

## **FCHD 6320: Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy**

Spring 2017 – Syllabus

Wednesdays @ 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Family Life Center Conference Room

**Professor:** Ryan B. Seedall, Ph.D.  
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### **Utah State University Marriage and Family Therapy Program Educational Outcomes:**

#### Program outcomes

The program will:

1. Graduate culturally competent therapists to work in the mental health field (PO 1).
2. Prepare students for successful completion of the MFT national exam and MFT licensure (PO 2).
3. Adhere to the advertised student graduation timeframe (PO 3).

#### Student Learning Outcomes

Each student will:

1. Demonstrate competence in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and client management of individuals, couples, and families (SLO 1).
2. Understand and apply ethical principles and decision making to clinical practice (SLO 2).
3. Demonstrate cultural competence and sensitivity to diversity of clients, colleagues, faculty, supervisors, and the public (SLO 3).
4. Interpret and integrate scholarly work into her or his clinical work (SLO 4).

#### **Course Purpose:**

The primary goal of this course is for you to develop a more comprehensive understanding of MFT theoretical models, including their core principles, goals, and interventions. In this course, we will primarily focus on student learning outcome #1 (***Demonstrate competence in the assessment, diagnosis, [and] treatment...of individuals, couples, and families***), while also giving some attention to each of the other learning outcomes.

#### **Core Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Provide a historical overview of theory development in MFT, including the foundational models out of which many of our current models developed.

- Highlight the core principles, goals, and interventions of each MFT model addressed in this course.
- Explain the strengths of each theory, as well as potential limitations (especially in terms of the amount of published research on that model).
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate models conceptually and in terms of practical application.

### **IDEA Objectives:**

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) (#1)
- Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories (#2)
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view (#11)

### **Required Texts:**

- Assigned articles and book chapters
- You will also choose two books from the following list and read them during the semester. These books must be approved by me.

Hargrave, T. D., & Pfitzer, F. (2011). *Restoration therapy: Understanding and guiding healing in marriage and family therapy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Johnson, S. M. (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Kerr, M. E., & Bowen, M. (1988). *Family evaluation*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Minuchin, S., Reiter, M. D., & Borda, C. (2013). *The craft of family therapy: Challenging certainties*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Monk, G., Winslade, J., Crocket, K., & Epston, D. (1996). *Narrative therapy in practice: The archaeology of hope*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Napier, A. Y., & Whitaker, C. (1988). *The family crucible: The intense experience of family therapy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Satir, V., Gomori, M., & Gerber, J. (1991). *The Satir model: Family therapy and beyond*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.

Schwartz, R. C. (1997). *Internal family systems therapy*. New York: Guilford Press.

### **Course Assignments**

- 1. Reading and Attendance (50 points):** Reading and attendance in the class are crucial to your learning and also to creating a learning community where you teach each other. As a result, I expect that you do the reading and participate in class. Most likely I will have you rate your performance in this area at the end of the semester. You get one absence based on sickness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstance. Missing class because of scheduling conflicts or other non-extenuating circumstances is typically not acceptable. If you know of something that may conflict, it is your responsibility to talk to me at least one month prior to the conflict. Each additional absence will mean a one-step reduction in grade (e.g. A to A-). In addition, being late more than three times to class also means a one-step grade reduction.
- 2. Model Presentation and Handout (100 points; 50 points each):** During the semester, you will be a part of two presentations (75-90 minutes each) on a theoretical model of your choice (1-2 per group). The presentation should be informational (e.g., PowerPoint), provide examples (e.g., video clips), and also be experiential (e.g., role plays). The presentation must also include a handout that includes information about principles of change and how it occurs, goals of therapy, the

interventions involved, and the role of the therapist. It is crucial that this presentation demonstrate that you have extended your knowledge *beyond the readings* for class.

3. **MFT Practice Exam and Study Guide** (75 points): During the middle part of the semester, you will have the opportunity during one class period to take an MFT practice exam (50 points). In addition to discussing the experience, we will divide up the questions amongst all students, and you will be responsible for finding information that will help answer that particular question. That means each student will be responsible for about 20 questions. We will then combine everyone's responses into a study guide (25 points) that you can use.
4. **Theory of Therapy and Change** (100 points; 25 points each): This course will focus on helping you further develop four aspects of your theory of therapy and change paper. The sections are (a) how problems arise in people's lives; (b) change and how it occurs, (c) goals and interventions of therapy, and (d) the role of the therapist. Each of these sections should be approximately 1-2 pages long. I will have you submit rough drafts in the middle of the semester. These will not be graded, but you will be given feedback that will help you get a higher grade on the final paper. The final paper consists of each of these parts and will be due at the end of the semester.
5. **Model-Based Case Analysis** (75 points): For this project, you will write an intensive analysis of a case that I will give you. It will outline a variety of relational dynamics, and you will choose two models to conceptualize the case. You will spend two pages analyzing the case study from your first model. Then you will spend two more pages analyzing it from your second model. You will then write a one-page comparison of the two models, identifying specific similarities and differences. Finally, you will write a one-page explanation of how you could integrate these two models in specifically treating this couple/family.

