

The University of Toledo
College of Social Justice & Human Service
Dept. of School Psychology, Higher Education, & Counselor Education

COUN 8450 – Couples and Family Therapy
Spring 2021

Semester Credit Hours: 4

Instructor Contact Information

Name: Megan Mahon, Ph.D., LPCC/S

Phone: (419) 283-6144

Office: Virtual

Email: megan.crotte@rockets.utoledo.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

Theories and practice of couples and family counseling are explored. Foundations of systems theories and their application to couples and family therapy are presented.

Course Prerequisites

COUN 5140 and COUN 5150.

Course Objectives

- Professional practice, which includes couples therapy, requires students who are preparing to work as marriage, couple, and family counselors possess the knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to address a wide variety of issues in the context of relationships and families
- Articulate knowledge of history, philosophy, basic principles, and trends in couple therapy.
- Understand ethical, legal, socio-economic, and socio-cultural factors influence on relationships.

Required Text

Capuzzi, D., & Stauffer, M. D. (Eds.) (2015). *Foundations of Couples, Marriage, and Family Counseling*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Recommended Reading

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Available for free from: <https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>.

Methods of Instructions

This class will be facilitated through Blackboard.

Web Assistance

This course is a web-assisted course and you are expected to check your Rockets email account as well as Blackboard for course updates. I will **only** respond to your UT email account and not your personal email account. Please check Blackboard frequently for course updates and to participate in discussions. You may access Blackboard by visiting: www.utoledo.edu/dl/, or you access it directly by visiting: <https://blackboard.utdl.edu/>.

Statement of Diversity

Diversity and Inclusion: In concert with the University of Toledo's values and expectations, the faculty within the Judith Herb College of Education, Health Science and Human Service upholds the tenets pledged by the University to respect and value personal uniqueness and differences. Specifically, we will actively participate in the initiatives of the University to attract and retain diverse faculty, staff, and students; to challenge stereotypes; and to promote sensitivity toward diversity and foster an environment of inclusion in all curricular and extra-curricular activities. Hence, all students enrolled in this course will be expected to:

- Be considerate of the thoughts and ideas of others.
- Promote a collaborative and supportive educational environment in a community of ideological, physical, or ethnic differences.
- Treat every individual with kindness, dignity, and respect regardless of:
 - Gender, race/ethnicity, religion;
 - Sexual orientation, gender identity;
 - Impairment(s)/Disability(ies);
 - Social economic status; and
 - Political views, and other element(s) or uniqueness.

You can visit the University of Toledo's web-page on diversity and inclusion here: <http://www.utoledo.edu/diversity/>.

Expectations

Due to the nature of this class, students are expected to:

- Be respectful and courteous of others' beliefs, thoughts, and feelings.
- Demonstrate accountability, integrity and honor in all course-related activities.
- Promote a positive and supportive learning environment for others.
- Treat every individual with kindness, dignity, and respect regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability(ies), political views, and other element(s) of uniqueness.

Confidentiality

Given the nature of counselor education, there will be the need to use examples or demonstrations during the course of instruction. Students will be expected to maintain confidentiality and to respect the right to privacy of others and their fellow students. The ability to demonstrate respect of others in class is an important barometer of how you will relate to co-workers and clients in practice.

Informed Consent

Because this class, as does the counseling process itself, requires self-reflection, some difficult

emotions may surface during the semester, or even after the semester has concluded. Should you need assistance with any issues, whether they have arisen during the class or not, the **UT Counseling Center** is available to serve you. They are located at the Main Campus Medical Center (1735 W. Rocket Drive) and their phone number is 419-530-2426. The link to their website is: <http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/>. You may stop by or call them to discuss your needs.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Any student found cheating on a test or assignment or any student who represents the work of another person as his or her own on any of the papers, projects, presentations, or assignments will be subject to penalties ranging from a grade of zero (0) on the assignment to an F in the course to expulsion from the University. All students are subject to the University Policy Statement on Academic Dishonesty in the current Catalog and the Department Policy on Plagiarism which is posted on the Department website.

