

INTRODUCTION TO MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY  
COUNSELING 611, May Mini 2015 Online

Instructor: Amir Abbassi, Ph.D., LPCs, LMFTs

Office: by appointment only

Email [amir.abbassi@tamuc.edu](mailto:amir.abbassi@tamuc.edu)

*This is an online class, so the expectations are a bit different than courses taught face-to-face. Students need to feel comfortable working from a computer, using the Internet, and being self-motivated to work on the course content throughout the week. In a 15 week semester, students may spend 2 hours and 40 minutes per week in a lecture class plus additional time for driving and study/preparation. During a 5 week summer semester, students may spend up to 8 hours per week in a lecture class plus additional time for driving and study/preparation. During a 2.5 week May or Winter Mini, students may spend up to 17.5 hours per week in a lecture class plus additional time for driving and study/preparation. So, for an online class, it is important to schedule your time wisely. While you do not have the driving time, it is expected that the completion of this course will take the same amount of time as if it were being taken face-to-face. However, how you spend that time will be different. The lectures are quite a bit shorter, and will not take up the amount of time as it does face-to-face.*

Office Hours: The instructor is accessible for out-of-class advisement and professional consultation relative to course performance and academic achievement. I will make every effort to resolve any problems, and I am available by email and telephone within 24 hours generally. If you need to speak with me, e-mail me and we will schedule a conference. My classes this semester is taught only online. So, if you call my office in Commerce, I may not receive the message. The best way to reach me is via email or my cell phone. If you need my cell phone, either call the department or email me and I will give it to you.

**IMPORTANT: Please use the e-college e-mail system. E-mails sent outside the provided secure system are not confidential, and I assume no responsibility for protecting the information within them. All my announcement and initial contact to you will be through ecollege. If you send me an email outside of ecollege, I will reply to it but will not take responsibility for protecting the information shared with you.**

*Texas A & M University-Commerce nurtures and educates for success through access to academic, research, and service programs of high quality.*

## TE<sub>x</sub>ES COMPETENCIES

### Competency 004 (Program Management)

The school counselor understands how to plan, implement and evaluate a developmental guidance program, including counseling services, that promotes all students' success

**Competency 006 (Counseling)**

The school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

**Competency 010 (Professionalism)**

The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

*"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment" (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).*

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library  
Room 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

**[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)**

**Course Description:**

This course surveys the historical development and principal conceptualizations of marital and family therapy. Goals include an introductory examination and comparison of various theories currently employed in the field. Subject areas to be covered include the various schools of family therapy, along with current trends and issues in marriage and family therapy. Case studies and videotapes will be utilized to facilitate students' understanding of theory and skills. In addition to reading the required text, additional outside reading is strongly encouraged to supplement student development in marriage and family therapy.

This is an introductory course to develop marriage and family counseling skills, which is required for doing internship and acquiring credentials as a Marriage & Family therapist. It is designed for students already having a background in counseling yet wanting specialized skill training. It will include assignments in which each student begins exploring her/his personal family of origin, an important component of training for professional counselors. COUN 611 requires considerable effort and motivation to successfully complete. If you are currently unable to dedicate adequate time and effort toward this course, please consider taking this at another time.

**Prerequisite:** COUN 510 or instructor consent.

Objectives: The objectives of this course are for each student to:

1. Be involved in an ongoing self-evaluation as a potential marriage counselor
2. Be developing a personal philosophy and methodology for marriage counseling that she/he can defend via sound rationale
3. Become acquainted with professionalism in marriage counseling (i.e., organizations, agencies, etc.).
4. Become aware of multiple aspects of relationship counseling (i.e., conjoint counseling, premarital counseling, divorce counseling, etc.)
5. Analyze how the family functions as a unique changing system and identify those points at which successful intervention seems most likely
6. Describe the historical development of the MFT field and current issues
7. Define key terms in the MFT and associate the terms with appropriate schools of thought
8. Compare and contrast the theories and approaches of leading schools of thought
9. Identify and demonstrate awareness of personal issues pertaining to one's family of origin and present functioning and how these issues may affect one's therapeutic relationships
10. Become familiar with current literature in the MFT field through journals & periodicals

Required Text:

Goldenberg, H. & Goldenberg I, (2008). *Family therapy: an overview*. (current edition). Thomson Brooks/cole. Belmont, CA.

