

## COUC 602: Marriage & Family Therapy II

### Course Description:

This course is an experiential exploration of selected, major treatment approaches utilized in marital and family counseling. The development of practical skills and techniques constitutes the primary focus. The intent is to make practical application of family counseling theories and awareness's presented in COUN 601.

### Rationale:

Counseling 602 is an elective course in the 60-hour programs and is especially applicable toward the COMF degree seeking student. The purpose of the class is to not only refresh students as to the concept and philosophy of marriage and family therapy, but also teach and practice marriage and family counseling skills and techniques. Students will be required to understand and demonstrate counseling skills as they relate to the systems philosophy and six major theoretical frameworks within the marriage and family therapy field.

### I. PREREQUISITES

COUN 501, 502, 503, 504, & 601 (See Graduate Catalog)

### II. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Hanna, S. M. (2007). *The practice of family therapy*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning. [PFT]

Goldenberg, I., & Goldenberg, H. (2008). *Family therapy: An overview*. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Books/Cole-Thomson Learning. [GG]

Patterson, J., Williams, L., Grauf-Grounds, C., & Chamow, L. (2009). *Essential skills in family therapy*. New York: Guilford Publications. ISBN: 9781606233054 [ES]

Worden, M. (2003). *Family therapy basics*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Books/Cole Thomson Learning. ISBN: 9780534519711 [FTB]

(Note bracketed [ ] text abbreviated in the reading schedule for the class semester)

### III. SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTBOOK(S)

Balswick, J. O., & Balswick, J. K. (2007) *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Evans, J. & Evans, K. (2007). *Marriage on the rock*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Kostenberger, A. J. (2004). *God, marriage, and family: Rebuilding the biblical foundation*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books.

Napier, A., & Whitaker, A. (1978). *The family crucible: The intense experience of family therapy*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Papp, P. (1983). *The process of change*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Worthington, E. (2005). *Hope focused marriage counseling: A guide to brief therapy*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

Worthington, E. (1993). *Marriage counseling: A Christian approach to counseling couples* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

Yarhouse, M. A. & Sells, J. N., (2008). *Family therapy: A comprehensive Christian appraisal*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

#### **IV. Disclaimer Statement**

The above texts provide information consistent with that required by state licensing boards in the class subject area. Liberty University does not necessarily endorse specific religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these texts.

#### **V. Measurable Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- a. Apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards of best practices established by the AACC, AAMFT, & IAMFC in marriage, couple, and family counseling.
- b. Identify and apply models or techniques appropriate to couples' or families' presenting problems.
- c. Demonstrate the ability to recognize his or her own limitations as a marriage, couple, and family counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate.
- d. Implement treatment plans and intervention strategies within systems theory.
- e. Conceptualize issues in marriage, couple, and family counseling using system theory.
- f. Demonstrate the ability to modify counseling systems, theories, techniques, and interventions to make them culturally appropriate for diverse couples and families.

- g. Create and provide appropriate referrals for community resources for families and couples.
- h. Utilize systems assessment models and procedures along with genogram building and analysis skills to evaluate family functioning.
- i. Apply relevant research findings to inform the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling.
- j. Critique and synthesize research data to increase the effectiveness of marriage, couple, and family counseling interventions.
- k. Integrate biblical principles and secular theories in a responsible, eclectic manner,

**VI. Course Requirements and Assignments** All writing assignments will use the latest edition APA publication criteria unless otherwise instructed.

- a. **Class Participation:** *Class attendance is mandatory.* Due to the amount of information that will be discussed and analyzed, it is imperative that you attend class. Some information presented in class will not be covered in the text or the additional reading assignments. During the course of the intensive, if problems that arise require you to be absent, please inform me and I will work with you to the extent that grace allows. Failure to attend class or participate may result in the student's inability to integrate textbook readings and class discussions, as well as potentially hinder successful completion of a state licensure examination. Failure to attend class will also lower the final grade awarded.
- b. **Class Discussion and Demonstrations (20% of the class grade):** *Class discussion is also mandatory.* During our classes we will be discussing topics relevant to the course. Not participating in these discussions will adversely affect your grade.