Attendance and Participation

It is the student's responsibility to keep up with lectures and assignments, and to contribute to class discussions and assignments.

Grading

A letter grade consistent with a student's performance on assignments will be awarded upon completion of the requirements for this course. A grade of incomplete (I) may be awarded, but only in *exceptional circumstances*. The expectation is that all work will be submitted *on or before the date it is due*. A rubric is available to follow along with to keep track of your own grades throughout the semester.

Late assignments between due date and 1 week will be assessed a 10% penalty. After one week from the due date, if the assignment is not submitted OR documentation outlining extenuating circumstances is not provided, the student will receive zero credit for the assignment without exception.

Drop/Withdrawal

Students who drop or withdraw from the course must notify the instructor in writing. Failure to notify the instructor shall result in the student being considered absent without leave from the class and the student shall be considered responsible for all work missed.

Special Needs

Students who require individualized arrangements for taking tests, taking notes, completing assignments, or any other aspect of the class should discuss these needs with the **Office of Accessibility (419-530-4981; OfficeOfAccessibility@utoledo.edu)**. Upon receipt of the appropriate documentation every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations to facilitate student learning and performance in the course.

Email

The University of Toledo issues each student an official UT email address. This email address usually takes the form of `firstname.lastname@rockets.utoledo.edu`. **All email communications**

about this class will be sent to and all communications from students should be sent from your official UT email address. Students will be expected to check this address regularly for official communications about this class. Email communications about this class will not be sent to personal email accounts and communications from personal email accounts may be blocked by UT spam filters.

Student Evaluations

At the conclusion of the academic semester, students will have an opportunity to evaluate the instructor and the course. This is done anonymously and used as a means to improve instruction, course content, and the overall curriculum. Your comments, suggestions, and feedback are taken seriously and contribute significantly to course and program improvement. You are strongly encouraged to complete a course evaluation.

Course Changes

The course syllabus, schedule, requirements, procedures, contents, etc., are subject to change by the instructor once the course is underway. Students will be apprised of any changes via Blackboard and/or email.

ADA Compliance

The University of Toledo provides educational opportunities to people with disabilities and complying with the ADA, Section 503 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“the Rehabilitation Act”) and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. UT Policy Number 3364-50-03.

Assignments

All written assignments (unless stated otherwise) are to be written in a style consistent with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* (Latest Edition). Students are to familiarize themselves with APA Style. It is expected that your papers will be of college-level quality and free of grammatical and spelling errors. If your assignment is not in by the time allotted on the day it is due it will be considered late and graded as the instructor sees fit.

1. Blackboard Discussion Participation (50 points)

It is expected that students check into our Blackboard (BB) classroom each week ready to participate in discussions. In addition to your weekly assigned textbook reading, there will be videos/articles/resources for you to review on BB.

Students will complete 10 online discussion prompts throughout the course worth 5 points each (with 3 points allocated to each original post and 2 points for responding to at least one classmate). To earn a complete 5 points on an online discussion activity, students must demonstrate adequate effort, analysis, depth, and personalization on your original post and respond to at least one of your peer’s original posts with adequate effort, analysis, depth, and personalization. Online discussion will be set up on Blackboard and responses will be mixed written and video format. The instructor will monitor the interaction process.

Initial discussion posts will be due on Fridays by 11:59pm EST and peer responses by Sunday at 11:59pm EST. Due to the interactive nature of this course, late discussion posts

cannot be accepted for credit.

Online Discussion Guidelines: Please read these carefully

One of the advantages of discussions online is that you can engage your instructor and fellow students at times when it is convenient for you. The intention of the course discussions is to encourage lively, informative exchanges about course-related topics that increase your knowledge of those topics--but it's up to you to make this happen.

