

PSY 6850 Syllabus: Family and Couple Therapy Practicum

Spring, 2013

Meeting Day: Tuesdays 9:00-11:30am

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Course Description:

The purpose this therapy practicum is to develop competency in clinical assessment, conceptualization, and therapy skills in the area of family and couple therapy. There will be some review of basic therapeutic skills in addition to an emphasis on specific assessment techniques and treatment issues for couples and families. The practical, diagnostic, therapeutic and professional issues involved in providing assessment and therapy services for couples and families will be addressed via didactic presentations, selected readings, and supervision of cases being seen in the Psychology Clinic. Supervision will take the form weekly class meetings and individual supervision of cases via videotape and direct observation of clinical therapy work. The goal is to have a participatory learning experience that promotes competence in using family and couple conceptual models and family/couple therapy skills.

Primary Texts:

Faber, A. & Mazlish, E. (2005). *How to Talk So Teens Will Listen & Listen So Teens Will Talk*. Collins.

Gottman, John. (2001). *The Relationship Cure*. Three Rivers Press: New York.

Nichols, M. P. (1999). *Inside Family Therapy: A Case Study in Family Healing*. Allyn & Bacon: Boston.

Since most students in this practicum will have already taken the previous Couple/Family Therapy course which covered basic theory and interventions, the readings for this supervisory practicum will be chosen and assigned as needed to support supervision of students working with a particular case problem (e.g., infidelity; sexual difficulties; divorce; blended families), to implement a specific therapy technique not already covered in the previous course, or to learn a new intervention that is particularly relevant for a case the student is working on. In addition to material from the texts, handouts, articles, or other primary source material for theory/therapy techniques may be used as supplemental readings for the course. Supplemental readings may include material from the following sources or from other sources relevant to the case being treated:

Gil, E. (1994). *Play in Family Therapy*. Guilford Press: New York.

Golden, L. (2004). *Case Studies in Marriage and Family Therapy; 2nd Ed.* Pearson Ed. Inc.: New Jersey.

Gottman, J.M. & Silverm N. (1999). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. Three Rivers Press: New York.

Sherman, Oresky & Roundtree (1991).

Solving Problems in Couples and Family Therapy. Brunner/Mazel Publishing, New York.

Workload expectations for the practicum are:

- (1) Each student will complete at least one intake interview with a couple or family during the semester and make an oral presentation at the Clinic staff meeting.
- (2) Each student will complete at least one full assessment per semester. The assessment will include an assessment of how the family and environment effects what ever the presenting issue is.
- (3) Each student will carry two therapy cases per semester. For ongoing cases (cases carrying over from prior semesters) students will conceptualize the case from a family or systems perspective. Any new cases picked up will be families or couples.
- (4) Students are expected to support their class peers and enhance their learning experience by regularly observing their peers conducting therapy and participating in the live supervision discussion. To promote this, intakes will be scheduled when possible at times when other students and myself can observe. Each student will also schedule one therapy session during the semester for live supervision.
- (5) Students will complete an assigned reading for each week prior to the practicum meeting. Each student will email me a short commentary that includes no less than two possible discussion questions based upon the reading. The goal is to facilitate engagement with, and application of, the didactic material and to promote class discussion of clinical cases presented during practicum.

Course Grading:

Grades for the therapy course will be based upon an evaluation of the student's performance in the following clinical skill areas: Case conceptualization and treatment planning; session planning and structuring; treatment implementation; assessment skills, including interviewing, testing, and interpretation skills; clarity of written reports; oral communication skills; meeting professional and ethical responsibilities; and quality of professional relationships, including preparation for supervision, use of supervision feedback, and consultation skills. Students will receive ongoing feedback about the quality of their performance in these areas as cases are being supervised in group.