



COUN 611: Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy
Course Syllabus:
Spring 2025
Online Course

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Robyn Flores, Ph.D., LMFT-S, LPC, NCC
Office Location: Remote
Office Hours: By appointment (Monday and Wednesday mornings)
University Email Address: robyn.flores@tamuc.edu
Preferred Method of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: Within 24 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Required Textbook

Goldenberg, H., Stanton, M & Goldenberg I, (2008). *Family therapy: an overview*. (9th edition). Cengage Learning.

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

Supplemental Readings

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

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

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

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

Recommended Textbook

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalogue Description of the Course

[semester/year} Syllabus/Schedule are subject to change



COUN 611. Introduction to Marriage and Family

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.

General Course Information

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.

Content Areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Self-evaluation as a potential marriage counselor
2. Personal philosophy and methodology for marriage counseling that she/he can defend via sound rationale
3. Professionalism in marriage counseling (i.e., organizations, agencies, etc.).
4. Multiple aspects of relationship counseling (i.e., conjoint counseling, premarital counseling, divorce counseling, etc.)
5. Family functions as a unique changing system and identify those points at which successful intervention seems most likely
6. Historical development of the MFT field and current issues
7. 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. Personal issues pertaining to one's family of origin and present functioning and how these issues may affect one's therapeutic relationships
10. Current literature in the MFT field through journals & periodicals

TEXES Competencies Related to this Course (*TEXES is the state examination required for school counselor certification.*)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

Measurement 1 (Knowledge):

- I. Final Exam. The final exam will be a multiple-choice and True/False exam in which students will demonstrate knowledge of various family therapy topics including theory and application to practice.
- II. Journal Article Critique. Students will utilize information from course lecture and readings to summarize information from a chosen journal article and discuss implications of the findings.

Measurement 2 (Skills):

- I. Journal Article Critique. Students will critically evaluate chosen journal article and evidence ability to effectively interpret and apply counseling research to clinical practice.

*All SLOs address the respective CACREP Standards evident in the syllabus.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In this class, you will utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) entitled D2L for portions of instructional and learning methods, submitting assignments, participating in online discussions, and completing quizzes. You will need to utilize other technologies such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc. If you have issues with this system, it is your responsibility to contact the help desk immediately

Instructional Methods

This course consists of lecture and didactic learning methods, small group discussions, and in-class assignments, coupled with experiential learning and practical application. When we are not meeting face to face, you will be expected to participate and complete all online tasks via D2L. In addition to this, small lectures, discussion, activities, and workshops may be utilized during this course.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible for the active learning process. Expectations of this course include the following:

1. You are expected to display professionalism at all times. Be respectful of your professor and peers.
2. Be open to feedback, as you will receive this throughout the program.
3. Prepare for classes. Complete any and all readings prior to class time.

4. Complete all assignments by the deadline.
5. Adhere to the university student code of conduct.
6. Participate. During face-to-face classes, you are expected to actively participate in all activities and discussion. In the online format, you are expected to participate in all online discussions/activities. This is crucial to your learning.
7. All writing assignments must be done according to APA 7th edition.
8. Regularly check your University email. My suggestion is to check this at least once a day as your instructors and others from the department and University may contact you. Begin your readings ASAP. Sometimes it may take more than one attempt to digest the material. Deadlines are the last possible moment something is due—not the first moment to start.
9. Work ahead. I realize this may not always be possible; however, when you can, do so.
10. Be open to the process. This degree takes time, work, effort, and growth

Exams (100 points each). There will be a midterm and final multiple choice and True/False timed exam. A review of the exams will be provided online. The goal of the exams is to test your knowledge on various theories of Family Therapy covered in this course, as well as application of knowledge to practice.

Assessment: Exams Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-79 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (80-89 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectation (90-100 points)
Grade Percentage on Exam	Less than 80% correct on all test items	Between 80% and 89% correct on all test items	Greater than 89% correct on all test items

Journal Article Critique (20 points): You will choose a journal article from an Appendix A journal, and critique it based on material learned from your text and from this class. The goal of this article critique is to enhance your ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate research relevant to marriage and family counseling and your area of focus, as well as apply research findings to practice. See Rubric below.

Journal Article Critique Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-3.4 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (3.5-4.6 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectation (4.5-5 points)
Summary of basic article information (5 points)	Demonstrates a lack of knowledge on how to appropriately summarize key findings. Basic information missing: name of author(s), title of article, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, methods, and discussion of findings and implications. Not representative of graduate level work	Demonstrates knowledge on how to appropriately summarize a journal article but omits one or two key points. Includes summary of basic information such as name of author(s), title of article, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, methods, and discussion of findings and implications. Representative of graduate level work	Demonstrates exceptional knowledge on how to appropriately summarize a journal article with no missing key points. Includes summary of basic information such as name of author(s), title of article, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, methods, and discussion of findings and implications. Representative of graduate

			level work
Critique of research (5 points)	Critique demonstrates little to no evidence of key ideas and findings. Did not include a critique of the research. Not representative of graduate level work	Critique demonstrates good evidence of key ideas and findings but omits one or two key points. Student's critique is fairly developed and has well-identified supporting points but may omit one or two key points. Representative of graduate level work	Demonstrates exceptional knowledge of key ideas and findings. Student's critique is clear, thorough, and has well-identified supporting points. Representative of graduate level work
Application to practice (5 points)	Application to practice was not addressed or insufficiently addressed; application was not relevant to SC or CMHC counseling; Not representative of graduate level work	Application to practice was addressed but missing one or two key points; application was relevant to SC or CMHC counseling; representative of graduate level work	Application to practice was thoroughly addressed without any missing information; application was relevant to SC or CMHC counseling; representative of graduate level work
APA Style/Grammar (5 points)	Substantial APA errors (> 6 errors). Poor quality, not indicative of graduate level work.	Some APA errors (3-4 errors). Good quality indicative of graduate level work.	Little to no errors (1-2 errors). Exceptional quality indicative of graduate level work.

