

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

***THEORIES AND METHODS OF
FAMILY INTERVENTION***

SW 393 R3

DINA M. KASSLER, PH.D.

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Theories and Methods of Family Intervention

Course Number:	SW 393 R3	Instructor:	Dina M. Kassler, Ph.D.
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Semester:	Fall 2013	Contact #:	512-809-3407
Meeting Time:	Mon, 5:30 – 8:30 pm	Office Location:	SSW 3.104A
Meeting Place:	SSW 2.122	Office Hours:	By appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of models and methods of family intervention. The content will include methods for assessment of families and an overview of several different models of family intervention with a focus on intervention skills and techniques. The course is grounded in best practices and the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based intervention strategies. This course will focus on using multiple perspectives in the advanced application of theories, models, and skills utilized in short- and longer-term family interventions.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES – *Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

1. Compare various theoretical approaches to working with the family as a system, including understanding the impact of the ecological and social environments in which diverse families live **(CI/APB 7)**
2. Demonstrate understanding of similarities and differences among theories and critically assess their theoretical perspectives, value bases, and the role of gender in family dynamics **(CI/APB 7)**
3. Integrate and demonstrate the differential application of procedures, techniques, and methods of family intervention models that reflect best practices for problem areas or helping diverse client groups **(CI/APPB 4)**
4. Select theories, models, and interventions and then critically evaluate and analyze these approaches as to their effectiveness in given situations. This includes: (a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; (b) the range of applicability; and (c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system **(CI/APB 2)**
5. Apply knowledge of the impact of policy and social justice issues to interventions with families of diverse cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, family structure, national origin, ability, or other manifestation of diversity **(CI/APB 6)**
6. Demonstrate skill in using family therapy theory to assess family dysfunction in the context of the larger community and target systems within and outside the family for change **(CI/APB 10a)**
7. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of family interventions **(CI/APB10c)**

The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP2.1.2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

CL/APB2 Refine ability to manage value differences and ethical dilemmas

Objectives 4

Assignment: Class Discussions, Exams, Researched Family Role Play

EP2.1.4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.

CL/APB4 Utilize needs, values, and strengths in applying appropriate interventions for diverse client systems

Objective 3

Assignment: Class Discussions, Exams, Researched Family Role Play

EP2.1.6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

CL/APB6 Apply empirically supported evidence to practice

Objective 5

Assignment: Small Group Presentation, Researched Family Role Play, Paper

EP2.1.7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

CL/APB7 Synthesize and select human behavior and the social environment theories to match client needs

Objectives 1, 2

Assignment: Small Group Presentation, Researched Family Role Play, Paper

EP2.1.10a. Engagement.

CL/APB10a Integrate theory-based relational skills in all areas of client engagement

Objective 6

Assignment: Exams, Small Group Presentation, Researched Family Role Play, Paper

EP2.1.10c. Intervention.

CL/APB10c Critically apply interventions to design, implement and evaluate effective practice

Objective 7

Assignment: Exams, Small Group Presentation, Researched Family Role Play, Paper

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to include a variety of experiences intended to achieve the student educational outcome of mastering knowledge and skill in this area. Included will be lectures, readings, discussions, presentations, videos, and experientials. The class will be organized to utilize small groups for the development of family treatment skills, and for the integration of these skills with researched and validated family work theory. Exercises to promote self-awareness in relation to family processes will be stressed in both written assignments and in-class interactions. Students will be asked to engage in informed discussion of the class assigned readings and be asked to apply these readings to the experiential exercises. **Teaching and learning will be collaborative and interactive.**

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

Jantzen, C., Harris, O., Jordan, C., & Franklin, C. (2006). *Family treatment: Evidenced-based practice with populations at-risk* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Nichols, M. (2014). *The essentials of family therapy* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class sessions promptly and regularly, and participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor.
2. Please turn off cell phone ringers and refrain from text messaging and other non-class activities during the class period.
3. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class**, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Failure to regularly attend class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade.
4. Except in the case of extreme emergencies, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.
5. Students are expected to both learn and demonstrate knowledge of family intervention theories and skills. This requires a search of the literature in a defined area (as part of the researched role plays as well as the presentation of family theory techniques) in order to develop specialized knowledge concerning the use of family interventions as treatment of a specific problem area and/or for a specific population. In addition, students will demonstrate their level of applied knowledge of family theories, interventions, and skills on exams.
6. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades *prior to the end of the semester*. **FINAL GRADES ASSIGNED IN THE COURSE ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.**
7. Small groups are expected to resolve challenges within their group context. The professor is willing to serve as a consultant if group members are unable to resolve their differences.
8. Family work can raise emotional issues. The professor and students have the ethical responsibility to their colleagues to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting.

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Attendance and Contribution

Due to the format and content of this course, both attendance and contribution are imperative. Students are expected to be in class, or in extenuating circumstances, to notify the professor that they will be absent. Because attendance and participation are expected, a lack of these may adversely affect a student's final course grade, i.e., attendance and quality of contribution, as demonstrated by student preparation level, will determine if final course grades will be affected.

Students will be allowed **one (1) absence**. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class period (*N.B.* once students are known to the professor, this will not be verbal but will still be noted every class period). In cases where a student misses more than one class period, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by **3% points for each class missed** after the first.

2. Exams, 60% (2 @ 30%)

There will be two (2) exams (**October 28th and December 2nd**). Each exam will be worth 30% of the total course grade (for a cumulative worth of 60% of the final grade). The exams will be based on readings, discussions, activities, presentations, videos, experiential exercises, and lecture material. The exams may consist of multiple choice, fill in the blanks, and true/false questions. Exams will cover the material indicated at the end of this syllabus – they will not be cumulative and there will be no comprehensive final exam.

