**PSY 5190 COUPLES AND FAMILY COUNSELING I**

**Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson Campus)**

Spring 2021

2 Credit Hours

**Instructor**

Prof. James Hurley, D. Phil., Ph. D., LMFT

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| **Contact Information**  (W) 601-923-1630 (Program office)  (C) 601-316-7389  Email jhurley@rts.edu | **Class meeting time**  Monday, 1-4:15 PM  **Office Hours**  By appointment |

**Course Description**

This course provides a broad understanding of marriage and family theories and a systemic approach to conceptualizing and counseling with families and couples. Students will gain an acquaintance with the emergence of systems counseling as a discipline within the field of psychology, with a broad introduction to the study of the family as a culturally influenced, ongoing, interacting social system, with selected established approaches to marriage and family counseling, and with an awareness of central conceptual and therapeutic issues of importance to counselors.

**Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)**

Students will demonstrate comprehension of:

1. The History and development of marriage, couple, and family counseling (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b)
2. General Systems Theory and its relation to counseling (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b)
3. Basic concepts and techniques of established models of family counseling. (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b)
4. Transgenerational dynamics and family system transactions (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b)
5. The Family Lifecycle (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b)
6. Her/his family experience through genogram construction (2.F.5.b)
7. Select skills pertinent to family (2.F.5.b)

**Methods of Instruction**

This course will be taught in the following format: Online and/or in person lecture, small group interaction, case study reviews, video observation, genogram construction, and reading.

**Assignments (Student Performance Evaluation Criteria)**

1. **Taibbi Readings (21%)**
2. **Nichols Quizzes (24%)**
3. **Three-Generational genogram (40%)**
4. **Family Sculpture and presentation (15%)**

**A1. Taibbi Readings**

Taibbi offers a clear introduction to the concepts and operations of family therapy. In dyads, students will jointly complete two (2) Discussion and Preparation Sheet (DPS) sheets covering selected chapters of the book. The process for each chapter is as follows:

1. Individually, read the chapter thoughtfully and write at least six (6) item entries (questions/comments/observations) on a DPS form for discussion.
2. Meet together for at least 20 minutes per chapter to discuss the tems on the DPS forms. If you cover them before the end of the time period, look over the chapter and find additional topics for discussion.
3. Devote at least the last 5 minutes of your discussion to an evaluation of the chapter from a biblical worldview. Record two or more significant observations from your discussion as items at the end of your combined sets of questions (Task 4. Below)
4. Combine the two sets of questions (Total 12 or more) on a single DPS form.
5. Record the length of time spent on discussion on the last line of the chapter DPS form.
6. Combine the chapter DPS forms into a single spreadsheet to upload to canvas. (Each student must upload the spreadsheet to their own accounts so that Canvas will give you credit.)

The DPSs are as follows (Due dates on course schedule)

Taibbi DPS 1: chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 6

Taibbi DPS 2: chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 12

**A2. Nichols Quizzes**

There will be three quizzes during the semester. The content of each quiz will be based on assigned Nichols readings (Listed in the Course Schedule) and on class lectures. Note that the quiz content does not correlate 1-to-1 with lecture material. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions. Each quiz will be available to take on Canvas during the first 20 minutes of class on the day when it is scheduled.

Bring your laptop to class with you and arrange to be in class ready for the test before class begins. If the class is meeting online, you will need to be able to open the Canvas program to take your quiz. Absences from taking the quiz at the scheduled time MUST be prearranged and a makeup time must be scheduled as soon as possible after the missed quiz. There is no make up for missed quizzes.

**A3. Three-Generational Genogram**

1. Construct during your family genogram with interpretation.
   * 1. You will receive instructions in class on how to construct your family genogram.
     2. Construct a **three**-generation genogram of your family with *Genopro* software. (Instructor option: If you are or were married, your instructor will let you know if you must include your present or former spouse’s family of origin.) This software is free but written for PC computers. It can be used on MAC computers. To do so you will need to pursue appropriate instructions. Use 3 or more “layers” to underscore different family patterns and issues. The first layer should be a general family tree with demographic information. The second layer should be the family tree with descriptive information for the most significant family members. The third layer should be the family tree with relationship descriptors. Additional layers can be added, if desired, to highlight particular family dynamics. The 3 or more layers will make the genogram clearer and help in the interpretative process. Your genogram must be constructed using the proper symbols and structure.
     3. b. Write an interpretation of your family genogram. Use the interpretative format described in the McGoldrick & Gerson text listed below to help you identify and highlight family patterns and issues in your genogram. A summary of this interpretive format will be discussed in class, and an outline of the interpretative categories can be downloaded from Canvas. Use this outline to write your paper. You responses should be written in bullet point form. Use APA format for the paper.
     4. Due date: Electronic copies of your genogram file (“your name.gno”; e.g., JillSmith.gno) and your interpretation in outline form should be uploaded to your Canvas account on the date in the course schedule below.

M3. McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention (3rd ed.)*, New York: W. W. Norton. This text is available on reserve in the library.

