MALC 647 Family Mediation

Course Description:

This course explores family mediation from the perspective of the psychology of marriage and family, systems theory, parenting, family dynamics, divorce and its effects on children and blended families - all set in our culturally diverse environment.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to

1. Describe the process, principles, techniques, and significance of mediation and how they apply to family disputes.

2. Explain how sociological variables such as cultural background, family style, social structure, conflict patterns, power, and social interaction are relevant to families and family disputes.

4. Discuss the sociological and psychological factors that fuel family pathologies and that contribute to dissolution of marriage.

5. Conduct a family mediation involving family conflict, marital problem, family conflict, or dissolution of marriage agreement.

Note: This is not a course in therapeutic approaches or counseling. The course focuses on helping practitioners mediate family problems through problem solving and conflict management processes.

Texts:


Due first day of class:

Assignment I Understanding Families through an analysis of *Ties That Stress*

Answer the following questions based on the concepts provided in *Ties That Stress*. NOTE: This paper is designed to have you process the ideas in the book, however you may have feelings or evaluations of the book. If you assert your judgments or evaluations, support them with evidence and reasoning. An “A” paper will demonstrate familiarity with content discussed in the book, display excellent writing skills, and use content from the book to support judgments.

1. How have families changed over the past half century, creating a climate of greater disharmony in families? Identify prominent themes.
2. What are the particular challenges for children growing up in today’s families?
3. What are the particular challenges for parents in parenting children?
4. What are the things helping professionals can do to help families function more effectively?

Assignment II with four parts due August 22 (Each part counts 25% of the evaluation)

1. **Application**: Apply the ideas in your two textbooks to you, your family (family of origin and/or family of choice), or to others’ families. These “Applications” are intended to go beyond mere recall or understanding of the book to apply them to actual situations, people, and/or relationships. If you were conducting a mediation of the marriage or family you describe, what would the mediation process look like. This first section will be 3-5 pages in length.

2. **Speaker contributions**: Provide 3 pages that explore the concepts provide by the speakers that you heard in class. Discuss the principles they introduced and your reaction to them. Relate their work and their principles to your two textbooks

3. **Analysis of your skill**: In class you will have been given the opportunity to co-mediate at least one family dispute. Provide a 3-page discussion about how you believe you did. Use concepts from the two textbooks as well as class presentations and feedback from classmates to support your judgments.

4. **Journal articles**: You will be given a set of journal articles. Synthesize insights from the articles in a way that helps us understand more about the challenges of marriage and family mediation. For example, what are the underlying factors that make marriage or family mediation difficult? What are mediator behaviors that promote trust, cooperation, and sharing of important material that contributes to resolution of differences? How do mediators manage the difficult dynamics such as emotion in a mediation session? What are the factors that contribute to successful marriage or family mediation? How do we decide what “success” means in a marriage or family mediation? An “A” synthesis will demonstrate high level critical thinking about the content of the articles, use citations or quotes to display familiarity with the articles, and be written well.
Please put all four sections of Assignment 2 in a single paper, rather than 4 separate papers. The paper will be typewritten, double spaced, use correct APA citations, contain some direct quotes – but don’t overdue it (use quotation marks and page references), and demonstrate critical thinking about the subject matter. It is okay to go over the page length recommendations. They are only meant to give you an idea about quantity of discussion.

**Grading Scale**

93-100 A   90-92 A-   87-89 B+   83-86 B   80-82 B-   77-79 C+   73-76 C   70-72 C-

**Attendance and Classroom Participation**: Because the course format is a 4 ½ day intensive and the emphasis on role-playing simulations, attendance is of critical importance. Classroom instruction and role-play exercises are cumulative; therefore, students who miss class time will be at a disadvantage with the materials. Accordingly, absences will be excused only in emergency situations and students are expected to provide the Instructor with the most advance notice possible.
Class Sessions

Sunday evening 5-6 pm Dinner 6-8 pm Class
Family systems
Genograms

Day 1 8:30am - 4:30pm
Changes in family in the nuclear age
Basic concepts of family systems and dynamics
Family rules, myths, roles and patterns of communication
Types of marriages and families
Relationship needs in healthy families
Indications of family disintegration
   Mediating a family dispute I

Day 2 8:30am – 4:30pm
Dysfunctional family processes
Conditions that create divorce
Viewing a filmed family mediation
10:45-12:00 Family mediation Larry King, J.D.
Effects of divorce on children
Mediating a family dispute II

