THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COURSE NUMBER: SOWO 842 (Section 01, Tuesdays: 2-4:50 PM)
COURSE TITLE, SEMESTER AND YEAR: FAMILIES: THEORY AND PRACTICE, FALL ‘09
INSTRUCTOR: Gary L. Bowen, Ph.D., ACSW
School of Social Work
Tate-Turner-Kuralt, Room 438
Phone: 919-962-6542 (O), 919-967-3196 (H), 919-448-4058 (M)
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OFFICE HOURS: Monday, 1-3:30 PM (By Appointment)
UNC-CH Safe Zone

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A review of explanatory and practice theories for understanding and intervening with families and couples.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By course end, students will:

1. Understand the development and role of explanatory and practice theory in family-centered social work practice.

2. Understand concepts, selected theory, and research concerning family functioning and interaction.

3. Understand family functioning and interaction in the context of race, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and culture and history.

4. Apply models of family functioning and interaction to frame and inform social interventions with couples and families.

5. Gain awareness of the field of family life education and review specific programs focused on promoting strong families and effective parenting.

6. Review major clinical and community intervention strategies for working with couples and families experiencing relationship problems or facing adversity and positive challenge.

7. Develop skills in engaging, assessing, intervening, measuring progress, and ending relationships with families that are culturally sensitive and relevant.

8. Examine family-centered social work practice in a variety of direct practice settings, including health, mental health, schools, the U.S. military, and settings particularly focused on child welfare.
9. Recognize ethical dilemmas and employ decision-making skills for ethical practice with families in agency and community based settings.

**EXPANDED DESCRIPTION:** This course includes a focus on both explanatory theories for understanding variation in couple and family interaction and practice theories for intervening to improve family member and family system functioning. Students will gain experience in identifying critical explanatory factors associated with strong and adaptive couple and family functioning—factors that function as leverage points in the design of social interventions. Students will review and present a specific couple or family-level practice intervention for promoting strong and adaptive functioning. In the context of advanced electives in couple and family therapy, this course will focus on couple and family life education and enrichment programs.

**REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS:**

**Main Text**


**Supplemental Texts**


**RELATED READINGS:**


**TEACHING METHODS:**

This course has been designed to maximize student involvement, and it will be facilitated using a transformative learning model. From this model, students work with the instructor as full partners in assuming responsibility for the success of the course. Students will prepare lectures, develop assignments, lead class discussion, and provide peer review.

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Class Attendance**
Students are expected to attend all class sessions, and classes will begin and end on time. A roll sheet will be distributed at the beginning of each class. If there is some reason that you cannot attend a class, please contact the instructor or leave a message for the instructor at the School of Social Work. Students who miss two class sessions will be penalized by one letter grade (special exceptions may apply). Students who miss three or more class sessions will receive an "F" as their final grade for the class.

**Email Accounts**
All students are required to have a valid UNC email account. A valid UNC email address has the following extension: @email.unc.edu.

**Required Reading**
To facilitate class involvement and discussion, students are expected to read all required materials prior to class.

**Class Participation**
Students are expected to contribute "meaningfully" to class discussion. During weeks 4 and 5, students will serve as discussion leaders on class readings. The professor may call upon students to respond to assigned readings/class discussion. Please let the professor know if you have particular concerns about being called upon in class. At the beginning of each class session, time will be allocated to address questions about readings and assignments.
Class Lecture
Students will have an opportunity to prepare and deliver a class lecture on an assigned topic, which should be approximately 60-90 minutes in duration (time will vary by presentation topic). Students will work together in small groups to prepare the class lecture. Topics will be assigned randomly (see assignments on last page), although students may trade topics with each other. Please submit an electronic copy (email attachment) of the PowerPoint slides (15-25 slides) to the professor at least 12 hours in advance of the presentation. Please distribute a hard copy of the PowerPoint presentation slides to all student participants on the day of the presentation (6 slides per page).

Students are expected to consult at least two additional reference sources in preparing for their lectures, and they are asked to identify, play and integrate a video clip (movie) in class (no more than 5-7 minutes in length) that depicts key assumptions/concepts from their presentation. Please prepare a one-page summary of this video clip for class distribution that includes reference information, a brief summary of its theme/content, and its implications for the topic. Presenters need to assume responsibility for having AV equipment necessary for their presentation.

Feedback on the presentation will be requested from other class members via a structured presentation evaluation form (See Appendix A) using the following scale: 60 = Poor (60%), 70 = Fair (70%), 80 = Good (80%), 90 = Very Good (90%), and 100 = Clearly Exceptional (100%) (see attached). The professor will prepare a summary critique, including an assigned grade, which will be distributed to students in the class following the presentation. Students’ critiques will be included. In most cases, students working together will receive the same grade for the presentation. On some occasions, class lecture grades are adjusted upward at the end of the semester in the context of other lectures.

Due: Day of Presentation.