**A4. Family Sculpture and presentation**

The goal of the family sculpture is to create a sculpture that is a figurative depiction encapsulating the relational dynamics of your family at a formative time frame in 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. Presenting genogram information to classmates will help you work with clients when you are in the clinic. There is no right or wrong way to do a family 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., your preteen years; your junior year in high school; when your children where four and six years old, etc.)

c. Select objects and/or pictures for all persons/things you wish to include. Objects and/or pictures should be made for all persons and things who or which had/have a significant effect on the family. Think in terms of shape, size, color, texture, etc.

d. Arrange the objects and/or pictures so that they express the past family relationships and dynamics as you understand them now. Consider the meaning of the size, shape, color, texture, and proximity of the objects and/or 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 or photographs attached to it does not meet the level of creativity expected for this project.) Photographs of example sculptures will be provided in the ‘files’ section of the course on Canvas.

e. This sculpture will not be turned in, but will be presented to the class on date(s) in the course schedule below. You will have 20 minutes for your presentation with up to 10 minutes for class discussion. (Practice beforehand)

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 objects and/or 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 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 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: At the beginning of the day you will be presenting your sculpture.

**Required Course Materials (Texts, Readings, and Videos)**:

1. Nichols, M. P. (2013). The essentials of family therapy (6th ed.).Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0205249008
2. Taibbi, R. (2015). Doing family therapy: Craft and creativity in clinical practice (3rd ed.). NY:Guilford. ISBN: 978-1462521203

**Optional Materials**:

1. McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention (3rd ed.)*, New York: W. W. Norton. This text is available on reserve in the library.

**Course Process and Schedule**

**Course Process**

This course is a 2 credit hour course taught in 3 1/4 hour blocks. Class meetings will therefore finish before the end of the term.

Part 1: Introduction to Family Therapy. The initial block of lecture material will consider the place of systemic counseling among major approaches to psychology and the emergence of marriage and family (systemic) counseling as a discipline.

Part 2: Systems Theory. This block will examine macro (general) systems theory, concepts emerging from it and its application to families, particularly to changes in a typical family life cycle. Class exercises will allow students to practice skills related to learning about and changing relationship systems.

Part 3. Transgenerational transmission. This section of the course will examine transgenerational transmission of individual and family functioning patterns. Video and class examples will be used to acquaint students with the construction of a therapeutic genogram. Each student will construct a personal family genogram (A2) and present a family sculpture in class (A3).

Part 4. Major approaches. Family systems are complexly organized and amenable to a wide variety of approaches to promoting change. This portion of the course will review selected major theoretical approaches and their strategies for promoting change. Class exercises will practice skills and interventions related to various theories.

Part 5. The final portion of the course will review an initial family counseling session.

**Course schedule** (Projected. May vary some.)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| † | **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading Due** | **Assignments Due** | **CACREP Standard** |
| L1 | 01/25/21 | Introduction  Emergence of Systemic Counseling  Systems theory and concepts 1 | N, Ch. 1-2; T, Ch. 2 |  | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
| L2 | 02/01/21 | Systems theory and concepts 2 | N, pp. 49-62; T, Ch. 3 |  | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
| L3 | 02/08/21 | Family life cycle  Family therapy process and techniques  Constructing and interpreting a genogram 1 | N, pp.62-68; T, Ch. 5  N, Ch. 3; T, Ch. 6  T, Ch. 1 | Taibbi DPS 1: chs. 2,3,1,5,6, | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
| L4 | 02/15/21 | Constructing and interpreting a genogram 2 |  | Quiz 1- On Nichols readings for L1-L3 and content of L1 and L2 | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
| L5 | 02/22/21 | Major Family Therapy approaches 1  Bowen family system therapy  Structural Family Therapy | N, Ch. 5; T, Ch.7  N, Ch.7; T, Ch. 8 |  | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
|  |  |  |  | Taibbi DPS 2: chs7,8,9,10,12 |  |
| L6 | 03/01/21 | Major Family Therapy approaches 2  Strategic & Systemic therapies  Narrative and Solution-focused therapy | N, Ch. 6, 10; T, Ch. 9  N, CH. 11-13; T, Ch.10  T, Ch. 12 | Quiz 2 – On Nichols readings for L4-L6 and content of L3-L5 | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
|  | 03/08/21 | No Class - Reading Week |  |  |  |
| L7 | 03/15/21 | Family therapy demonstration: Clinical Video: Initial Therapy Session | N, Ch. 14;  N, Ch. 15; | Quiz 3 – On Nichols readings for L7 and content of L6 | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b) |
| L8 | 03/22/21 | Presentation of family sculpture |  | Family Sculpture | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b ) |
|  | 03/29/21 | NO class |  |  |  |
|  | 04/05/21 | NO class |  |  |  |
|  | 04/12/21 | NO class |  |  |  |
|  | 04/19/21 | NO class |  | Genogram | (2.F.5.b; 5.C.1.b ) |
|  | 04/26/21 | NO class |  |  |  |
|  | 05/11/21 | Exam Week - NO final exam for this course |  |  |  |

**Policies and Important Information**

All written work must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) style. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g. https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

**Disability Accommodation Policy.** If you require a special adaptation or accommodation to participate fully in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. Last minute special requests will be subject to the same late assignment policy as other students.

