

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO**  
**School of Applied Psychology and Counselor Education**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

**APCE 665 – FAMILY SYSTEMS**

**Nov. 6,7 & 8, and Nov. 20,21 & 22, 2009: F: 4.05-10pm, Sa: 8-5 pm, Su: 8-4 pm**

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3 semester hours.

**PROFESSOR:** Dr. Softas-Nall, Professor of Counseling Psychology, AAMFT Clinical Member and Approved Supervisor, Licensed Psychologist, NCC.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** Office McKee 291, office mailbox Room 248, [basilia.softas-nall@unco.edu](mailto:basilia.softas-nall@unco.edu), ph. 970 351 1631, FAX 970 351 2625, 501 20<sup>th</sup> st, Greeley, CO 80639.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT:** Jody Huntington, MA, NCC. Doctoral student, Counselor Education and Supervision. [jhuntington@comcast.net](mailto:jhuntington@comcast.net)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Study general systems theory of family development and interactions. Structural, communication, analytic, behavioral and postmodern approaches to family therapy will be examined, as well as ethics, legal issues, and current research.

**OBJECTIVES:** The participants in this course will:

1. Understand the family as a system and a focus of treatment.
2. Become familiar with the major theoretical approaches to conceptualizing and intervening with family systems.
3. Become familiar with a variety of therapeutic techniques for helping families to change.
4. Familiarize himself/herself with current research with family systems and therapy.
5. Be able to discuss knowledgeably legal and ethical issues unique to family therapy.

**COURSE CONTENT:**

1. Introduction of Course Requirements and Assignments
2. History of Family Therapy
3. Stages of Family Development
4. Gender, race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic level etc and family life
5. Communications Theory and the Human Validation Process Model: Satir
6. Transgenerational Approach: Bowen, Object Relations: Framo
7. Symbolic - Experiential: Whitaker
8. Structural Theory and Techniques: Minuchin , Aponte
9. Strategic Family Therapy and Techniques: Haley and Madanes
10. Social Learning Theory and Techniques: Patterson
11. Brief Family Therapy: DeShazer, Insoo Kim Berg
12. Narrative Therapy: Michael White, Madigan

- 13. Legal and Ethical Issues in Family Therapy
- 14. Evidence based interventions and Family Therapy

**CACREP STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

**OBJECTIVES specifically related to standards:**

- MFT: A. 1. History of marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy including philosophical and etiological premises that define the practice of marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy.
- MFT: A. 2. Structure and operations of professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentialing bodies pertaining to the practice of marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy (e.g., the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors). In addition to CACREP standards AAMFT practices and state licensure issues will be addressed.
- MFT: B. 1. Marital, couple, and family life cycle dynamics, healthy family functioning, family structures, and development in a multicultural society, family of origin and intergenerational influences, cultural heritage, socioeconomic status, and belief systems;
- MFT: A. 5. The role of marital, couple and family counselors/therapists in a variety of practice settings and in relation to other helping professionals; and
- MFT: A. 6. The role of racial ethnic, and cultural heritage, nationality, socioeconomic status, family structure, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual beliefs, occupational, physical and mental status, and equity issues in marital, couple, and family counseling/therapy.
- MFT: B. 1. Marital, couple, and family life cycle dynamics, healthy family functioning, family structures, and development in a multicultural society, family of origin and intergenerational influences, cultural heritage, socioeconomic status, and belief systems;
- MFT: B. 3. Societal trends and treatment issues related to working with diverse family systems (e.g., families in transition, dual-career couples, and blended families).

## **EVALUATION: GRADING SCALE:**

A	93% to 100%
A-	90% to 92%
B+	87% to 89%
B	83% to 86%
B-	80% to 82%
C+	77% to 79%
C	73% to 76%
C-	70% to 72%
D+	67% to 69%
D	63% to 66%
D-	60% to 62%
F	Below 60%

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Two exams (35% each), presentation (20%) or paper (20%), attendance and active participation (10%). Please note active participation is expected throughout the course and needs to be meaningful in relation to your professional development as a counselor in training and your future career.

