

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

CHFD 8060 Contemporary Family Therapy across the Lifespan  
Spring 2009

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Office Hours: By appointment. I encourage you to see me regarding anything in the course. If I am not in my office when you call, leave a message and I will get back with you.  
Class Times: Tuesday 2:00 – 4:30

Course Goals

1. To learn about postmodern theories and postmodern approaches for viewing individual and family dynamics and the practice of therapy. We will examine the construction of identity across the lifespan. Clinical approaches that will be examined include narrative therapy, solution focused therapy, and collaborative language systems.
2. To understand how the concepts of self and other is culturally and historically embedded, such that cultural norms and values including religious and spiritual views influence one's identity and relationships as well as influence clinical and educational practices.
3. We will also examine how the social institution of therapy contributes in shaping our identities.
4. To critically evaluate key distinctions, assumptions, metaphors and practices of various models of therapy and applying postmodern theories to therapy models for working with individuals, couples, families and larger systems.
5. To critically examine how issues such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. are included and excluded in theories of research, pedagogy and clinical practice.
6. To examine one's own "embodiment" and how this embodiment impacts our pedagogical, research and therapeutic practices. This includes a biopsychosocial-spiritual perspective.
7. To examine how postmodern ideas and practices can be applied to pedagogical, research and clinical perspectives.
8. To examine meditation and contemplative practices and their application to research, teaching and clinical practice.
9. To examine the critiques and limits of postmodern approaches.

Texts

Sampson, E. E. (2008). *Celebrating the other: A dialogic account of human nature*. Taos, NM: A Taos Institute Publication.

A reader available through WebCT (access code is pomo)

Class Format

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 understanding with 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  
And
7. Speak in order to listen (not listen in order to speak). (From Lyotard via Lois Shawyer)

#### Grading

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

#### Point distribution:

Co-Facilitation:	60 points possible
WebCt discussion:	80 points possible
Paper1:	50 points possible
Paper 2:	50 points possible
Paper 3:	50 points possible
Bias Assessment:	30 points possible
<u>Final Paper:</u>	<u>80 points possible</u>
Total:	400 points possible

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>

#### Requirements

1. **Attendance and active participation in class** are required and missing class or non-participation will account in the final grade. I expect people to come to class prepared, to contribute to class discussions, and participate in activities. This does not mean you have to be verbally active each class, as active participation can occur in multiple manners. Inform the instructor prior to class if you will be late or miss class. **You may have one missed class with an acceptable excuse, after that, each missed class, regardless of the reason will reduce your final grade by 21 points. Being late to class, leaving early or non-participation will also deduct points.**
  
2. Each class for 60-70 minutes, two students (depending on the size of the class, one person (45 minutes) may have to do this on her or his own) will be responsible for facilitating class discussion for one hour. **This will require posing questions, highlighting issues, and leading activities in class. It may also require reading supplemental materials. Please note there are additional readings posted on the webct course content that can be useful in this regard. It will be necessary to review the WebCT postings from classmates prior to the class to incorporate questions and comments posed. This does not mean repeating the comments and discussion questions, but rather, to move the discussion to a different level of understanding. Evaluation of the co-facilitation includes being prepared, relevance of the discussion and contributing to the development of ideas. Activities can include but are not limited to power point, role plays, handouts, video, exercises, etc. You will have one hour for facilitating the discussion. 60 points**
  
3. **Participation in a WebCT discussion** is an important part of the course content. Prior to each class 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 simply replicating another person's remarks. The post must be made by midnight prior to class in order to give time for the other students, the co-facilitators and myself to see your posts. You are encouraged to reply to other comments and participate in a discussion of the different threads during the week as well. Because of class size, the discussion group will be divided into two groups. For access go to <http://www.uga.edu/> and click on 'My WebCT,' and log in to this course using your UGA MyID. With WebCt I am able to see how many posts each person makes.
  - 80 points = averaging 3 or more posts per week and extending the ideas posted**
  - 64 points = averaging 2-3 posts per week and engaged in comments on other posts**
  - 40 points = averaging less than 2 posts per week and not engaging in interaction.**
  
4. You will be assigned three short position papers in which you will respond to different topics, issues or questions. Each paper is worth **50 points (total of 150 points)**. Grading will be based on the demonstration of critical thinking, application of theory, and clarity of writing. The paper is due by 11:55 of the due date. Late papers will not be accepted except by prior arrangement. Papers must be submitted via webct.
  - Paper 1: **For therapists:** Define and discuss what 'collaboration' means in the practice of therapy. Include a discussion on power, therapist roles and responsibilities, client's role and responsibilities and issues of working with more than one client. Provide examples (either real or imaginary) clarifying your points. **For non-therapists:** Write your definition of postmodernism as you presently understand it and address how you think postmodern ideas might shape understanding of the following concepts, definitions of the family, individual identity, social power, research, practice, and expert knowledge. The response is to be between 4 and 5 pages, APA style. Cite references appropriately. **Due Jan. 27**
  - Paper 2: to be assigned in class. **Due February 24**
  - Paper 3: to be assigned in class. **Due March 31**