Come to class with an open mind and be willing to take some risks. If you don't normally participate in class, consider making a contract with yourself for participating actively and verbally in each class session. I recommend that you develop questions and thought statements when initially evaluating the various cases and textbook chapters. Bring these to class to help you engage the materials.

**Demonstrations:** Students will be formed into groups for the sake of therapy demonstrations. There will be two or three groups available, depending on class size. One group will act as the family for the demonstrations. They will be given general family make-up and dynamics in the form of a case study, and instructions for playing the role of the therapy family. Another group will be charged with conducting the therapy. Introductory comments should briefly outline their approach and how it is conducted. All group participants will be

involved in the therapy process, and will be changed (round-robin) at the professor's discretion, while the therapy process is ongoing.

A total of six approaches will be analyzed and synthesized primarily by the experiential method. Note related dates on the Class Schedule. All group members are expected to be present for their participation in either the therapy group or the family group. If class size allows, some members will be charged with the role of "panel of experts" to help give guidance to the therapy process. Each role-play demonstration is meant to display concepts, principles, attitudes, reactions, techniques, interventions, etc., that a therapist would use or encounter in conjunction with the specific form of therapy being demonstrated. (Related to learning outcome A, B, D, E & F)

Texts (in addition to class materials), videos, or interviews with professional therapists are approved ways for group members to obtain additional information for enhancing a given demonstration. All demonstrations will be operated as though they are an actual family therapy session (about an hour in length). (Related to the learning outcomes E, J & K).

- c. **Reading Assignments:** It is essential that students read the books assigned. Although issues will be discussed and lectures will cover many topics, the books will address areas which will not be covered. Therefore, students will be required to respond to questions from the professor on topics and readings assigned during the semester.

Keep up with the readings and come to class prepared to ask questions, raise issues, or otherwise discuss related topics found therein. If you do not keep up with the readings, they will bury you. Organize your thoughts and questions before coming to class so that your learning experience will be enhanced. (Related to the learning outcomes B, C, E, F & H).

- d. **ASSIGNMENT - Genogram Interview/Demonstration (20% of the class grade):**

Each student will generate and implement a couple and/or family interview for the specific purpose of building a therapeutic genogram. Students will either role-play the couple or family as another student conducts the interview counseling session. Marriage and family related issues such as ethnicity, cultural variances, SES, and various diverse people groups will be examined.

After the interview each student will construct a treatment strategy to address presenting problems within the context of system theory. **Due???** (Related to learning outcomes A, B, E, F, G, H & K)

- e. **ASSIGNMENT – Personal Therapy Paper (20% of the class grade):** Your Personal Therapy Paper is intended to be a full narrative description of your own variety of marriage and family therapy. If the professor were to watch the student

actually conducting sessions of marriage and family therapy, while reading the paper, the two contexts should coincide. To accomplish this task, students must follow the outline below.

1. Brief theoretical overview (no more than 2 pages)
2. Pragmatic overview of initial session(s) (What would you actually do during the first session or two, and why?)
3. Pragmatic overview of middle session(s)
4. Pragmatic overview of final session(s)
5. What principles or outcomes “drive” your therapy, and why?
6. Brief analysis of ways in which your own family of origin has influenced your above perspectives.
7. Integration of faith. (How might faith or spirituality play a role in the case?)
8. What aspects of marriage and family therapy do you find enjoyable; which aspects worry you – and why?
9. How are you currently critically evaluating your understanding and skill level for conducting marriage and family therapy?

This therapy paper must follow APA writing format, with the exception that they may use the first person. Be very careful that the paper is not plagiarized. When citing presuppositions or techniques, be sure to cite the appropriate sources for your work. The body of the paper – not including title/cover page, abstract page or reference page(s) – should total 18 to 20 pages. No extra credit will be given for having more than 20 sources!! The reference materials should include a minimum of eight (8) professional references in addition to any class text information.