Suggested Reading:

McGoldrick, M. & Gerson, R. (1985). *Genograms in family assessment*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Beavers, W.R.(1985). *Successful marriage: A family systems approach to couples therapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Ginott, H.G. (1965). *Between parent and child*. New York: Avon

Nelson, J. (1996). *Positive discipline*. New York: Ballentine Books (Any of this series).

Sperry, L. & Carlson, J. (1991). *Marital therapy: Integrating theory and technique*. Love: Denver.

Expectations:

1. Participation - Students are expected to participate in all class discussion when assigned, and to complete all assignments as designated by due dates. This includes reading the assigned text material and participating appropriately in a class discussions.

2. Assignment - All assignments must be typed.

3. Grades - Graded class assignments including tests will be returned to you as soon as possible. The student is expected to maintain a personal record of grading progress throughout the course.

## Activities:

1. Lecture and discussion.

2. For each assigned chapter for the day, each student has to write 5 multiple choice questions with 4 answers for each. Student has to give the page reference for each question written and mark the correct answer. Student also has to write the reason/logic for why the marked correct answer is the right answer. Each group of 5 questions have to be marked clearly with corresponding chapter. Questions have to be uploaded by the due date with your name on it, in the MSWord format to the drop box associated with the each session for in order to receive the due credit.

3. Article analyses:

Each student will read and critique one article in any of the many professional journals related to relationship counseling. Students may select an article such as "marital satisfaction" or "family conflict" or any topic related to marriage and family issues (please see the list of some of the marriage and family related journals below). This article will be presented to the class in the discussion area for classmates' feedback.

4. Videos:

Relevant counseling videotapes will be reviewed.

5. Examinations. There will be two multiple choice examinations.

6. Creating a Family Genogram

In a short mini semester, there will not be enough time to schedule interviews with people in your family of origin linkage, in order to create a meaningful Genogram. However, I will be happy to provide the supervision for those of you who would like to take on the task on their own.

## Format

This course will be conducted by lecture, class discussion totally online. Objectives will be attained through the following:

1. Student reading and participation
2. Lecture and discussion
3. Question creation
4. Videos
5. article critique presentation

## Requirements:

1. Reading of required texts.
2. Create multiple choice questions from the reading assigned
3. Critique one marriage counseling journal/research article.
4. Participate in class discussion
5. Take the two exams

The instructor reserves the right to modify the above requirements.

## Evaluation:

Participation in class discussion	15%
Question Creation	15

Article critique	10%
Two examinations (30% each)	60%

**Grading:** An instructor does not give grades. Students earn grades. If you approach your class with this understanding, it is the beginning of taking responsibility for your education and being a great student.

**Grading Scale**

90-100	=	A
80-89	=	B
70-79	=	C
60-69	=	D
59>	=	F

**Professional Conduct:** Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association. Any behavior, which is deemed unethical, will be grounds for review of the student by the program faculty.

**Attendance:** This course is totally online and you will study it on your own schedule, however, there are deadlines for reading and writing assignments that you have to follow. Each day/week you will get an assignment and new materials will be placed online for you to review.

**All materials in this course are copy righted and you are not allowed to print, copy or save any of the material without the instructor written permission.** Your active participation in answering questions is required. I will be asking question online and expect you to fully participate in answering the questions. Even though, you are not required to be at your computer at certain hours of the day or week, I do expect to hear from you on the discussion area. You need to give feedback to other students on their work.

This course is online. I do not keep any paper record (including a grade book) on this class. This means that your work have to be uploaded on the “Ecollege” online in order for you to receive credit. If you email any of your work to me, I will read it but will not be able to give you the credit until it is posted online. Please make sure that you are familiar with the Ecollege. I am not a technology expert. Please forward all your technology questions to support services in “Ecollege”. No excuse is accepted for technology not working on your computer.