<b><u>Grading:</u></b>	<b><u>Points</u></b>
Reading & Participation	50
Theory of Therapy and Change	100
Model Presentation and Handouts	100
Model-Based Case Analysis	75
MFT Practice Exam and Study Guide	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>

The final grade will be based on your level of competency in meeting objectives of the course. Your in-class work and completed assignments will be used in assessing your competency.

Below is a general description of each grade. However, each assignment will include a set of criteria that will be used to grade your work. No extra credit work is provided in this class.

- A = Exceptional work in all areas.
- B = Competent work in all areas.
- C = Generally competent work in most areas, but isolated indications of inconsistent or marginal work in some areas.
- D = Indication of inconsistent or marginal work, with the possibility of improvement through continued supervision.
- F = Indication of habitually inconsistent or marginal work.

The following scale will be used at the end of the semester to determine the final grade.

A.....	93% or higher	C.....	73% or higher
A-.....	90% or higher	C-.....	70% or higher
B+.....	87% or higher	D+.....	67% or higher
B.....	83% or higher	D.....	63% or higher
B-.....	80% or higher	D.....	60% or higher
C+.....	77% or higher	F.....	below 60%

### **Course Policies:**

1. **Late work:** For all assignments, 5% will be deducted for every calendar day late. After 10 days late, the maximum you can receive is 50%, and you will need to turn in all late assignments by the *last day of class* for credit.
2. **APA Format:** All papers must be written in APA format, including references. Failure to use APA formatting will result in a reduction in your grade for that assignment. You will also be graded on spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and other aspects of writing.
3. **Diversity Statement:** Diversity and issues of social inequality are core values of the Utah State University marriage and family therapy program. We are committed to helping provide a pluralistic campus community through Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and non-discrimination on the basis of “race, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, health status, religion, national origin, sexual origin, gender identity or relationship status” (AAMFT Code of Ethics, 2012). We strive not only to embody these values of mutual respect and non-discrimination in the administration of the MFT program, but we also believe that it is a crucial part of our training to increase awareness and sensitivity in our students. This will require self-reflection regarding any potential “blind spots” that may be indicative of unexplored bias or prejudice. Increased sensitivity to issues of diversity will also likely involve some experiences that will stretch and challenge you. Our goal is to work with you to help you identify areas of growth related to diversity and to help you along in that process. For additional information regarding diversity, you are encouraged to contact the USU Access and Diversity Center (435-797-1728) and the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity office (435-797-1266).
4. **Physical Impairments:** It is the policy of the Utah State University to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional, or medical impairments may be eligible for accommodations to aid the learning process. Veterans may also be eligible for services. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print, or digital) are available with advance notice. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC; [www.usu.edu/drc](http://www.usu.edu/drc)) in Room 101 of the University Inn (voice: 435-797-2444; TTY: 435-797-0740). There is also a toll free number (1-800-259-2966).

5. **Honor Code Policy:** As stated in the student code, “Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to re-enforce the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.” You have also all signed the Honor Pledge, which states, “I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity.”
6. **Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a report to the University. It may also result in additional consequences that will occur on a case-by-case basis. Academic Dishonesty is defined in the University’s Student Code include, but are not limited to the following:

**Cheating:**

- (1) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually”;
- (2) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
- (3) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
- (4) acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
- (5) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
- (6) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or
- (7) engaging in any form of research fraud.

**Falsification:**

- (1) altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

**Plagiarism:**

- (1) representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

Full text of the Student Code available at available at available at  
<http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/pdf/StudentCode.pdf>:

1. **Communications via Email:** Email is an official form of communication at USU. Any communication to you about this course will be to the email address you have listed in ACCESS as your preferred address. You are responsible for any information conveyed to you at that email address. **It is your responsibility to check your email account regularly.** To make sure that the university is using the email account you prefer, do the following:
  - a. Log in using you’re A number and password
  - b. At the USU website, click on the link “MyUSU” at the top right of the page
  - c. Click on “Launchpad” (on the left navigation)