Day 3 8:30am -4:30pm
Who chooses to mediate?
Factors associated with positive outcomes and satisfaction
Mediation processes for family disputes
Viewing a filmed family mediation
Parenting agreements
Discussion of issues in Ties that Stress such as children, adolescents, parenting
1:00 pm “How theory applies to practice” Jackie Moorhead, Ph.D.
Mediating a family dispute III
Mediating a family dispute IV

Day 4 8:30am – 4:30 pm
11:00 am Adolescent and marriage issues: Franklin Cameron, PsyD.
Writing agreements
Discussion of insights from the three practitioners (preparation for homework)
Viewing a filmed family mediation
   Mediating a family dispute V
   Mediating a family dispute VI

Day 5 8:30am – 12:00 Class followed by Lunch
University Policies
University Student Code of Conduct.
SPS Graduate Programs’ students and faculty share responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. This includes using information technology responsibly in online and other courses. In order for faculty members to provide and students to receive effective instruction in classrooms, laboratories, online courses, and other learning areas, the Graduate Programs and Faculty expect students to conduct themselves in an orderly and cooperative manner and not engage in disruptive behavior, disorderly conduct or intentionally interfere in the freedom of expression of others.

“Disruptive Behavior” or “Disorderly Conduct” as applied to the academic setting, means behavior that a reasonable faculty member or student would view as intentionally or recklessly interfering with normal academic functions, University events or University sponsored activities. Examples include, but are not limited to: persistently speaking or commenting without being recognized or interrupting other speakers; behavior that distracts the class from the subject matter or discussion; or in extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior or personal insults; refusal to comply with faculty direction including refusal to work in a group, using a cell phone or pager during a classroom session; or behavior that has a negative impact in any learning environment. Disruptive behavior also includes any other behavior covered by the Regis

Students who fail to adhere to acceptable behavioral standards will be counseled by the classroom faculty. Should the issue not be resolved, they will then be referred to the Program Chair and then, should it be necessary, to the Dean and may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion from the program.

Plagiarism Policy
Plagiarism is defined as presenting as one’s own, the ideas, words or product of another. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, this includes copying and pasting from online media or from any web-site. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements.

An instructor may, at their discretion, utilize the services of Turnitin.com to evaluate the student work product for plagiarism. Alternatively, an instructor may require students to submit the work product directly to Turnitin.com for evaluation prior to submission to the instructor. For more information on Turnitin.com, please go to www.turnitin.com.

Equal Access & Disability Services
Regis University, in compliance with federal guidelines, is committed to equal educational opportunity by assuring otherwise qualified students with disabilities equal access to Regis University programs and activities that are provided to students without disabilities. An otherwise qualified person with a disability is a student who meets the academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in Regis University’s educational programs and activities.
Eligibility
To ensure the provision of reasonable and appropriate services at Regis University, students with disabilities must identify themselves in a timely manner to the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Room 118B, Life Directions Center, 303-458-4941, disability@regis.edu, in order to receive the requested accommodation(s). Current and comprehensive documentation must be on file with ODS prior to approval of the accommodation.

Students may disclose their disabilities and request accommodations at any time during their academic career. However, it is strongly encouraged that students self-disclose their disabilities at the beginning of their academic experience because accommodations are not retroactive.

Accelerated courses that are offered in eight week terms are fast-paced and reading intensive. Incomplete grades are seldom granted and are not considered appropriate accommodations. All courses are expected to be completed during the term in which they occur.

Diversity
At Regis University, diversity is at the core of our faith-inspired commitment to build an inclusive community that values the dignity and contributions of all of our members. Our differences thrive in a learning environment characterized by the Jesuit traditions of mutual respect and the pursuit of justice, an environment in which our human differences, whether physical or philosophical, are respected.

Writing Assistance – Smarthinking
The School for Professional Studies will provide 10 hours of FREE tutoring or writing assistance for one year for all SPS students through ™SMARTTHINKING. The tutoring year begins on March 8 of the current year. To register for ™SMARTTHINKING, access INsite at https://insite.regis.edu, login using your RegisNet Username and Password. Select ™SMARTTHINKING.

RegisNet
A RegisNET Account allows students to use and access Regis University web-based resources. RegisNET provides access to SHAREPOINT, ™SMARTTHINKING, free email, course modules and syllabi, Dayton Memorial Library Databases, computer labs, presentation equipment, etc. To register for a RegisNET account, go to INsite (http://insite.regis.edu/). Select “RegisNET Account.” You will be required to post either your social security number or student ID.

Dayton Memorial Library
The Dayton Memorial Library can be accessed http://www.regis.edu/library.htm website The Jesuit University system provides 24 hour research support. The reference desk can be accessed by the link on the site or at 303-458-4031, 1-800-388-2366 Ext. 4031.