## **COUN 611 FLEXIBLE CALENDARS**

Session 1	5/18	Introduction, course overview and requirements Adopting a Family Relationship Framework: Chapter 1 Family Development: Continuity and change: Chapter 2
Session 2	5/19	Gender, culture, and ethnicity factors in family functioning: Chapter 3 Interlocking systems: the individual, the family and community: Chapter 4
Session 3	5/20	Origins and growth of family therapy: Chapter 5 Professional issues and ethical practices, Chapter 6
Session 4	5/21	Psychodynamic model: Chapter 7
Session 5	5/22	Transgenerational Models: Chapter 8
Session 6	5/25	Midterm Exam Experiential Models: Chapter 9 All multiple choice questions from chapters 1-8 are due
Session 7	5/26	The Structural Model: Chapter 10
Session 8	5/27	Strategic Models: Chapter 11
Session 9	5/28	The behavioral and Cognitive-Behavioral Models: Chapter 12
Session 10	5/29	Social Construction Models I: Chapter 13
Session 11	6/1	Social Construction Models II: Chapter 14 EXAM REVIEW
Session 12	6/2	Psycho-educational Models: Chapter 15
Session 12	6/3	Final Exam All multiple choice questions from chapters 9-15 are due

## **LIST OF JOURNAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ARTICLE**

American Journal of Family Therapy  
Annual Review of Psychology (see marriage articles in 1991, 1998, 1999 volumes)  
Behavioral Assessment  
Behavioral Science Research  
Behavior Therapy  
Clinical Psychology Review

Family Coordinator  
Family Process,  
The Journal of Family Psychology  
Family Relations,  
Journal of Abnormal Psychology  
Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology  
Journal of Family Violence  
Journal of Interpersonal Violence  
Journal of Marital and Family Therapy  
Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling  
Journal of Marriage and the Family  
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology  
Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy  
Journal of Studies on Alcohol  
Psychological Bulletin  
Violence and Victims

## Bibliography

Aron, A. & Aron, E.N. (1986). *Love and the expansion of self: Understanding attraction and satisfaction*. New York: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

Bader, E. & Pearson, P.T. (1988). *In quest of the mythical mate: A developmental approach to diagnosis and treatment in couples therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Barker, R.L. (1984). *Treating couples in crisis*. New York: The Free Press.

Barker, R.L. (1987). *The green-eyed marriage: Surviving jealous relationships*. New York: The Free Press.

Beattie, M. (1987). *Codependent no more: How to stop controlling others and start caring for yourself*. New York: Harper/Haseden.

Beavers, W.R. (1985). *Successful marriage: A family systems approach to couples therapy*. New York: W.W.Norton.

Beck, A.T. (1988). *Love is never enough: How couples can overcome misunderstandings, resolve conflicts, and solve relationship problems through cognitive therapy*. New York: Harper & Row.

Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.

Carter, B. & McGoldrick, M. (Eds.) (1988). *The changing family life cycle: A framework for family therapy*. (2nd ed.). New York: Gardner Press.

Curran, D. (1983). *Traits of a healthy family*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

- Dinkmeyer, D. & Carlson, J. (1984). *Training in marriage enrichment*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Duhl, B.S. (1983). *From the inside out and other metaphors*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Ellis, A., Sichel, J.L., Yeager, R.J., DiMattia, D.J. & DiGuespe, R. (1989). *Rational-emotive couples therapy*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Farrell, W. (1986). *Why men are the way they are*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Fredman, N. & Sherman, R. (1987). *Handbook of measurements for marriage & family therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Fry, W.F., Jr. & Salamah, W.A. (1987). *Handbook of humor and psychotherapy: Advances in the clinical use of humor*. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Exchange, Inc.
- Goldenberg, I. & Goldenberg, H. (2000). *Family therapy: An overview*. (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Gottman, J. (1994a). *What predicts divorce: The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Gottman, J. (1994b). *Why marriages succeed or fail*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Guerin, J. Jr., Fay, L, Burden, S., & Kautto, J. (1987). *The evaluation and treatment of marital conflict: A four-stage approach*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gurman, A.S. & Rice, D.G. (1975). *Couples in conflict*. New York: Jason Aronson.
- Gurman, A.S. (Ed.). (1985). *Casebook of marital therapy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Haley, J. (1987). *Problem-solving therapy*. (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Haynes, J.M. & Haynes, G.L. (1989). *Mediating divorce: Casebook of strategies for successful family negotiations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hof, L. & Miller, W.R. (1981). *Marriage enrichment: Philosophy, process & program*. Bowie, MD: Robert J. Brady Co.
- Humphrey, F.G. (1983). *Marital therapy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Huber, C.H. & Baruth, L.G. (1981). *Coping with marital conflict: An Adlerian approach to succeeding in marriage*. Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing Co.
- Jacobson, N.S. & Margolin, G. (1979). *Marital therapy: Strategies based on social learning and behavior exchange principles*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Karpel, M.A. (Ed.) (1986). *Family resources: The hidden partner in family therapy*. New York: The Guilford Press.