**EXAMS:** Multiple choice, about 50-60 questions-the attached questions are a guideline to assist you in preparing for the multiple choice test. In addition, there will be essays in applying a model to a case. Grading will include identification of possible issues related to gender, ethnicity, family developmental stages, accuracy of model reflected in depth of integrating case and conceptualization, goals, stages, counseling techniques and role of therapist.

**PRESENTATION:** 10-12 minutes, depending on how many students are in class. Students may present genograms or another topic, see below paper options. More information the first day of class. Alternative option is to present on a current issue in Family Systems. Depending on number of students, some may write a paper instead of presentation. **Due Friday of second weekend as soon as class begins.**

## **GENERIC OUTLINE FOR GENOGRAM PRESENTATION AND PAPER:**

1. Diagram: dates, occupations, causes of death, etc. You will be given a model (Strauss Family). Make it large enough for class to see. (For paper option can be one page.)
2. Significant family events (3 to 4)
3. Related gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, family development stage issues, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual, and disability issues-patterns.
4. Three Family Themes/Issues

5. Psychological impact of 2 and 3
6. What would you keep the same in your family?
7. Reframe an experience
8. What would you change in your family? What would you want different?
9. What from this family information may impact you as a counselor/therapist (both in terms of vulnerability and strength)? What have you learned from this experience which would be useful to your future career?

Note: Students may ask professor to review an article on the Ethical Considerations of conducting the Family Genogram as a class project. Review the article and decide for yourself how much you want to disclose. Evaluation is contingent upon all questions answered, visible diagram and adherence to timeline. Other outlines for presentations will be given in class, ie gender genograms, cultural/ethnic genogram, spiritual genogram etc.

**PAPER options:** Will be discussed the first day of class in more detail. Due the last Sunday of classes. Papers are expected to be 4-5 typed pages, double spaced, regular font, grammatically correct, with a title page (not counting in the total number of papers) which includes name, name of professor, class title and number, and a creative title of the project. To receive paper back you may attach a self addressed envelope. Criteria for grading include thoroughness, level of insight, depth, connection to family systems and timely completion. Papers due Friday of second weekend.

1. Genogram paper: You can choose to write a paper instead of the presentation. It needs to be double spaced, maximum 5 pages. One page for the diagram - genogram. Answer all questions outlined for the genogram.
2. Interview a couple and follow the Gottman oral history guidelines provided in class. Summarize in max 5 double space pages. In paper address what has CIT learned from this exercise which might be useful to their training/future career?
3. Choose a topic impacting family systems and write a formal paper –APA style with a minimum of three references. Topics may include but not be limited to the following: Infertility and couples, Divorce and children, Schools and families, ADHD and families, Extramarital affairs, Military families, Ethnicity and family therapy etc. Include an informal paragraph in the end describing what has been useful for CIT in relation to their career/training?

**PARTICIPATION:** 10 points maximum. Attend class and actively participate in course discussions. Please be here when class starts and ends (and for all that happens in between). There is a lot to cover. If you think you must miss any of this class consider taking it another time. Repeated tardiness or unexcused absences will result in a total course grade reduction of at least one letter grade. Class content is expected to be relevant and meaningful to your professional training, which implies your continued active

engagement with the material and taking responsibility to fit materials into your area of future expertise.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:** This class is taught in a lecture/discussion/activity format. Students will be involved in learning in a variety of ways (lectures and discussion, video/DVD-cases and group processing of cases). This course is intended to be comprehensive and is therefore intense and face-paced. Students are informed of deadlines in advance and are expected to adhere to them.

**TEXT:** Goldenberg, I. and Goldenberg, H. (2007) (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) *Family Therapy: An Overview*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole. (This is a new edition. For this summer class I will accept the previous edition.)

**Doctoral Teaching Apprentice:** The doctoral teaching apprentice will be responsible for leading some lectures, discussions, and video/DVD case presentations. The apprentice will also review student work such as presentations, exams, and papers. This allows the apprentice to evaluate student work under the direction of a faculty member. The assignment of grades is the sole responsibility of the instructor. All questions pertaining to grades are to be directed to Dr. Softas.

Supplementary readings- Relative Chapters and Articles (I refer to them in class)

Softas-Nall, B. (2008). Family Therapy. In Leong, F.T., Altmaier, E.M., & Johnson, B. (Eds). *Encyclopedia of Counseling: Volume 1*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA. 1, 203-207.