Review of Marital/Family Education/Enrichment/Enhancement Program
Working in pairs, students will select a marital/family education/enrichment/enhancement program in consultation with the professor for review and presentation to the larger class. The review/presentation will cover the following points, although the professor will seek consultation from the students about this outline:

- Name of program and developer(s)
- Basis for selection—Why did you select this particular program for review?
- Content—What is taught? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
- Timing—When does it occur in the life cycle? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
- Target—Who receives it? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
- Setting—Where does it take place? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
- Trainers/Leaders—What are the qualifications and requirements for those who train or lead the program?
- Methods—How is content presented and learned? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
- Intensity—What is the dosage? (see Hawkins et al., 2004)
  - Time/duration—How much investment in time does the program participation require?
- Engagement—How are participants recruited and engaged in the program?
• Ending—How is termination handled with participants?
• Outcomes—What are the intended results from participation? How are these results measured? How long are participants tracked to monitor results?
• *Theoretical orientation—What explanatory theories anchor the program? (see Bowen, 1991)
• *Empirical research base—How is program content informed by the empirical research base? If possible, develop a logic model, including outcomes and antecedents. (see Adler-Baeder et al., 2004)
• Assessment tools—What, if any, types of tools are used for assessment/evaluation? How is progress monitored and measured during the course of program implementation?
• Program—What is the program agenda and timeline? (see Bowen, 1991)
• Inclusiveness—To what extent is the program sensitive to gender, class, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and contextual differences? (see Leslie, 1995)
• Ethical issues or dilemmas—Do you have ethical concerns about the program as described?
• *Empirical support—By what means and to what extent has the program received empirical support for its efficacy? (Jakubowski et al., 2004)
• Next steps—In your opinion, what steps are necessary to continue to develop/refine this program?

I have placed an asterisk on the most important aspects of your review. You are free to vary the order of these points. Please prepare a detailed PowerPoint presentation (30-35 slides) that includes the points above, including the use of charts and diagrams. You will have approximately 40 minutes to present your summary in classes 13-16, including 10 minutes for class discussion. Once I have your selections, I will be able to develop logical order for presentation. Feedback on the presentation will be requested from other class members via a structured presentation evaluation form (see Appendix B). In the absence of presenting concerns or issues, presenters working in teams will receive the same final score.
Due: Day of Presentation.

Integrative Collage
Please develop a collage (images and words from magazines) on an approximately 22” by 28” poster board or heavy-duty card stock paper that describe your understanding of and perspective toward working with families in the context of our work this semester (theory and practice). Of all the concepts and assumptions that we have reviewed, which ones have most influenced your perspective—try to represent this in developing your collage. The same for people—which authors had a particular impact on your perspective? Please attempt to represent how your family history, gender and racial/ethnic/cultural heritage contributes to your integrative perspective. Please be prepared to explain your collage to a colleague. Bring a “sticky pad” (2” x 2”) to class to attach comments on other collages. You will be able to keep your collage.
Due: (Week 16)
Final Integrative Experience
Prepare a eight-page, written essay that summarizes your integrative perspective at the beginning of the course (1 page); your integrative perspective at this point (3 pages); a discussion of how your perspective is influenced by your family history, gender and racial/ethnic/cultural heritage (1 page); implications of your analysis for your social work practice with families (2 page); and strengths and weaknesses in your integrative perspective for social work practice and the implications of your analysis for informing your work next semester (1 page). Please edit your papers carefully.
Due: Exam Date

GRADING SYSTEM:
The core assignments and their relative weights in the grading system are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Lecture</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Presentation</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collage</td>
<td>07.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Integrative Experience</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review/Class Participation</td>
<td>07.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each assignment/requirement will be graded using the following numeric system:

- H = 94-100
- P = 80-93
- L = 70-79
- F = 69 and below

To qualify for a grade of Clear Excellence (H), students will need to complete all assignments with a grade of 70% or better, with an average grade of 94% or better.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
Unless negotiated in advance with the professor, assignments are due on the date specified in the syllabus. All assignments must be completed to receive a Passing Grade for the course (H/P/L). Students will receive 0 credit for assignments submitted past the due date.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
Please refer to the APA Style Guide, The SSW Manual, and the SSW Writing Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. All written assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating that, "I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work".

In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required."
POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University’s Disabilities Services and provide documentation of their disability. Disabilities Services will notify the instructor that the student has a documented disability and may require accommodations. Students should discuss the specific accommodations they require (e.g., changes in instructional format, examination format) directly with the instructor.

POLICIES ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM:
*Do not engage in activities unrelated to the course including, but not limited to:*
- completing assignments for other courses
- checking email during class
- communication unrelated to in-class activities (i.e., voice, email, text messaging, etc.)
- surfing the web or visiting websites unrelated to in-class activities
- playing games, listening to music or watching videos

*Do not distract others*
- Set all devices including all sound alerts to “vibrate” or “mute” during class
- Do not place or accept calls or text messages during class
- Arrive with sufficient time to set up laptops, etc., before class begins. Set-up must be completed before class begins.
- Be aware of potentially distracting typing or clicking

*Prohibited use of computers and other wireless devices includes:*
- Special events or guest speakers
- Presentation or role-play demonstration by classmates
- While viewing videotapes
- Any other time designated by the instructor

*ALWAYS* respect the request of a classmate or the instructor to cease the use of any and all electronic/wireless devices.