5. Write a 5-7 page paper (APA) presenting the application of postmodern theories to a specific clinical model, or to a specific topic of study in your discipline. Include how postmodern theory informs your topic. For example, for a clinical model consider such aspects as: pathology/health, how change occurs, types of clinical issues addressed, the relevance of diagnosis, responsibilities of the therapist, responsibilities of the clients, types of interventions, the process of treatment, evaluation of treatment, limitations of the model, and ethical concerns. For a non-clinical topic, you can address pedagogy, research or another topic relevant to postmodern theories. Grading will be based on the demonstration of critical thinking, application of theory, and clarity of writing. Please note there are additional readings posted on the webct course content that may be useful in writing your paper. On the last day of class you will be expected to give a brief presentation of your paper (title and summary). **80 points Due April 27**
  
6. Participate in a computer based assessment program that is an examination of one's biases. Do at least two of the assessments and write a brief report about your experiences and reactions to the assessment, regardless if you agree with it or not. Include in your summary a discussion of defining bias, other methods for examining biases in self and others, and methods for challenging one's biases? This is to be a 4-page paper. **Due April 20**  
[http://www.tolerance.org/hidden\\_bias/index.html](http://www.tolerance.org/hidden_bias/index.html) **30 points**

#### Schedule of Classes

##### January

13 I am currently on my way to Washington DC for a meeting that starts tomorrow morning. While I tried to find a flight out later tonight, I could not find a convenient flight. I offer my apologies for missing class today. I have four things I would like you to do today in my absence. Class will be short today. First, introduce yourself to one another. Second, get a copy of my syllabus. Third, watch the video. As you watch the video, please keep notes of your responses. What are your thoughts, feelings and reactions to the video? Are there assumptions that you have that are challenged? Are there elements of the video that you disagree with? What implications are there to issues of clinical practice and/or family development from the video? And fourth, be prepared next week to: 1) go over the syllabus; 2) discuss the video; 3) discuss the assigned readings; and 4) decide what day you will co-facilitate. Email me any questions you may have. I will be returning to Athens Thursday night.

20 Introductions. Considering what we mean by notions of self, other and family.

Read: Coontz (1997) (pp. 11-32)  
 Prusank (1993) (pp. 132-153)  
 Van Langehove & Harre (1993, pp. 81- 99)

27 Post-structuralism and postmodernism

**Paper 1 due.** Review: [www.california.com/~rathbone/path.htm](http://www.california.com/~rathbone/path.htm)

Art Frank Video

Read: Crotty (1998) (pp. 1-41)  
 Sarup (1993) (pp. 32-57)  
 Blume, T. (2008) (pp. 1-18)

## February

### 3 Post-structuralism and postmodernism continued

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Sarup (1993) (pp. 58 – 88)  
Sampson (1993) Identity Politics  
Weingarten (1991) (pp. 285-305)

### 10 Post-structuralism and postmodernism continued:

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Sarup (1993) (pp. 129-159, 178-187)  
Hare-Mustin (1994) (pp. 19-34)

### 17 Gender and positioning (Video: Michael White training tape)

Co-facilitators:

Read: Crawford (1995) (pp. 49-85, 93-128)  
Davies and Harre (1997, pp. 1-15)  
Sampson (2008) (pp. 1-28)

### 24 More on Gender **Paper 2 due**

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Crawford (1995) (pp. 135-160)  
Zimmerman, Haddock, McGeorge (2001) (pp. 55-68)  
Miller (2000) (pp. 1-40)

## March

### 3 Practices of therapy Solution Focused Therapy (video of Insoo Berg)

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Roberts (2005) (pp. 45-63)  
Walter & Peller (2000) (pp. 1-61)

### 10 Spring Break

### 17 Practices of therapy: Collaborative language systems (video of Harlene Anderson)

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Anderson (1996) (pp. 132-165)  
Anderson & Goolishian (1992) (pp. 25-39)  
Readings by Seikkula (2002 a, b), Anderson (2002) and Trimble (2002)

### 24 Practices of therapy (video of Michael White)

Read: Drewery & Winslade (pp. 32- 52)  
Winslade, Crocket & Monk (pp. 53-81)  
Strong (2001) (pp. 41-55)

31 Emotions, illness and disease and trauma. **Paper 3 Due.**

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Greenberg & Angus (2004) (pp. 331-349)  
Weingarten (2003) (pp. 1-18)  
Kleinman (1988) (pp. 3-55)

April

6 Practices of therapy, race, culture and research

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Gale, Lawless, & Roulston (2004) (pp. 123-144)  
Sampson (2008) (pp. 29-94)

13 Practices of research and critiques of postmodernism.

Co-facilitators:

- 1.
- 2.