Some guidelines for participating in an online discussion:

- Do more than state agreement or disagreement. Justify and support your opinion. The most persuasive opinions are supported by evidence, examples, reasons, and facts. If you disagree with something, say why. If you really like something that you've read, let people know what makes you think that way.
- Do appropriate preparation, such as reading and lesson activity work, before you join the discussion.
- To receive full credit when responding to peers, comments should be a paragraph of at least 100 words. Your responses should encourage continued discussion and collaboration on the topics covered.
- Check your message before you send it. Pay attention to your spelling and grammar and be sure your message makes the points you want to make in a clear and concise way. Remember, other students and instructors can read your messages.
- Help move the discussion along. When contributing to a discussion, read other people's comments first. Introduce new ideas, but also build on what others have said ("Piggy-back" on other people's ideas).
- Keep up with the discussion throughout the course. After you have made your contribution on a topic, check back a few times to find out how the discussion is evolving. Does someone's comment make you think twice about your view?
- Share your experience with your fellow students. You may be able to offer advice to someone who is newer to the course.
- Respect others' ideas and opinions. Feel free to disagree but express your disagreement in a respectful manner. Disrespectful communication is poor communication and not acceptable in this course.

2. Treatment Plan Paper (20 points)

Students will choose a fictional family from TV, movies, books, etc., and write a treatment plan to work with that couple/family on an ongoing basis. The treatment plan will include items such as: 1) Presenting problem; 2) Identification of 2-3 treatment goals; 3) Desired outcomes; 4) Session interventions based on empirically validated research; and 5) Cultural considerations. Further details for this assignment will be provided during the semester.

3. Critique of Theory Paper (30 points)

Students will choose a couples or family counseling theory and provide a critical analysis

of it. The different theories make up Chapters 6-11 in the textbook. Students will be provide a brief overview of the theory before using their own words to identify their perceived: 1) Benefits of the theory, 2) Drawbacks to the theory, 3) Cultural differences to consider when using this theory, and 4) What types of issues between couples or within families would be good fits for using the this theory? Further details for this assignment will be provided during the semester.

Grading Scale:

A = 90-100% (90-100 points) C = 70-79% (70-79 points) F = Below 60% (59 points and lower)
 B = 80-89 % (80-89 points) D = 60-69% (60-69 points)

Date	Topic	Chapters Covered/Assignments: To be read <u>before</u> class-see also additional material on BB
Week 1 1/19/21-1/22/21	Introduction, syllabus	Read: Chapter 1
Week 2 1/25/21-1/29/21	Genograms	Read: Chapter 2
Week 3 2/1/21-2/5/21	Diversity and Culture Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues	Read: Chapters 3 and 5
Week 4 2/8/21-2/12/21	Issues in Couples Counseling Sexuality and Gender in Couples Counseling <u>Treatment Plan Paper DUE 2/14/21 by 11:59pm</u>	Read: Chapters 12 and 13
Week 5 2/15/21-2/19/21	Addiction in Families	Read: Chapter 16
Week 6 2/22/21-2/26/21	Violence, Abuse, and Trauma in Families	Read: Chapter 17
Week 7 3/1/21-3/5/21	Divorce and Loss in Families	Read: Chapter 18
Week 8 3/8/21-3/12/21	Psychodynamic Theories Experiential and Humanistic Theories	Read: Chapters 6 and 7
Week 9 3/15/21-3/19/21	<u>INSTRUCTIONAL BREAK!</u>	Enjoy your week off!

Week 10 3/22/21-3/26/21	Bowenian Family Systems Theory <u>Critique of Theory Paper DUE</u> <u>3/28/21 by 11:59pm</u>	Read: Chapter 8
Week 11 3/29/21-4/2/21	Structural Theory Strategic and Milan Systemic Theories	Read: Chapters 9 and 10
Week 12 4/5/21-4/9/21	Behavioral and Cognitive- Behavioral Theories	Read: Chapter 11
Week 13 4/12/21-4/16/21	Research and Assessment Working with Parents	Read: Chapters 4 and 15
Week 14 4/19/21-4/23/21	Life Cycle and Narrative Therapy	Read: Chapter 14
Week 15 4/26/21-4/30/21	Prepare for final	
Week 16 5/3/21-5/7/21	<u>EXAM WEEK</u>	