**Access to Research Database.** RTS provides MAC students with access to the Ebscohost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following the link below and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/>

**Submission of work**. **(Site specific instructions)**

**Late work.** All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be deducted 1/3 letter grade for each late day.

**Return of work**. All work returned to students will be available in the MAC Office. Any work not collected by the first full week of the next semester or term will be shredded.

**Grading Scale**: Note: Hurley uses a 12 point scale. Values are listed beside the letter grades below.

A 12 (97-100)

A- 11 (94-96)

B+ 10 (91-93)

B 9 (88-90)

B- 8 (86-87)

C+ 7 (83-85)

C 6 (80-82)

C- 5 (78-79)

D+ 4 (75-77)

D 3 (72-74)

D- 2 (70-71)

F 0 (Below 70)

**Attendance Policy:**

Regular attendance is expected and required. Absences must be pre-arranged and confirmed by email between the professor and student. Quizzes are available only at the start of class on quiz days. Unexcused absences on quiz days will result in no credit for the exam. Unexcused absence for more than one 3 hour class will result in the loss of one letter grade per absence. If serious illness or an emergency prevents a student from attending any class, please notify the instructor before the class begins by email and by phone (601-316-7389). It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any materials handed out or presented during the missed class from a classmate.

**Class Participation:**

Students are expected to participate in all components of the class and will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of discussion. Each student is expected to read all of the assigned materials in advance for each class and have prepared written comments and questions for class discussion. Contributions should reflect knowledge of the reading assignments or other sources.

**Site Specific NOTES about submitting assignments**

Text formatting: Items should be in Georgia Font, 12 points, double spaced. (Georgia font has been selected because research indicates it gets the best grades.)

Submitting work. Submit your work on Canvas.

Submission time and date: Due Dates and times are specified in Canvas. Canvas times and dates supersede those on the syllabus if there is a discrepancy.

Scanning as JPGs: Some items may need to be scanned and inserted into .doc files as .jpg images. If you have a problem achieving a scan, chat with someone. Many smart phone apps can do the scan for you.

**Late work**: Submit by dates represent the latest date an assignment may be handed in. They are not suggested ‘target’ dates. In a professional work setting, especially in mental health settings where notes must be written within certain time limits. Submit by dates are not flexible. Schedule your work to allow for unexpected delays.

**Student Learning Outcome Table**

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in the Course Schedule of this syllabus.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course Objective** | **Lecture(s)** | **Material(s)** | **Assignment(s)** | **CACREP Standard(s)** |
| 1. History and development of marriage, couple, and family counseling | L1, | M1, M2 | A1, A2 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. General Systems Theory and its relation to counseling | L1, L2 | M1, M2 | A1, A2 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. Familiarity with basic concepts and techniques of established models of family therapy. | L5, L6 | M1, M2 | A1, A2 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. Transgenerational dynamics and family system transactions | L3, L4 | M1, M2, M3 | A1, A2 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. The Family Lifecycle | L3 | M1, M2 | A2 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. Examine his/her family experience through genogram construction | L3, L4, L8 | M1, M2 | A3, A4 | 2.F.5.b,  5.C.1.b |
| 1. Skills pertinent to family | L7, L8 | M1, M2, M3 | A3, A4 | 2.F.5.b |



**Course Objectives Related to MAC\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: 1PSY5190

Professor: Hurley

Campus: Jackson

Date: Spring 2021

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| **MAC\* Student Learning Outcomes**  *In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.* | | **Rubric**   * **Strong** * **Moderate** * **Minimal** * **None** | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice** | Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling. | Moderate | Ethical implications of systemic counseling information is considered |
| **Social & Cultural Diversity** | Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one’s own life and career and those of the client. | Moderate | Implications of family diversities for cultural expectations and bias is considered |
| **Human Growth & Development** | Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas. | Strong | Family systems and individual development is a central aspect of the course |
| **Career Development** | Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making. | None |  |
| **Counseling & Helping Relationships** | Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans. | Strong | The course focuses on these topics is a central theme of the course |
| **Group Counseling & Group Work** | Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness. | Minimal | Family development overlaps, yet is distinct from group counseling |
| **Assessment & Testing** | Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include 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. | Minimal | Family assessment employs instruments in a limited manner. |
| **Research & Program Evaluation** | Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling. | Strong | Students review important texts through their biblical worldview. |
| **Clinical Mental Health Counseling** | Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling. | Strong | The skills and concepts involved in family counseling are central to many circumstances in counseling |
| **Integration (Biblical/Theological)** | Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices. | Moderate | Students evaluate a major text from their biblical perspective |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the triune God. | Moderate | Student genogram family evaluations involve love for God and for persons made in his image. |