Read: Held (1999) and Gale (1999) (pp. 135-178)  
Sampson (2008) (pp. 95-162)

20 Mindfulness and spirituality **Due: Self assessment of biases**

Read: Shotter (2003): Real Presences (pp. 1-34)  
Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M. Creswell, J. D. (2007).  
Gale (2008)

27 Teaching and Performances of postmodern final presentations:

**Final paper due** (brief presentation of your paper to class)

Read: Gale (2004) (pp. 1-9)  
Sampson (2008) (pp. 162-188)

Reader Reference List

- Anderson, H. (1996). *Conversation, language, and possibilities*. (pp. 132-165).
- Anderson, H. & Goolishian, H. (1992). The client is the expert: A not-knowing approach to therapy. In S. McNamee & K. J. Gergen (Eds.), *Therapy As Social Construction*, (pp.25-39),Newbury, CA: Sage.
- Blume, T. (2008). Retelling the story of couple and family counseling. *The Family Journal*, 16, 1.
- Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M. Creswell, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological Inquiry* 2007, Vol. 18, No. 4, 211–237
- Baer, R. A. (2006). Overview of mindfulness and acceptance based treatment approaches. (p. 3-30) In R. Baer (Ed.) *Mindfulness-based treatment approaches: Clinicians guide to evidence base and application*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Coontz, S. (1997). *The way we really are: Coming to terms with America's changing families* (pp.11-32), New York: Basic Books.

- Crawford, M. (1995). Talking difference: On gender and language. (pp. 49-161). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage
- Davies, B. & Harre, R. (n.d.) *Positioning: The discursive production of selves*. retrieved July 5, 1997, from <http://www.massey.ac.nz/~Alock/position/position.htm>
- Gale, J. (2004). Experiencing relational thinking: Lessons from Improvisational Theater. *Context*, 75, 10-12.
- Gale, J., Lawless, J., & Roulston, K. (2004). Discursive approaches to clinical research. In T. Strong & D. Paré (Eds.), *Furthering Talk: Advances in the Discursive Therapies* (pp.125-144), New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Greenberg, L. S. & Angus, L. E. (2004). The contributions of emotion processes to narrative change in psychotherapy: A dialectical constructivist approach. In L. E. Angus & J. McLeod (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative and Psychotherapy: Practice, Theory and Research*, (pp.331-349), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hare-Mustin, R.T. (1994). Discourses in the mirrored room: A postmodern analysis of therapy. *Family Process*, 33, 19-34.
- Held, B. S. (1999). How brief therapy got postmodern, or where's the brief? In W. J. Matthews & J. H. Edgette (Eds.) *Current thinking and research in brief therapy*. Phil. PA: Brunner/Mazel. (pp.134-178)
- Kleinman, A. (1988). *The illness narratives: Suffering, healing & the human condition*. Basic Books.
- Miller, L. (2000). The poverty of truth-seeking: Postmodernism, discourse analysis and critical feminism. *Theory & Psychology*, 10, 3, 313-352.
- Nadeau, J. W. (1995). Family construction of meaning. In R. A. Neimeyer (Ed.) *Meaning reconstruction & the experience of loss*. Washington, DC, APA.
- Prusank, D. T. (1993). Contextualizing social control: An ethnomethodical analysis of parental accounts of discipline interactions. In N. Coupland & J.F. Nussbaum, *Discourse and Lifespan Identity*, (pp. 132-153). London: Sage.
- Roberts, J. (2005). Transparency and self-disclosure in family therapy: Dangers and possibilities. *Family Process*, 44, 45-63.
- Sarup, M. (1993). An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). (pp. 32-88, 128-187), New York: Longman.
- Samson, E. E. (1993). Identity Politics. *American Psychologist*, 48, 12, 19-30.
- Seikkula, J. (2002a) Open Dialogues with good and poor outcomes for psychotic crises: Examples from families with violence. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 28, 3, 263-274, and responses by H. Anderson (2002), D. Trimble (2002) and J. Seikkula (2002b).
- Shotter, J. (2003). Real Presences: Meaning as living movement in a participatory world. *Theory & Psychology*, 13, 4, 435-468.
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- Strong, T. (2001). "My house," "your house,": Toward optimizing dialogue in therapy. *Journal of Clinical Activities, Assignments, & Handouts in Psychotherapy Practice*, 1(4), 41-55.
- Van Langenhove, L. & Harré, R. (1993). Positioning and autobiography: Telling your life. In N. Coupland & J.F. Nussbaum, *Discourse and Lifespan Identity*, (pp. 81-99). London: Sage.
- Walter J. L., & Peller, J. E. (2000). *Recreating brief therapy: Preferences and possibilities*. New York: Norton.
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- Weingarten, K. (2003). Excerpt from the book *CommonShock* (pp. 1-18)
- Winslade, J., Crocket, K., & Monk, G. (1997). The therapeutic relationship. G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket & D. Epston (Eds.), *Narrative Therapy in Practice: The Archaeology of Hope*. (pp. 32-81). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Zimmerman, T. S., Haddock, S. A., & McGeorge, C. R. (2001). Mars and venus: Unequal planets. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 27(1), 55-68.