COUN 615: Seminar in Advanced Marital Counseling / Therapy
Course Syllabus
Summer II, 2025
July 7 – August 7
Tuesdays: 5:30-9:30 PM
Dallas Campus

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Robyn Flores, Ph.D., LMFT-S, AAMFT Approved Supervisor, LPC, NCC, ACS
Office: Remote
Office Hours: by appointment (during Summer Semester)
University Email Address: robyn.flores@etamu.edu
Preferred Method of Communication: email or text 623-377-8435
Communication Response Time: 24 business hours

COURSE INFORMATION
Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Reading

Required Textbooks:
Flynn, S. V. (2023). *The couple, marriage, and family practitioner. Contemporary issues, interventions, and skills.* Springer Publishing. doi: 10.1891/9780826187758
ISBN: 978-0-8261-8774-1 (Print); 978-0-8261-8775-8 (eBook)

Recommended/Suggested Readings – will be used for presentation (choose 2):
Fern, J. (2020). *Polysecure.* Thornapple Press.

Gambescia, N., Weeks, G., Hertlein, K. (2020). *A clinician's guide to systemic sex therapy.* Routledge.

Nagoski, E. (2015). *Come are you are.* Simon & Schuster Publishing.

Perel, E. (2018). *The state of affairs: Rethinking infidelity.* Harper Paperbacks.

Rosenberg, M. (2015). *Nonviolent communication: A language of life: Life-changing tools for healthy relationships.* PuddleDancer Press.

Schnarch, D. (2009). *Passionate marriage: Love, sex, and intimacy in emotionally committed relationships.* W. W. Norton & Company.

Thomas, D. (2024). *The deep psychology of BDSM and kink: Jungian and archetypal perspectives*. Routledge.

Thomas, K. W. (2016). *Conscious uncoupling: 5 steps to living happily even after*. Harmony Publishers.

Academic/Peer-Reviewed Journal Readings:
The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families (IAMFC)
Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (AAMFT)
The Family Process
AAMFT Code of Ethics (2015)

Optional Readings:
Haber, R., Braga, C., Benda, J., Fitch, J., Mitran, C. L., & Nelson, K. A. (2022). Therapist use of self and the development of a culturally-aware professional in family therapy. *The Family Journal*, *30*(3), 274–280. https://doi.org/10.1177/10664807211061834

Nunes, C. E., Antoniette, A., and Darwiche, J. (2022). Engaging in coparenting changes in couple's therapy: Two contrasting cases. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 48*(4), 998-1016.

Spengler, P. M., Lee, N. A., Wiebe, S. A., and Wittenborn, A. K. (2022). A comprehensive meta-analysis on the efficacy of emotionally focused couple therapy. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000233 (/doi/10.1037/cfp0000233)

Catalogue Description of the Course

CATALOG DESCRIPTION of COUN 615. Marital Counseling/Therapy. A study of counseling theories applied to martial and other dyadic relationships. Emphasis will be placed on the assimilation, integration and application of information pertaining to such topics as marital/divorce developmental tasks theory, object relations theory, systemic family of origin theory, interaction patterns in marriage, divorce process, and post-divorce adjustment. Techniques and historical development of marriage enrichment, marital therapy, and divorce therapy interventions will be included.

Prerequisite: Completion or concurrent enrollment in Counseling 611, 612 and/or consent of instructor

Dr. Flores's description of the course with lectures, activities, and experientials in mind:

A comprehensive study of counseling theories and interventions as applied to marital and other relationships, including diverse relational structures. Emphasis is placed on the assimilation, integration, and application of theoretical and practical knowledge associated with relational, marital, and divorce developmental tasks theory, object relations theory, systemic family of origin theory, and interaction patterns in intimate partnerships. Special attention is given to dynamics of consensual nonmonogamy,

sexuality issues (i.e., sexual identity, orientation, desire discrepancies, and sexual functioning), intimacy, and infidelity/betrayal. In addition, complexities of blended family systems, including co-parenting, stepfamily integration, and post-divorce adjustment are examined through a systemic lens. Ethical and affirming counseling practices, creative interventions, and fostering collaborative care with other providers is explored.

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 SPSS, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc. If you have issues with this system, it is your responsibility to contact the help desk immediately.

Instructional Methods, Student Responsibilities, 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 demonstrate professionalism at all times. Be respectful of your professor and peers. Be open to feedback, as you will receive this throughout the program.
2. Prepare for classes in the way that you learn best. Some students are *proactive* readers, meaning they read prior to class. Some students are *reactive* readers, meaning they read after lecture to help support their learning.
3. Complete all assignments before each deadline.
4. Adhere to the university student code of conduct.
5. Participate. During face-to-face classes, you are expected to actively participate in all activities and discussions. In the online format, you are expected to participate in all online discussions/activities. This is crucial to your learning.
6. All writing assignments **must be done according to APA 7th** edition standards.
7. 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.
8. Begin your readings ASAP. Sometimes it may take more than one attempt to digest the material.

