

CHFD 6010: ISSUES IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY
Spring 2008

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I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. The students will learn about the historical development and current status of the profession and discipline of marriage and family therapy.
2. Students will learn about key concepts regarding legal and ethical decision making.
3. Students will examine their own thinking and values in relation to the practice of marriage and family therapy. In class we will work for practices of accountability and responsibility particularly in regards to clients, community and professional roles.
4. The class will explore and consider the following topics: professional ethics, legal issues around MFT, unique issues of systemic therapy, issues of power, gender and culture, confidentiality; licensing and certification; record keeping; managed care; supervision; private practice; inter-professional relationships; case management; therapist-client relationship; issues of violence; issues of drug and alcohol abuse. Other topics may also be included.
5. Students will examine ethical issues in clinical practice with diverse populations including ethnicity, race, SES and religion.
6. To help each student develop and articulate his/her own theory of ethics.

My pedagogical philosophy is that effective learning occurs in a collaborative context in which everyone participates in the learning/teaching process. Each person is expected to take responsibility for his or her own learning and teaching and to be both respectful, as well as challenging of the viewpoints of others. I am available to discuss ideas outside of class, and it is your responsibility to contact me if you need help with understanding any of the readings or assignments. The purpose of this critical stance is help each person in class unpack and examine her/his assumptions and taken for granted views about human identity, behavior, change and therapy. Student contribution based on course materials will form a substantial part of the course.

Additionally, it is important to consider your own processes of observing and acting. Consequently, in examining couple and family therapy, a starting place is to examine the observer (i.e., yourself). While we will do role-plays and have discussions that may lead to personal issues, this course is not about self-therapy. If a student experiences any type of personal or psychological discomfort, it is recommended that he/she seek professional counseling.

As this class includes both doctoral and master students, we will discuss the syllabus the first day of class. The syllabus may be revised to accommodate different levels of experience and coursework. In this regard, any changes that lead to a different contractual arrangement for requirements for this class will be written and signed.

Some suggested guidelines (adapted from Nash, 2002) for class include:

1. Do not force premature closure on conversations.
2. Find the value in what you oppose. Find the error in what you espouse.
3. Speak with, not at or separate from, each other.

4. Accept no text or opinion uncritically; it might be mistaken. Reject no text or opinion uncritically; it might be correct.
5. Find and express your own voice, but also find the right time lower your own voice in that others might find theirs.
6. Do speak! Language is the primary tool we have to make meaning together.
7. Speak in order to listen (not listen in order to speak). (From Lyotard via Lois Shawyer)

III. TEXTS

Wilcoxon, S. A., Remley, T. P., Gladding, S. T., & Huber, C. H. (2007). Ethical, legal, and professional issues in the practice of marriage and family therapy (4th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

AAMFT (2006). *User's guide to the AAMFT Code of Ethics*. Washington, DC: AAMFT. A Reader

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and participation in class** are required and missing class will account in the final grade. It is your responsibility to inform the instructor prior to class if you will be late or miss class. There will be various in-class activities, and if you miss one of the days this occurs, it is your responsibility to complete the assignment outside of class and turn it in the following class without further loss of points.

You may have one missed class with an acceptable excuse (though you also need to complete any assignments for that class), after that, each missed class will reduce your grade by 21 points

2. **A WebCT discussion** will be a part of the course content. Prior to each class you must post at least two (well thought out) original questions or comments for the readings of that day (this means reading the other comments and not replicating another person's remarks, though you can comment on other remarks). The post must be made by midnight prior to class in order to give time for the other students, and the co-facilitators to see your message. You are encouraged to reply to other comments and participate in a discussion of the different threads during the week. For access go to <http://www.uga.edu/> and click on 'My WebCT,' and log in to this course using your UGA MyID. **45 points for posting two questions per week, up to 70 points for active participation on the list and posting comments to other questions**
3. Co-facilitation of one class discussion. This will require summarizing the questions raised on the WebCt discussion list and helping lead a discussion about them in class. **30 points**
4. You will be assigned four short position papers in which you will respond to different topics, issues or questions. Each paper is due the assigned date and must be submitted to WebCT prior to 12:00 that night. No late papers will be accepted. Note that the papers are worth various points from **40 points to 100 points**

Paper 1: Write a 3 paper reflecting your theory of ethics and clinical practice at this point in time. What standards do you use for evaluating your own actions and what standards do you use for evaluating clients' behaviors? In view of your response to the previous question, when working with couples or families, what are your views about confidentiality, duty to warn, affairs, child abuse and addiction (in terms of your responsibility and the client(s) responsibility)? **40 points Due January 23**

Paper 2: Write a 3-page reaction paper to the MFT Institute (January 25). Your paper should include a brief summary of what stood out in the institute for you (positive or negative), and why these aspects are important to the practice of MFT. Also, discuss the relevance of the institute to MFT ethical issues. Your registration will be paid for this workshop. If you cannot attend the workshop due to other obligations for that day, you will need to meet with me to discuss an alternative assignment. Points will be assigned based on clarity of expression and depth of thought/demonstration of self-awareness. **40 points Due February 13**