Softas-Nall, B., Beadle, M. Newell, J. & Helm, H. (2008). Attitudes of family therapists on the disclosure of extramarital affairs. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*. 16, (4), 328-337.

Softas-Nall, B. & Sukhodolsky, D.H. (2006). Family in the United States: Social context, structure, and roles. In Georgas, J. et al. (Eds.), *Families Across Cultures*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. **Book received award by APA's Division in International Psychology.**

Williamson, J., Softas-Nall, B., & Miller, J. (2003). Grandmothers raising grandchildren: An exploration of their experiences and emotions. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 11(1), 23-32.

Softas-Nall, B., Baldo T. and Williams, S. (2001). Family-of-origin, personality characteristics, and counselor trainees' effectiveness. *Psychological Reports*, 88(3), 854-856.

Softas-Nall, B. and Baldo, T. (2001). The unexpected cotherapist. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 9(2), 191-192.

Softas-Nall, B. and Baldo, T. (2000). Dialogues within a Greek family: Multicultural stories of a couple revisited. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 8(4), 396-398.

Softas-Nall, B., Baldo, T. and Tiedemann, T. (1999). Gender based solution-focused genogram case: He and she across the generations. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 7(2), 177-180.

Softas-Nall, B. and Francis P. (1998). A solution-focused approach to suicide assessment and intervention with families. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 6(1), 64-66.

Softas-Nall, B., Baldo, T., and Williams, S. (1997). Counselor trainee perceptions of Hispanic, Black and White teenage expectant mothers and fathers. *Journal for Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 25(4), 234-243.

### **TEXTBOOK COURSE CONTENT:**

**It is expected you have read the materials from the textbook before each weekend and have reviewed the attached questions before the first weekend. Questions are the stem of multiple choice questions. This is an intensive weekend format and the better prepared you are before each weekend the more in depth your training will be and of greater value.**

#### **First half of class:**

Introduction/Systems Perspective, History. Ch-1

Family development, continuity, and change Ch.2

Gender, Culture, and Ethnicity factors Ch. 3

Interlocking systems: The individual, the family and the community Ch. 4

Origins and growth of Family Therapy, Ch. 5

Professional Issues and Ethical Practices, Ch 6, will be covered in class but not for the test. You take a whole class on ethics.

Human Validation Process Model Ch-9 pp. 222-230

Emotionally focused Couple Therapy 231-235

Psychodynamic Approaches. Ch-6 especially

Objects Relations Therapy-Framo Ch. 7 only pp. 165-168

Transgenerational Approach. Ch-8

Symbolic-Experiential. Ch-9 only pp. 207-215

**Midterm end of first weekend**

**Second half of class:**

**Genogram presentations or genogram papers or papers in lieu of genogram due Friday of second weekend**

Structural Family Therapy Ch-10

Strategic Family Therapy Ch. 11 pp. 275-286

Behavioral/Cognitive. Ch-13

Social Construction Models I: Solution-Focused Ch. 14

Social Construction Models II: Narrative Therapy Ch. 15

Evaluations

**Final end of second weekend**

This is a tentative outline. Instructor may make changes during the course.

**ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** Cheating on examinations, submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment to expulsion from the University.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:** Students are expected to adhere to the appropriate code of ethics for their particular program. Any behavior which is deemed unethical will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

**DISABILITY ACCESS CENTER:** Any student requesting disability accommodation for all classes must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at 970-351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Note: Faculty does not discuss grades over the phone.

**Electronic Devices:** All cell phones and pagers are to be turned off during class time. No text messaging during class. If a student has a particular need (is on-call for work or has children at home) he or she is expected to notify the instructor prior to the beginning of class so that accommodations can be made. Computers are welcomed as long as students are using them only for note taking, no surfing the web or e-mailing will be allowed. Due to numerous student complaints, any student found misusing his or her computer will be asked to shut it down.

