Course Description: This course focuses on the theoretical foundations of systems theories used in family therapy. Students will examine different theoretical approaches as each pertains to marriage and family therapy. Prerequisites: MMFT 615.

Course Outcomes:
At the completion of this course, the student will:
1. Relate the history and development of systems theory.
2. Understand and articulate the major theoretical models used in marriage and family therapy.
3. Examine the impact of culture, gender, social change and other factors on our understanding of the family.
4. Compare and contrast various family system approaches with each other.

Required Texts


Case Studies in Marriage and Family therapy (the instructor should have these available):


Optional Readings:


Suggested Learning Activities:

1. **In-class Activities.** Students will be expected to actively participate in all in-class activities and role plays. (15% of grade)

2. **In-class Quizzes.** Students will complete two quizzes (on weeks 5 and 8) that will cover class discussion and reading material covered to that point in the class. (10% of grade total; each is worth 5% of grade)

3. **Write a 7 to 10 page paper based on a real family.** You may use any family you know well, but do not fabricate one. Choose a school of family therapy as a basis for analyzing the family structure, patterns, roles, problems and other relevant concerns. Propose a treatment plan and interventions consistent with the chosen theory that a counselor would use in working with the family. (25% of grade for paper; 5% of grade for presentation) **Due at Session 5**

4. **Write a 10 to 15 page paper** using one of the following perspectives:
   a. Compare and contrast two different theoretical approaches to family therapy addressing similarities and differences between the approaches in terms of key concepts, therapy goals, therapist role and function, and specific techniques/intervention strategies.
   b. Discuss your systems theory preference (e.g. strategic, structural, experiential) and provide a rationale for choosing this approach in your clinical work. Include a discussion of the populations you would work with and the strengths and weaknesses of this theoretical approach. (35% of grade for paper; 5% of grade for presentation) **Due at Session 7.**

*A supplemental Faculty syllabus will be distributed on the first night of class; the supplemental syllabus will address specific grading, attendance, and assignment criteria as well as provide additional pertinent course information.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Class Content</th>
<th>Material Due</th>
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</table>
| Session 1 |              | Course overview  
Introductions  
Discuss class procedures  
Review textbooks  
Review syllabus  
**Topic:** The Foundations of Family Therapy | • In-class Activities  
• Class Discussion:  
goals of family therapy, pitfalls of family therapy, joys of family therapy. |
| Session 2 |              | **Topics:** The Evolution of Family Therapy  
**Read:** Chapters 1 & 2 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 1-3 of Family Crucible,  
Chapter 1 of Ties that Bind.  
**Activity:** Small groups – discuss / develop questions for the initial phone inquiry and for an intake form. | • Reading summaries  
• In-class Activities |
| Session 3 |              | **Topics:** Early Models and Basic Concepts  
**Read:** Chapters 3 & 4 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 4-6 of Family Crucible  
Chapter 2 of Ties that Bind  
**Activity:** Small groups - answer questions in Chapter 1 of “Family Ties that Bind.” | • Reading summaries  
• In-class Activities |
| Session 4 |              | **Topics:** The Classic Schools of Family Therapy  
**Read:** Chapters 5-7 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 7-9 of Family Crucible,  
Chapter 3 of Ties that Bind.  
**Activity:** Small groups – chapter questions and other aspects of therapy. | • Reading summaries  
• In-class Activities |
| Session 5 |              | **Topics:** Structural and Cognitive Therapy  
**Read:** Chapters 8 & 9 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 10-12 of Family Crucible,  
Chapter 4 of Ties that Bind.  
**Activity:** Multiple choice test / quiz | • Reading summaries  
• In-class quiz # 1  
• **Short paper Due**  
• **presentation** |
| Session 6 |              | **Topics:** Entering the 21st Century  
**Read:** Chapters 10 & 11 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 13-15 of Family Crucible,  
Chapter 5 of Ties that Bind  
**Activity:** Small groups | Class Discussion:  
reading summaries  
In-class activities |
| Session 7 |              | **Topics:** Brief Therapy and Narrative Therapy  
**Read:** Chapters 12 & 13 of Family Therapy,  
Chapters 16-18 of Family Crucible,  
Chapter 6 of Ties that Bind  
**Activity:** Role play of a family therapy situation using a few selected techniques such as the intake form, reframing or circular questioning. | Class Discussion:  
reading summaries  
In-class Activities  
**Long paper Due – brief presentation of paper** |
| Session 8 |              | **Topics:** Research in Family Therapy  
**Read:** Finish reading all three textbooks.  
**Activity:** Course review; Quiz  
Family therapy session role play  
Discuss the emotional aspects of counter-transference in family therapy. | • reading summaries  
• Course Review  
• In-class quiz # 2  
• In-class Activities |