Paper 3: Compare the AAMFT Code of Ethics with one other code of ethics (counseling, social work, psychology, etc.). Note areas of similarities and differences as well as the uniqueness of the discipline. Each presentation is to include a chart of comparison for discussion. Be prepared to present in class on April 2. . You can do this activity in dyads or in triads but you do need to partner with students from other programs. The response is to be about 5 -7 pages, APA style. Cite references as needed. You will also need to provide a grade of your partner(s), which will count 25% of the **100 points. Due April 2**

Paper 4: Revisit your first paper and your responses of the other papers. How have your ideas changed or maintained the same? In your narrative, reference the sources and events that have influenced your ideas. In this paper, highlight your personal theory of clinical practice. The paper is to be between 4 and 5 pages, APA style. Points will be assigned based on clarity of expression and depth of thought/demonstration of self-awareness. **60 points Due April 23**

5. A take home final exam will be given the end of the semester. The exam will include multiple choice questions, clinical vignettes, and short narrative response questions. **60 points**

Option II

This will be discussed in class. This option is to do assignments 1, 2, 3 above, papers 1 and 4 above, and to do a 5-hour presentation on ethics to NEGAMFT sometime later this year. There will also be additional readings for this option. This option is available to a limited number of students.

GRADE:

A	370-400
A-	360-370
B+	350-359
B	330-349
B-	320-329
C+	310-319
C	290-309
C-	280-289
Fail	below 279

All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at:

<http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>

SCHEDULE

January

9 **Introductions.** Go over syllabus. What are ethics? Differences between personal and professional ethics. Activities: continuum placement on elements of practice, style and values, class creating a taxonomy of issues relevant for this course, personal biases and blind spots. Creating our own culture and practices for class.

16 **Historical and philosophical foundations** (a mindfulness and compassion approach to empathy and self-care)

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Gale & Long (1995)
Neff (2004) (pp. 27-37)
Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 2)
Lagemen (1993) (pp. 17-40)

23 No class today: Attend the MFT Institute on January 25. **Paper one due, submit via WebCt**

30 **Values, culture and ethical theory**

Paper two due via WebCt

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 1)
Harre (1991) (pp. 33-46)
*Tjeltveit (1999) (pp. 51-82)
Lagemen (1993) (pp. 41-104)

February

6 **Ethical Issues in MFT**

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 3)
Green & Hansen (1989)

13 **More ethical issues in MFT**

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 4 and 5)

20 **More ethical issues in MFT**

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 6)

27 **More ethical issues in MFT**

Co-Facilitation:

Tom Camp guest lectures
Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 7)

March

5 Legal issues in MFT

Brian Carney guest lectures

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 8-10)

Lagemen (1993) (pp17-40),

Spring break 10-14

19 Professional issues in MFT

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 11)

26 AAMFT Code of ethics

Co-facilitation:

Read: User's guide to the AAMFT Code of Ethics (pp. 1-86)

April

2 Paper 3 Due via WebCT

Co-Facilitation:

Carl Johnson, Executive Director, GAMFT guest lectures.

Read: Wilcoxon et al (2007) (Chapter 13)

9 Culture and feminism.

Co-Facilitation:

Read: bell hooks, (1995).. (pp. 31-61; 263-272).

Haddock, S. A., Zimmerman, T. S., & MacPhee, D. (2000). 153-170.

16 Spirituality

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Haug, I. E. (1998), 181-194.

23 Issues of domestic violence (video)

Paper 4 Due, via WebCT

Co-Facilitation:

Read: Goldner, V. (1999). 325-336

Final Exam Due ?

References

- bell hooks, (1995). Killing rage, ending racism. (pp. 31-61; 263-272). New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Gale, J., & Long, J. (1996). Foundations of family therapy. In D. Sprenkle, F. Piercy, & J. Wetchler (Eds.) Sourcebook of marital and family therapy. (pp. 1-24). New York: Guilford.
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- Green, S. L. & Hansen, J. C. (1989). Ethical dilemmas faced by family therapists. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 18 (3), 263-268.
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- Margolin, G. (1986). Ethical issues in marital therapy. In N. S. Jacobson and A. S. Gurman (Eds.). Clinical Handbook of Marital Therapy. New York: Guilford Press. 621-637.
- Neff, K. (2004). Self-compassion and psychological well-being. Constructionism in the Human Sciences, 9, 2, 27-37.
- Neff, K. (2003) Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude towards oneself. Self and Identity, 2, 85-101.
- Piercy, F. & Miller, J. (1998). Factors related to family therapists= breaking confidence when clients disclose high-risks-to-HIV/Aids sexual behaviors. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 24, 457-472.
- Smith, T. E. (1991). Lie to me no more: Believable stories and marital affairs. Family Process, 30, 215-225.
- Tjeltveit, A. C. (1999). Ethics and Values in Psychotherapy. (51-82; 83-104). New York: Routledge.
- Wendorf, D. J. & Wendorf, R. J. (1985). A systemic view of family therapy ethics. Family Process, 24, 443-453.