- d. Click on “Banner”
  - e. Under “Banner” click on the link “View/Edit Personal Information”
  - f. Click on “Personal Information”
  - g. Click on “View/Update Preferred E-mail Address”
  - h. Follow the short instructions to update your preferred email address.
2. **Physical Impairments:** Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional, or medical impairments may be eligible for accommodations to aid the learning process. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC; [www.usu.edu/drc](http://www.usu.edu/drc)) in Room 101 of the University Inn (voice: 435-797-2444; TTY: 435-797-0740). There is also a toll free number (1-800-259-2966). Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. In cooperation with the DRC, reasonable accommodation will be provided for qualified students with disabilities. **Please meet with me during the first week of class to make arrangements.** Alternative format print materials (large print, audio, CD, or braille) will be available through the DRC.
3. **Grievance Process:** Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: See the USU Catalog at the following link:  
<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=1080&hl=%22grievance%22&returnto=search>. Please note that I am usually the first step for handling the grievance. I would hope you would discuss any issues of fairness with me directly.

## FHCD 6320: Weekly Schedule of Content and Readings

*Note: This is the proposed schedule of classes and topics. It is subject to change.*

### COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	Discussion Topics	Readings	Due
Wednesday January 11	Introduction to the Course Systems Theory	Syllabus	
Wednesday January 18	Bateson-Influenced Models	Ch. 4: Strategic & Systemic	
Wednesday January 25	Structural Family Therapy (Evan)	TBD	How Problems Arise
Wednesday February 1	Bowen Family Systems (Alex)	TBD	
Wednesday February 8	Contextual Family Therapy (Doug & Juliet)	TBD	How Change Occurs
Wednesday February 15	Symbolic Experiential Therapy (Ashley & Alex)	TBD	Book #1
Wednesday February 22	Satir Experiential Therapy (Evan & Sarah)	TBD	Goals & Interventions
Wednesday March 1	Emotionally Focused Therapy (Kaity & Doug)	TBD	
Wednesday March 8	<b>No Class – Spring Break</b>		
Wednesday March 15	Internal Family Systems (Juliet & Ashley)	TBD	Therapist Role
Wednesday March 22	Narrative Family Therapy (Sarah & Kaity)	TBD	Book #2
Wednesday March 29	Integrative Models	Epstein & Baucom (2002)	
Wednesday April 5	MFT Practice Exam	No readings – Just study!	ToFTC – Final (4/8)
Wednesday April 12	Common Factors	Blow et al. (2009) Davis, Lebow, & Sprenkle (2012)	
Wednesday April 19	Emotion Regulation I	Fruzzetti (2006) Coan (2011)	MFT Practice Exam Study Guide
Wednesday April 26	Emotion Regulation II	Seedall & Wampler (2013) Solomon (2010)	Case Study Analysis

## **Appendix A: Student Learning Outcomes**

Student Learning Outcomes (Faculty will choose from any and all of the appropriate Core Competencies below associated with this course)

Each student will:

### **1. Demonstrate competence in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and client management of individuals, couples, and families.**

CC 1.1.2 Understand theories and techniques of individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy

CC 4.1.1 Comprehend a variety of individual and systemic therapeutic models and their application, including evidence-based therapies and culturally sensitive approaches.

CC 4.2.1 Recognize how different techniques may impact the treatment process.

CC 4.3.1 Match treatment modalities and techniques to clients' needs, goals, and values.

### **2. Understand and apply ethical principles and decision making to clinical practice**

AAMFT Code of Ethics

### **3. Demonstrate cultural competence and sensitivity to clients, colleagues, supervisors and faculty and the public**

CC 1.2.1 Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, larger systems, social context).

### **4. Critique, interpret, and integrate scholarly work into their clinical work**

CC 6.1.1 Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice.

CC 6.3.1 Read current MFT and other professional literature.

CC 6.3.2 Use current MFT and other research to inform clinical practice.

## **Appendix B: Standard Grading Rubric**

The following rubric will be used to evaluate each of the skills you will be demonstrating as part of your assignments:

Major Skill Deficit	Emerging Skills – Minor Skill Deficit	Skill Competence – Meets Expectations	Skill Competence – Exceeds Expectations	Skill Competence – Exceptional Skills
< 60%	60% - 79%	80% - 85%	85% - 90%	90% - 100%

## **Model Presentation Handout**

*\*\*\*These are the core ideas to cover, not the suggested format\*\*\**

How does this model view people and problems?

What are the core terms used in this model to conceptualize cases (and what do they mean)?

How is change viewed in this model, and how does it occur?

What are the primary goals of therapy?

What is the role of the therapist in accomplishing those goals?

What interventions are used to accomplish the above goals and bring about change?

How does this model approach issues of diversity and social justice (i.e., power and privilege)?

What research has been done regarding the effectiveness of this model (and its interventions)?

What are the primary strengths and weaknesses of the model?

What readings do you suggest for those who want to learn more?