**PLEASE PRINT THIS SYLLABUS AND BRING TO CLASS THE FIRST DAY.**

**\*\*SAVE A COPY OF ALL SYLLABI FOR YOUR RECORDS AND FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE SUBMISSION TO LICENSURE BOARDS.**

**Summer 2009**

**Family Systems Mid term Questions**

**Questions are to be worked on outside of class, NOT during class time. Students choosing to work on the review questions in class are choosing to earn less points of participation. It is recommended that questions are put away during class time.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. By definition, a nuclear family refers to:

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Clinical theories that focus on the individual probably emphasize:

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. From a family systems perspective, the appearance of symptoms in a family member represents the manifestation of:

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. According to the text, the major credit for applying cybernetic principles to human communication belongs to:

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. "A bad mother produces sick children." This statement is offered by the authors as an example of:

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Family stage markers are events in a family's life that:

- \_\_\_ 8. Which group of family therapists is most apt to study family transitions?
- \_\_\_ 9. Which of the following constitutes a horizontal stressor?
- \_\_\_ 10. A shortcoming in the family life stage perspective is:
- \_\_\_ 11. Most heads of one-parent households:
- \_\_\_ 12. Custodial and noncustodial single parents share the following problems:
- \_\_\_ 13. Which of the following is considered a gender issue?
- \_\_\_ 14. The Women's Project in Family Therapy:
- \_\_\_ 15. Feminist-informed therapists are especially critical of:
- \_\_\_ 16. Today, working wives:
- \_\_\_ 17. Women are especially vulnerable if divorced later in life because of:
- \_\_\_ 18. Gender-sensitive family therapy:

- \_\_\_ 19. Gender, power, and control issues are involved in:
- \_\_\_ 20. One goal of gender-sensitive family therapy is to:
- \_\_\_ 21. Approximately what percent of the current American population is made up of persons of color?
- \_\_\_ 22. Children living with unmarried mothers are:
- \_\_\_ 23. Aponte contends that power is largely determined by:
- \_\_\_ 24. In the case of single-parent families led by a teenage mother:
- \_\_\_ 25. A systems perspective:
- \_\_\_ 26. Most family rules are:
- \_\_\_ 27. A family's metarules refers to:
- \_\_\_ 28. The home heating system analogy illustrated in the text is used to help explain:
- \_\_\_ 29. Returned information regarding the consequences of an event is called:

- \_\_\_ 30. Which of the following statements is true?
- \_\_\_ 31. According to the text, which subsystem is basic in a family?
- \_\_\_ 32. The \_\_\_\_\_ of subsystem boundaries is more important for effective family function than the composition of the family subsystems.
- \_\_\_ 34. Research with schizophrenics and their families was carried out during the 1950s in all but one of the following places. Which one does not fit?
- \_\_\_ 35. Bowen studied families with schizophrenic members, especially their:
- \_\_\_ 36. The authors consider all but one of the following to be the major founders of family therapy:
- \_\_\_ 37. The Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic is especially known for their work with:
- \_\_\_ 38. Feminists have faulted existing practices as:
- \_\_\_ 39. An empirically valid theory:
- \_\_\_ 40. Family Sculpting is a:

- \_\_\_ 41. For symbolic-experiential therapists, the focus of therapy is:
- \_\_\_ 42. Humanistically-oriented therapists view dysfunctional behavior as:
- \_\_\_ 43. Satir called her approach:
- \_\_\_ 44. In Satir's classification of communication stances, blamers are considered to be struggling with feelings of:
- \_\_\_ 45. The Family Life Chronology is essentially:
- \_\_\_ 46. The Avanta Network represents:
- \_\_\_ 47. The number of followers of Satir's methods:
- \_\_\_ 48. Bowen's approach may be considered a bridge between what views?
- \_\_\_ 49. By symbiosis, Bowen is referring to:
- \_\_\_ 50. Which of the following is not one of Bowen's concepts?
- \_\_\_ 51. The "undifferentiated family ego mass" refers to:

\_\_\_ 52. In Bowen's Differentiation of Self Scale, people at the low end are apt to lead lives:

\_\_\_ 53. A consequence of parental fusion, according to Bowen, may be:

\_\_\_ 54. Bowen's concept of societal regression extends his view to:

\_\_\_ 55. In Bowen's system, a family evaluation interview:

\_\_\_ 56. Genograms helps shed light on:

\_\_\_ 57. The major professional organization of family therapists, with the largest number of members is:

Additional review questions may be given out the first day of class

Make sure you have read the material before answering the questions