BAD WEATHER POLICY:
Please check your email by 7:00 a.m. on the day of class in case of snow, ice or other threatening and/or unsafe conditions. Use your best judgment about travel safety if you are driving to Chapel Hill from surrounding areas that have snow, ice or other threatening and/or unsafe conditions.
READINGS AND COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: August 25 (No Class)

Week 2: September 1

Introductions
Course Review
Logistics
Personal Integrative Perspectives (Small Group Exercise)
☐ Record for later review


Week 3: September 8

Introduction to Theory (Professor)

Smith et al. (2009). Introduction (pp. 1-8).

Smith et al., (2009). Social Exchange Theory (pp. 201-212).

Substantive Application (Professor)

Intimate Relationship Cohesion and Dissolution

Smith et al. (2009). Sample Reading: Power and Dependence in Intimate Exchange (pp. 213-229).


Week 4: September 15

Practice Application (Professor)

MAP: A Corporate Support Program for Couples

The Practice Couple and Marital Education and Enrichment\textsuperscript{1}


(Discussion leader: Bowen)


(Discussion leaders: Bustle, Cadarette, Clemence)


(Discussion leaders: Costa, Crawford-Green, Denard)


(Discussion leaders: Faison, Hanef, Hartley)


(Discussion leaders: Andringa, Basnight)


(Discussion leaders: Martinson, McAllister, Millican)


(Discussion leaders: Perkins, Price, Rafter)


(Discussion leaders: Ridout, Stern, Taperek)

**Recommended Readings**


\textsuperscript{1} The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) sponsors a Certification for Family Life Educators (CFLE). For more information, see http://www.ncfr.org/cert/
Week 5: September 22

Families In Context (Professor)


Substantive Application (Professor)

*Families in the Military*


Week 6: September 29

Children in Context (Professor)


Substantive Application (Student Presentation)

*Children in the Military*


**Week 7: October 6**

Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Student Presentation)


Substantive Application (Student Presentation)

*Teenage Pregnancy*


**Week 8: October 13**

Family Systems Theory (Student Presentation)


Substantive Application (Student Presentation)

*The Circumplex Model*


Week 9: October 20

Feminist Family Theory (Student Presentation)


Smith et al. (2009). Sample Reading: *Why Welfare?* (pp. 177-200).

Substantive Application (Student Presentation)

*Working and Still Poor*


Class 10: October 27

Family Stress Theory (Professor)


Class 11: November 3

Substantive Application (Student Presentation)

*The MEES Model*


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2 Presenters only.

**Conceptual Frameworks**

*Ambiguous Loss*


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**Week 12: November 10 (No Class)**

**Week 13: November 17**

**Practice Presentations x 3**

**Week 14: November 24**

**Practice Presentations x 3**

**Week 15: December 1**

**Practice Presentations x 3**

**Week 16: December 8**

**Practice Presentation x 1**

**A Personal Integrative Perspective (Collage)**

**Final Integrative Experience Discussion**

**Final Exam**

**Final Integrative Experience Due (See Exam Schedule)**

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3 Presenters only.
4 Presenters only.
5 Presenters only.
Class Lecture Assignments

09/29 Children in the Military (Meredith Costa, Christine Rafter)

10/06 Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Jen Bustle, Jolee Faison)

10/06 Teenage Pregnancy (Erin Ridout, Noah Martinson)

10/13 Family Systems Theory (Whitney Andringa, Kourtney Taperek)

10/13 The Circumplex Model (Jackie Millican, Martha Cadarette)

10/20 Feminist Family Theory (MC Hartley, Christina Denard)

10/20 Working and Still Poor (Samir Hanef, Yolanda McAllister)

11/03 The MEES Model (Kindra Clemance, Lauren Perkins)

11/03 Ambiguous Loss (Carly Price, Becky Stern)

You may trade presentation topics and partners.
Appendix A
Presentation Evaluation Form

Presentation:___________________________________________________________________

Presenter(s):_________________________________________________________________

Please rate the group presentation in the following areas with:
60 = Poor, 70 = Fair, 80 = Good, 90 = Very Good, and 100 = Clearly Exceptional.

**Content:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall integration of assigned readings/reference materials</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of examples to clarify presentation material</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application to family functioning and interaction</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of video selection</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implications for social work practice with families</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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**Style/Delivery:**

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<tr>
<td>Creativity—Use of innovative ways to convey information</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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<td>Visual aids—Use of hand-outs, PowerPoint, and other forms of media to supplement information presented</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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<td>Enthusiasm—Communicated ideas with fervor</td>
<td>60 70 80 90 100</td>
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Please identify two strengths of the presentation:
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___________________________________________________________________________

Please provide at least one recommendation for improvement:
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Appendix B
Presentation Evaluation Form

Presentation: ________________________________________________________________

Presenter(s): ______________________________________________________________

Please rate the group presentation in the following areas with:
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness to presentation outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of theoretical orientation</td>
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<td>Review of empirical research base</td>
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<td>Review of empirical support</td>
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Please provide at least one recommendation for improvement:
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