Discussion Boards (6 points for initial post and 6 points for response post; 30% total) in D2L. You will have a total of 5 discussion boards (5 initial postings and 10 response postings) in this class. You are expected to give a thorough and thoughtful response to each prompt. In addition to the initial discussion, you will also respond to two of your classmate's discussion posts. The goal of the discussion posts is to stimulate conversation surrounding research, challenge any preconceived notions relevant to research and the counseling profession, and expand your thoughts on counselors' role in research. The rubrics for both discussion and response posts are below. For the days with discussion posts, they are released on the day of class and are due in 48 hours. **Please note that no late postings will be accepted.** For each live class you actively participate in, you may replace a discussion board. See schedule for options for live classes.

Discussion Post Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-3.9 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (4.0-4.4 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectations (4.5-5.0points)
Discussion Post Qualities 5 Points	Post is not complete, not written in a clear manner OR post is missing critical components of the question OR is discussed in an illogical/inconsistent manner. Post has several grammatical/APA errors; not consistent with graduate level work	Post presents most elements of the question OR all elements discussed in a brief manner. Post is evident of graduate level work with some grammatical/APA errors	Post presents all elements of the question(s) discussed thoroughly and clearly. Post is evident of graduate level work with few to no grammatical/APA errors.



Response Post Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-3.9 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (4.0-4.4 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectations (4.5-5.0 points)
Response Post Qualities 5 Points	Response is not complete, missing critical components OR feedback is not thoughtful. Response has several grammatical/APA errors and is not consistent with graduate level work.	Response presents most elements in a brief manner. Response is evident of graduate level work with some grammatical/APA errors.	Response presents all elements required thoroughly and clearly. Provided thoughtful feedback to peer. Response is evident of graduate level work with few to no grammatical/APA errors.

Prerequisite: COUN 510 or instructor consent.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
60%-69%	D
< 59%	F

Assignment/Assessment	Point Value
Participation in class discussion	20
Discussion Boards	80
Article critique	20
Midterm Exam	30
Final Exam	30

Total points possible = 100. Your Final Grade is determined adding the point values earned from each assignment and then dividing by 100.

Assignments are due on the day noted in the syllabus.

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- For YouSeeU Sync Meeting sessions 8 Mbps is required.** Additional system requirements found here: <https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>
- You must have a:
 - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - Speakers or headphones.
 - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA web site](http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp)
<http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>



- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - Adobe Reader <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Adobe Flash Player (version 17 or later) <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
 - Adobe Shockwave Player <https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
 - Apple Quick Time <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

**Brightspace Support
Need Help?
Student Support**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.



If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words “click here” to submit an issue via email.



System Maintenance

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Communication with your professors is key to your professional growth. I am here to support and guide you along your academic journey. With that being said, I cannot help you if you do not communicate with me. Please make an appointment if you have any concerns or questions. Because I teach in different locations, email is the best way to reach me. I will attempt to answer all emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday, but at times will need up to 72 hours to do so. When emailing, please use your university email and address me with courtesy and respect.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Written assignments are due on the day noted in the syllabus. All papers are due at the beginning of the class period. Late papers will have 10% deduction per day late from the final score.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>



TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

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 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>



Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

OUTLINE – subject to modifications

Date	Topic	CACREP Standards	Readings	Assignments
Week 1	Adopting a Family Relationship	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 1	Self- introduction on D2L
Week 2	Family Development	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 2	Live class option January 18 th at 12:00 PM
Week 3	Gender, Culture and Ethnicity factor in Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 3	Discussion post # 1 Depression in system approach

Week 4	Interlocking System	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 4	
Week 5	Origin and Growth of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 5	Live class option February 8 th at 9:00 AM
Week 6	Professional Issue and ethic	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 6 Visit LMFT board at website at https://www.dshs.texas.gov/mft/	Discussion post # 2 LMFT Board on Action Re-enforcement
Week 7	Psychodynamic Model of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 7	
Week 8	Transgenerational Models of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 8	Midterm Exam review
Week 9		N/A	Midterm Exam	Timed Midterm Exam
Week 10	Experiential Models of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), chapter 9 Article review from Appendix A list of Journal	Live class option March 15 th at 10:00 AM
Week 11	The Structural Model of Family Therapy Strategic Model of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 10 and 11	
Week 12	The Milan Systemic Model of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 12	
Week 13	The Behavioral and Cognitive Model of Family Therapy	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 13	Discussion post # 3 Haley VS CBFT

Week 14	Social Construction Model I and Model II	N/A	Goldenberg et al., (2008), Chapter 14 and 15	Discussion Post #4 Social Construction VS Systemic approach to family therapy
Week 15		N/A	Final Exam	Timed Final Exam

Appendix A

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