- Klagsbrun, F. (1985). *Married people: Staying together in the age of divorce*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Kolevzon, M.S. (1988). *The merry-go-rounds of intimate relationships*. North Miami, FL: Kenmarc Press.
- Kressel, K. (1985). *The process of divorce: How professionals and couples negotiate settlements*. New York: Basic Books.
- L'Abate, L. & McHenry, S. (1983). *Handbook of marital interventions*. New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Lazarus, A. (1985). *Casebook of multimodal therapy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Lazarus, A. (1985). *Marital myths*. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers.
- Lederer, W. J. (1981). *Marital choices*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Lerner, H.G. (1985). *The dance of anger*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Lerner, H.G. (1985). *The dance of intimacy*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Lieberman, R.P., Wheeler, E.G., DeVisser, L.A.J.M., Kuehnel, J. & Kuehnel, T. (1980). *Handbook of marital therapy: A positive approach to helping troubled relationships*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Masters W.H. & Johnson, V.E. (1970). *The pleasure bond: A new look at sexuality and commitment*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.
- Masters W.H. & Johnson, V.E. (1986). *Masters and Johnson on sex and loving*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co.
- Minuchin, S. & Mishman, H.C. (1981). *Family therapy techniques*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Morawetz, A. & Walker, G. (1984). *Brief therapy with single-parent families*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Norcross, J.C. (Ed.) (1986). *Handbook of eclectic psychotherapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Norwood, R. (1985). *Women who love too much*. LA: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc.
- Pittman, F.S. III. (1987). *Turner points: Treating families in transition and crisis*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Sadock, B.J., Kaplan, H.I., & Freedman, A.M. (Eds.). (1976). *The sexual experience*. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins.
- Satir, V. (1983). *Conjoint family therapy*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.
- Schnarch, D. (1991). *Constructing the sexual crucible*. New York: Norton.
- Schnarch, D. (1997). *Passionate marriage*. New York: Norton.
- Sherman, R. & Fredman, N. (1986). *Handbook of structured techniques in marriage & family therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

- Sperry, L. & Carlson, J. (1993). *Marital therapy: Integrating theory and practice*. Denver, CO: Love Publishing.
- Sperry, L. & Carlson, J. (1996). *Psychopathology and psychotherapy: From diagnosis to treatment DSM- IV*. Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development.
- Stahmann, R.F. & Hiebert, W.J. (Eds.) (1988). *The psychology of love*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Stuart, R.B. (1980). *Helping couples change: A social learning approach to marital therapy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Thomas, E.J. (1977). *Marital communication and decision making: Analysis, assessment, and change*. New York: The Free Press.
- Vaughn, D. (1986). *Uncoupling: Turning points in intimate relationships*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Viorst, J. (1986). *Necessary losses*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Waring, E.M. (1988). *Enhancing marital intimacy through facilitating cognitive self-disclosure*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Weiss, R.S. (1975). *Marital separation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wells, J. (1983). *Current issues in marriage & the family*. New York: Macmillan.
- Whitfield, C.L. (1987). *Healing the child within*. Pompano Beach, FL: Health Communications.
- Wolman, B.B. & Stricker, G. (Eds.) (1983). *Handbook of family and marital therapy*. New York: Plenum Press.