Additional instructions will be posted on Blackboard (“Bb”). All written assignments will be submitted through the Bb assignment manager. **Due???** (Related to learning outcomes A, B, C, D, H, I, J & K).

- f. **ASSIGNMENT – Journal Article Critique Papers (20% of the class grade (2x10%)):** The critique papers are to be “literature review” type papers. Students will follow the outline below with their narrative.

1. Briefly summarize the chosen article (professional marriage and family journals)
2. Analyze the three most significant points the author(s) are making
3. Synthesize the above points to marriage, couples, or family therapy
4. How do you see yourself using any of the significant points (in II above)
5. What concepts, ideas seemed to be missing in the article (what was left out)? (Compare/contrast to any class text material)
6. Generate your own rating for the article and explain your rationale
7. Attach the actual article to the critique paper as an appendix in a pdf or Word document form

The Journal Article Critique Papers are also meant to be compact in presentation – four to five pages in length. Remember that page length refers to the body of the paper and not the title page, abstract page, or reference page. Students should keep in mind that the professor is looking for papers that exude a “professional” tone, quality, and appearance! Additional instructions will be posted on Blackboard (“Bb”). All written assignments will be submitted through the Bb assignment manager. **Due???** (Related to learning outcomes E, F, I & J).

- g. **ASSIGNMENT – Journal Article Summary Report (20% of the class grade (2x10%)):** During the class periods of which the critique papers are due, each student will provide a brief (a few minutes) oral summary of their article. Afterwards each student will **present two primary findings** from the journal article that will enhance learning for the entire class. This assignment is especially important because of the need to examine, critique, and analyze current research information concerning marriage and family therapy. The two findings should be unique and distinguished from our text materials.

This will cause/force you to read through articles looking for research findings that will be of interest to the class and thus enhance everyone’s learning. Simply any article from a marriage and family therapy journal will not suffice.

When a student finds an article that looks like one that would benefit the class, e-mail to the professor the article title, author(s), and journal title. If the professor has already accepted your article submission as one another student will report on, the professor will send an e-mail to the submitting student indicating that another article is needed, thus avoiding article repetition. Early research is necessary so that students are not caught without an article for the class report. (Related to learning outcomes E, F, I & J).

## VII. Weight

| Assignment                     | Percent of Grade | Due                             |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Class Discussion/Demonstration | 20               | Each class session              |
| In Class Genogram Interview    | 20               | During class/see class schedule |
| Two Journal Article Critiques  | 20 (2x10)        | See class schedule              |
| Summary and Findings Reports   | 20 (2x10)        | See class schedule              |
| Personal Therapy Paper         | 20               | See class schedule              |

## Scale

| Letter Grade | Points/Percent |
|--------------|----------------|
| A            | 94 – 100       |
| B            | 86 – 93        |
| C            | 75 – 85        |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| D | 68 – 74 |
| F | 0 – 67  |

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### VIII. Procedures and Special Focus Issues

#### a. Late Policy

The “Class Discussion/Demonstration” and “Summary and Findings Reports” assignments will be due at the beginning of the class date assigned - no late submissions will be accepted. While the other papers have due dates, late submissions will be accepted, but will lose 10 points per day (including weekends). No paper will be accepted after 5 days past the due date.

#### b. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact the Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) in DH 2016 or at [dlpodas@liberty.edu](mailto:dlpodas@liberty.edu) to make arrangements for academic accommodations. For all disability testing accommodation requests (i.e. quieter environment, extended time, oral testing, etc.) the Tutoring/Testing Center in TE 127 is the officially designated place for all tests administered outside of the regular classroom.

#### c. Dual Relationship & Limits of Confidentiality

The faculty is responsible to interact with counseling students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty are responsible to avoid dual relationships with students such as entering a student-counselor or student-pastor relationship. Thus, the faculty do not provide personal counseling addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student is in need of personal or professional counseling then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor in their community.

In the event of a student’s disclosure, either verbally, or in writing, of either threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator or supervisor, will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the appropriate program chair or distance learning dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student’s permanent record.