9. Be open to the process. This degree takes time, work, effort, and growth.

Assignments/Assessments

1. **Critical Book Review, Consultation, and Presentation (60 points):** You will choose two (2) books from the recommended reading list. In the format of a group consultation (masters) or supervision (doctoral) session, you will provide a case presentation with the following elements:

   - Overview of a (real or fictional) marginalized relational dynamic/presenting concerns) that would benefit from the information learned from *both* books.
   - Overview of the marginalized dynamic and/or presenting concern(s).
   - Treatment plan implementing both 1) a systems theoretical disposition, 2) interventions from that theory, and 3) objectives/experientials that may be used for the case based on the information gathered from the two (2) books.
   - In addition to the two (2) books as references, please provide a "mini" literature review of at least ten (10) additional relevant, scholarly articles from within the past five (5) years supporting your methods and approach to this case.
   - No less than three (3) questions for the group in relation to what you need for support for this case.

2. **Post-Class Review Quizzes (total 2 quizzes. Each quiz earns maximum 10 points):** Each quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions, true-false questions from the required textbook and lecture. Quizzes must be completed by the date/time posted/announced.

3. **Final Exam (20 points):** The Final Exam will consist of 100 multiple-choice, true/false questions from the lectures and case consultation information. The goal of the exam is to test your knowledge on material presented in class and in the reading.

Class Presentation Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectations	2 – Meets Expectations	3 – Exceeds Expectations
Overview of a (real or fictional) marginalized relational dynamic/presenting concerns) that would benefit from the information learned from *both* books.	Cited incorrectly, no mention of the books chosen during presentation. Overview does not include adequate demographic and cultural identity information.	Appropriate citation via APA 7, mentioning the books throughout presentation. Overview includes adequate demographic and cultural identity	Books, authors, and literature review articles integrated into the presentation with accurate APA 7 citations. Overview includes demographic and cultural identity

	Presenting concerns not addressed.	information. Presenting concerns addressed.	information with depth and detail. Presenting concerns addressed with depth and detail.
Overview of the marginalized dynamic and/or presenting concern(s).	Does not provide an overview of the marginalized dynamic and/or presenting concern(s).	Provides brief overview of the marginalized dynamic and/or presenting concern(s).	Provides a detailed overview of the marginalized dynamic and/or presenting concern(s).
Treatment plan implementing both 1) a systems theoretical disposition, 2) interventions from that theory, and 3) objectives/experientials that may be used for the case based on the information gathered from the two (2) books.	Does not include a treatment plan; if provided, there are missing elements.	Includes a treatment plan with an overview of the elements described in the syllabus.	Includes a detailed and culturally sensitive treatment plan with brief overview of the elements described in the syllabus.
"Mini" literature review of at least ten (10) additional scholarly articles from within the past five (5) years supporting your methods and approach to this case.	Does not provide a literature review; less than ten (10) scholarly articles; older than 5 years.	Provides a literature review with ten (10) scholarly articles; within 5 years.	Provides a literature review with more than ten (10) scholarly articles; within two (2) years.
No less than three (3) questions for the group in relation to what you	Does not include questions.	Includes three (3) questions.	Includes three (3) questions and

need for support for this case			relevant sub questions.

Grading

Grading in this class will include both points and percentages so that students can determine at any time in the class where they stand. The grade book will be available through D2L and students may access it at anytime they wish.

Grades will be determined as follows:

	Master's	Doctoral
Presentation	60	50
Quizzes (2)	20	20
Final Exam	20	20
Doctoral Supervision	X	10
Total Possible	100	100

Points Earned and Grading Scale:

Final Letter Grade	
A (90%)	90-100 points
B (80%)	80-89 points
C (70%)	70-79 points
F	Less than 70 points

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS   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.

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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
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, D2Lsupports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version.
Device	**Operating System**	**Browser**	**Supported Browser Version(s)**
			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:
  - o 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred o Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive o 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-SystemRequirements

- 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

- 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/ o 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.

Technical Support

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).
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/13stude nts/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/13stude nts/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13stude nts/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&MCommerce 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/34Safet yOfEmployeesAndStudents/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.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

IMPORTANT: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule of the class. Any alterations will be announced in class, in eCollege or via email by the instructor. Students who do not check eCollege or their email assume responsibility for missing alterations to the course.

	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 July 7	Introduction ACA (2014) Code of Ethics; AAMFT (2015) Code of Ethics	Flynn (2023) Chapters 1-3; Choose books for project	Quiz 1 (due July 13 at 11:59pm)
Week 2 July 14	Skills and Methods	Flynn (2023) Chapters 4-6; Read books for project	
Week 3 July 21	Applications and Special Populations	Flynn (2023) Chapters 7-10; Read books for project	Quiz 2 (due July 27 at 11:59pm)
Week 4 July 28	Special Issues	Read books for project	Presentations (case consultations and supervision demonstrations)
Week 5 August 3	Special Issues	Lebow & Snyder (2022) Chapters 29, 30	Final Exam (due August 6 at 11:59pm)

Dated: May 1, 2025