PSY570 Couples Counseling

Reformed Theological Seminary – Orlando
Mondays, February 8 – May 9, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
3 credit hours
Spring Semester, 2016
Instructor: Scott Coupland, Ph.D.
Office Hours: By appointment
Telephone: (407) 278-4466
Email: scoupland@rts.edu

PURPOSE
To examine the nature and proper functioning of marriage, gender issues in marriage, common couple patterns, and premarital/remarital and marital counseling strategies designed to promote harmony and instill hope.

OBJECTIVES
1. To gain a biblical framework for marriage that is translatable into the identification of healthy and dysfunctional relational patterns.
2. To understand the role of gender issues in relationships and how to address these issues appropriately.
3. To become familiar with common marital problem patterns.
4. To understand issues addressed in and approaches to pre/re-marital counseling.
5. To acquire introductory skills for assessment and intervention with couples using emotionally focused couples therapy.
6. To learn strategies for addressing specific couple’s issues (e.g., separation and divorce, infidelity, violence).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS
OR


*Available on Canvas.
RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>Gender issues</td>
<td>Palmer &amp; Johnson; Johnson, et al., chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td>Gender issues</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 2</td>
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<td>Feb. 22</td>
<td>Gender issues</td>
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<td>Feb. 29</td>
<td>Couple patterns</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 3</td>
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<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>Attachment theory in couples</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 4</td>
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<td>Mar. 14</td>
<td>Couples counseling, stages 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 21</td>
<td>Spring break, no class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>Couples counseling, stages 3-6</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 6</td>
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<td>Apr. 9</td>
<td>Couples counseling, 7-9</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 7</td>
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<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td>Premarital and remarital counseling</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 23</td>
<td>Couples counseling role-playing at RTS</td>
<td>Johnson et al., chapter 9</td>
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<td>Apr. 25</td>
<td>Infidelity</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Separation, divorce and remarriage</td>
<td>Smith; Smullens; Tracy</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
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REQUIREMENTS
1. Read assigned texts and articles.

Reading report due Friday, May 13th by 5:00 p.m. on your Canvas account.

2. Complete all exercises in chapters 1 through 9 in Becoming an emotionally focused couple therapy: The workbook. Use the workbook itself to fill in your answers and responses to the exercise questions. A recommended schedule for working on the exercises is listed in the class schedule above.

Due Thursday, May 19th by 5:00 p.m. A box will be available for your workbook at Kathie Earll’s desk.

3. Conduct four couple therapy role-play sessions.
   A. These role-play exercises will be conducted on Saturday, April 23 from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. All sessions will be conducted at RTS in the Oviedo Counseling Clinic. These sessions will be mentored by a 2nd year MAC student who will provide feedback to the counselors.
   B. Students will be assigned to groups of 4 for this role-play exercise. Within each group of 4, each person will be paired. Students will remain in the group and as a pair through the entirety of the role-plays.
C. Within each group each pair will rotate between the roles of co-counselors and the couple being counseled.

D. Couple’s role: In the couple role the paired students will role-play as if they are in a relationship with each other. Each pair should have a conversation prior to the role plays to determine some basic facts about their couple’s history, their roles and interactive patterns, and the situation that brings them to a couples counseling. The patterns and themes in their relationship will be carried through the 4 role-play sessions.

E. Co-counselor’s role: As co-counselors both students are expected to participate in leading the counseling role-play. They will conduct a four, 20 minute role-plays of a couples counseling session using the Emotionally Focused Couples Counseling steps.

F. Role-play schedule
   Round 1
   8:30-8:50 a.m.: Review of steps 1 & 2
   8:50-9:10 a.m.: The first pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 1 & 2
   9:10-9:20 a.m.: Feedback to the co-counselors
   9:20-9:40 a.m.: The second pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 1 & 2
   9:40-9:50 a.m.: Feedback
   9:50-10:00 a.m.: Break
   Round 2
   10:00-10:20 a.m.: Review of steps 3 & 4
   10:20-10:40 a.m.: The first pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 3 & 4
   10:40-10:50 a.m.: Feedback to the co-counselors
   10:50-11:10 a.m.: The second pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 3 & 4
   11:10-11:20 a.m.: Feedback
   Lunch provided
   11:20 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
   Round 3
   12:00-12:20 p.m.: Review of steps 5 & 6
   12:20-12:40 p.m.: The first pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 5 & 6
   12:40-12:50 p.m.: Feedback to the co-counselors
   12:50-1:10 p.m.: The second pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 5 & 6
   1:10-1:20 p.m.: Feedback
   1:20-1:30 p.m.: Break
   Round 4
   1:30-1:50 p.m.: Review of steps 7-9
   1:50-2:10 p.m.: The first pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 7-9
   2:10-2:20 p.m.: Feedback to the co-counselors
   2:20-2:40 p.m.: The second pair of counselors will utilize skills from steps 7-9
   2:40-2:50 p.m.: Feedback

Note: The specifics of this assignment may be altered based on the number of students in the class.

4. Take home final examination. This exam consists of a series of movie clips of couples interacting and recorded clips of couples counseling. Students will respond to multiple choice questions for each clip. The questions will assess the student’s ability to apply the material regarding gender issues, couple patterns, attachment styles, affairs, domestic
violence, and counseling techniques to “live” scenarios. The clips will be available for online viewing on May 9th at 12:00 p.m.

Due Thursday, May 19th by 5:00 p.m. on your Canvas account.

GRADING
Reading: 20%
Workbook 30%
Role-play: 25%
Final exam: 25%

Course grades will be determined by adding points from the all the assignments. Grades will be based on the following scale:

A = 97-100%  B- = 86-87%  D+ = 75-77%
A- = 94-96%  C+ = 83-85%  D = 72-74%
B+ = 93-91%  C = 80-82%  D- = 70-71%
B = 88-92%  C- = 78-79%  F = below 70%

ACADEMIC STANDARDS
Classroom attendance and participation are required at all class sessions.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule and grading policy as needed.
# Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** PSY570 Couples Counseling  
**Professor:** Scott Coupland, Ph.D.  
**Campus:** RTS—Orlando  
**Date:** 2/8/2016

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<tr>
<th>MAC Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOUNDATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>A couples counseling model is learned along with the ethical elements of working with couples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling/soul care, a variety of counseling models and theories, ethics and professional standards of practice, and a psychological, biblical and theological framework for counseling/soul care.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COUNSELING, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Students learn, critique, and apply couples counseling theory.</td>
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<td>Able to describe and apply the principles of mental and spiritual health, including prevention, intervention, consultation, education, and advocacy, as well as the operation of programs and networks that promote mental health in a cultural/global society.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIVERSITY AND ADVOCACY</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Gender and power issues are discussed in the context of understanding couple dynamics.</td>
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<td>Understands how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking clinical mental health counseling services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one’s own life and career and those of the client.</td>
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<td><strong>ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Understands and applies various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses, including diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.</td>
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<td><strong>RESEARCH AND EVALUATION</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Understands and demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling through a biblical worldview.</td>
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<td><strong>DIAGNOSIS</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Working with persons with personality disorders in couples counseling is addressed.</td>
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<td>Knows and applies the principles of the diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis, and the use of current diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the <em>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)</em>, and evaluates them through a biblical and theological framework.</td>
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<td><strong>INTEGRATION</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Students evaluate the EFCT model of couples counseling from a biblical perspective.</td>
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<td>Integration of biblical &amp; theological concepts with counseling practices.</td>
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<td><strong>SANCTIFICATION</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Students practice caring for distressed couples by conducting a day long exercise in couples counseling.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for Triune God</td>
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