#### d. Correspondence

Students are expected to communicate in a professional manner at all times whenever emailing classmates, professors, or any employee of Liberty University.

Because there is no accompanying tone of voice, facial expressions or body language, email communication is more easily misinterpreted than face-to-face. Your emails should be courteous and well thought out to avoid knee-jerk responses that will be interpreted as “flaming” or sarcasm. Communicate complaints directly to the individual involved. Do not send a blanket email to everyone in the class or to administrative personnel until you have communicated your concerns directly to the person involved and allowed them time to respond. Do not post a message to the class on Blackboard that is more appropriate for an individual. Avoid offensive language of any kind.

e. Communication

1. Electronic Communication: All electronic communication must be done via Liberty Email. I will communicate via your Liberty account and you are expected to communicate via my Liberty account, [vdhinson@liberty.edu](mailto:vdhinson@liberty.edu).
2. Face to Face Communication: All individual communication will be scheduled during my posted office hours in my office in the Centre for Counseling and Family Studies Department.
3. Phone Conferences: I will make myself readily available via email and face to face contact. Phone conferences will be limited to emergencies only and will be subject to time constraints.

## IX. Policies

- A. Because of the nature of this class, attendance is required. Please see the professor for any anticipated absences, e.g. death in family, emergency medical situation, etc.
- B. No extra credit work will be available.
- C. Students should keep copies of their papers/assignments on their computers in case the electronic versions somehow “disappear”.
- D. Students should check their Liberty University email accounts at least once a day to receive information about the class, etc. Being aware of changes, etc. is your responsibility.
- E. Students are expected to check the Bb site for this class for any announcements, additional materials, etc. This is your responsibility.
- F. Students are expected to abide by the policies concerning academic honesty as stated in The Liberty Way. If you plagiarize, you will receive a zero for the assignment (at the least) and **possibly** a FD (failure due to dishonesty) as a final grade for the course. See the following link for particulars:  
<http://www.liberty.edu/StudentAffairs/index.cfm?PID=1324>.

- G. Papers and Assignments - Papers are expected to be presented in a systematic and logical fashion. Students may be asked to submit their papers to the Graduate Writing Center. The Graduate Writing Center Website is located at [www.liberty.edu/graduatewritingcenter](http://www.liberty.edu/graduatewritingcenter) and is also available via email at [graduatewriting@liberty.edu](mailto:graduatewriting@liberty.edu). APA format is required on all written work. Papers that do not follow the latest edition APA guidelines will not be accepted. In graduate school, students must have the ability to write on a level that not only displays a general understanding of information, but also an ability to analyze, synthesize, and articulate complex ideas. All assignments will be graded using a graduate school standard. Because of the importance of written communication skills, the professor reserves the right to give a failing grade to a paper based solely upon the quality of the writing.
- H. All papers and assignments will be submitted electronically on Bb unless otherwise stated. Please note that the University recommends NOT accessing Bb using Microsoft Internet Explorer. They recommend using Mozilla Firefox. This can be downloaded free at:  
<http://www.mozilla.com/firefox/?Referrer=AdWords&Campaign=Mozilla%20Firefox>
- I. Please turn your cell phones off while in class.
- J. Laptops are permitted in the classroom for the purpose of taking notes. They should not be used for surfing the web or emailing others.

**X. Suggestions for getting the most from this course**

1. Decide at the beginning if you are willing to devote the time and energy needed to do a quality job for this important course in your program.
2. Look through all the required reading material before the course begins to get a general idea of what the course involves. Read this syllabus carefully to be sure that you understand what is expected of you in this course.
3. Keep up with the readings and come to class prepared to ask questions, raise issues, or otherwise discuss related topics found therein. If you do not keep up on the readings, they will bury you.
4. After each class session, organize your notes for the topic of the day.
5. Come to class with an open mind and be willing to take some risks. If you don't normally participate much in class, think about making a contract with yourself for participating actively and verbally in each session. Remember that ??% of your grade for this class is based upon student engagement in discussions.

6. If you are experiencing difficulty in the course, do not wait until the end of the course to see me to discuss it.