in the text (available on reserve in the library) below to help you identify and highlight family patterns and issues in your genogram.
   c. Discuss how you have seen and/or hope to see these patterns changed/redeemed.
   d. Your genogram must be constructed using the proper symbols and structure.

This text is available on reserve in the library and may help you in the construction and interpretation of your genogram.

Due date: One genogram presentation per week in your process group during the month of October. A copy of your genogram and a brief outline of your interpretation should be emailed to Dr. Coupland on the date of your presentation.

3. Paper sculpture and presentation.
   The goal of the paper sculpture is to create a figurative picture that encapsulates the relational dynamics of your family at a certain time frame of your life. This sculpture allows you to reflect on your family system’s characteristics and may give you a different perspective on your family as a group and your role in the family. There is no right or wrong way to do a paper sculpture. Use your imagination.
   a. Decide what family you want to sculpt. You may sculpt your family of origin, or, if you are married and have children, your family of procreation.
   b. Pick a time period on which to focus (e.g., my preteen years; my junior year in high school; when my children where four and six years old, etc.)
c. Create paper shapes and/or select objects or pictures for all persons/things you wish to
develop. Shapes/objects/pictures should be made for all persons and things who or
which had/have a significant effect on the family. Think in terms of size, color, texture,
etc.
d. Arrange the shapes/objects/pictures so that they express the family relationships as you
see them. Consider the meaning of the proximity of the shapes/objects/pictures to one
another. When you are satisfied with the arrangement, secure them in place. (Note: a
piece of paper with a few magazine clips attached to it does not meet the level of
creativity expected for this project.)
e. This sculpture will not be turned in, but will be presented to the class on November 22th
or 29th. You will have 20 minutes for your presentation.
f. Address the following in your presentation:
i. Identify the time period in your life that is represented by your sculpture.
ii. Identify who or what the shapes/objects/pictures are (age, sex, relationship to
you, why included), why you arranged them as you did, the meaning of any
connecting or boundary lines, and any special uses of size, shape, color, texture,
proximity.
iii. Describe the family dynamics depicted in your paper sculpture.
iv. What were the roles of the family members?
v. How did you respond to these dynamics at the time of the scene?
vi. How has your response to these dynamics changed since then (if applicable), and/or
how would you like to see it changed?
vii. How have you sought to “honor your father and mother,” and love the other family
members depicted in your paper sculpture.

Due date: November 28th or December 5th in class.

4. Case study review and questions.
In the third hour of the classes held from October 3 to November 8 case studies will be
provided with questions associated with them. In groups of three, you will discuss and type
out your responses to the questions and email them to Dr. Coupland’s email address at
scoupland@rts.edu by the end of class. The intent is to apply your conceptualization and
technique skills as related to the topic discussed in class that day. Each assignment is worth
10 points. Each group member will receive the same grade.

5. Weekly quizzes.
There will be a weekly quiz given the last 10 minutes of each class beginning on August 29
and ending November 8. The quizzes will be based on the required reading for the lecture
topic being covered in class that day, and the material covered in the class that day. The
quizzes will consist of 5 multiple choice questions, and each quiz is worth 10 points. If you
are not satisfied with your quiz grade, you may retake the same quiz during the 10 minute
period prior to the next class. There is no makeup permitted for missed quizzes.
GRADING
Family genogram and interpretation: 50 points
Paper sculpture and interpretative presentation: 50 points
Case studies and questions: 70 points
Weekly quizzes: 100 points
Required reading: 30 points
Total possible points: 300 points
Course grades will be determined by adding points from the family genogram with interpretative presentation, the paper sculpture and presentation, the in-class technique demonstrations, the take home examination, and the required reading. Grades will be based on the following scale:

A = 291-300 points  C+ = 249-257 points  D- = 210-215 points
A- = 282-290 points  C = 240-248 points  F = 209 points and below
B+ = 273-281 points  C- = 234-239 points
B = 264-272 points  D+ = 225-233 points
B- = 258-263 points  D = 216-224 points

ACADEMIC STANDARDS
If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.

All assignments will be due on the date specified in the syllabus. Late genograms or paper sculptures will not be accepted.