3. Small Group Presentation of Family Theory-Based Techniques or Procedures, 15% (Group Grade)

Students are expected to form groups of 2-5 and present to the rest of the class some family therapy techniques and/or procedures specific to a theoretical orientation or perspective of their choice. This will involve some background research into a particular family theory (examples of theories include, but are not limited to, CBT, psychoeducational, narrative, systems, and structural therapies) and then a presentation, which can include lectures supplemented with PowerPoint slides, experientials, exercises, or anything else you find useful in teaching this aspect to your classmates. No written assignment is required; however, please provide to the instructor **AT LEAST 24 HRS BEFORE PRESENTING** any handouts or PowerPoints so they can be posted to Blackboard.

Feel free to pick any family theory perspective or concept you wish, but be sure to narrow the topic down. For example, you may choose to narrow a topic to its use with a particular population, cultural group, or specific “non-nuclear” families.

In an attempt to prevent duplication of material, students will submit their to-be covered topic prior to presentation. Once presentation dates are selected/assigned to student groups, topic selection can begin, giving preference to those who choose to present earliest in the process (i.e., the group who will be the very first to present will have first “dibs” on their choice of topic).

These presentations will occur on October 7th and 14th as indicated in the “Course Schedule” at the end of this syllabus and are expected to be approximately 15-20 minutes in length. DO NOT think “bigger is better.” To respect other students who will also be presenting the same day and should be afforded the same amount of time, all groups will have a “hard stop” at 20 minutes. Evaluation components of this assignment will include the depth and accuracy of the material presented as well as the clarity with which concepts were conveyed.

4. Researched Family Role Play Demonstration, 10% (Group Grade)

Students will be assigned to groups which will role play one treatment session in front of the class utilizing a specific theoretical framework(s). Each group will reflect adherence to social work values and ethics, and application to the specific population of your role-played family. The session should demonstrate techniques appropriate to a mid-treatment meeting (i.e., this should be an established treatment and **NOT** a first

session). It is expected that the role play should last approximately 30 – 45 minutes, leaving time to process what the group members and class observers experienced. This assignment, which includes the role-play itself, a group outline, and a group summary, will be worth 10% of the final course grade. **(N.B. Only one outline and group summary is expected per group.)** A post-group reflection paper will also result from these role plays but will be assessed as a separate grade (see Course Assignment #5 below). **The outlines will be due on November 4th** and should be a brief version of what the final “Group Summary” will become. **Role plays will take place on November 11th and 18th.** **Please note that, without exception, any student who fails to be present for the actual group presentation will receive no higher than 20% of this group grade and may receive no points at all depending on contributions made up to that point.** Group evaluation components will include:

- Evidence of preparation and creativity
- Theoretical coherence demonstrated
- Treatment stage (middle session) represented appropriately
- Degree of preparation of all members as evidenced by the role-play itself, class discussion afterwards, and the utilization of the research presented in support of the interventions used

Additionally, on the day of the role play, each group will turn in to the instructor and distribute to all class members a copy of the group’s *Role Play Summary* with relevant research that should include, but is not limited to:

- Theoretical framework(s) being implemented
- Presenting problem(s) of the family
- Description for each group member’s character (student’s real name with corresponding name adopted for role play; age; ethnicity; relevant life and environmental circumstances)
- A list of 5 to 10 relevant, evidence-based references used to prepare the role play. Citations must be **recent** and **accurate**. Research **MUST** include journal articles, not just web-based resources. **(N.B. Wikipedia is NOT a reference source!!!)**
- Additionally, one copy of the **abstract** of all articles and **covers** of all books (or first page if using only one chapter) used must be submitted to the instructor with her copy of the group’s ***Role Play Summary***

In an attempt to prevent duplication of material, students will submit the theoretical orientation and family demographics/cultural group they wish to use well in advance of their group presentation. Once group members are decided on, topic selections can begin, giving preference to those who choose to present earliest (i.e., the group who will be the first to present will have first “dibs” on their choice of theory/population).

N.B.: As you are learners, I am not expecting the role plays to be professionally facilitated, but rather to immerse the student in active learning of that particular modality. This active learning will require out-of-class group meetings and rehearsal time. Role-play group grades will be posted to Blackboard after the last role play is completed, to provide as fair and objective a grading process as possible.

5. Researched Family Role Play Reflection Paper, 15%

Your Role Play Reflection Paper will be due on **November 25th**. It should be 5 – 7 pages in length, written in APA format (*Publication Manual of the American*

Psychological Association – Sixth Edition). This paper needs to be supported with relevant citations and referenced material and, as such, **MUST** include a reference list (not to be included as part of the total pages required, i.e., the paper itself should be 5 – 7 pages, and then the reference page added on to that). You may use reference material from our in-class readings or assignments, but you are also expected to utilize outside referenced materials as well. Late assignments will be assessed penalties at the rate of **5 points (out of 100 pts) for each calendar day late** (not per scheduled class day) beginning immediately following the start of class time. Late papers will be accepted as e-mail submissions with penalties assessed based on arrival time (*N.B. Please refrain from submitting on-time written assignments as e-mail*). Your paper should include:

- A brief restating of the family information (e.g., problems role-played, frameworks and interventions used, etc.)
- Group dynamics/interactions between members/characters portrayed
- The leadership techniques and styles of the facilitator(s)
- How well your group portrayed the theoretical framework(s) cited
- How the research collected was explicitly utilized in formulating the family session
- An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the session as a whole
- What you would do the same/different if you were the full-time SW for this family
- What interventions you would consider including in future sessions
- Personal reactions/observations re: what the experience was like for you as a family member or leader and how this may have differed from what you expected
- A personal assessment of your contribution to the overall process of this project

Role Play Reflection Paper evaluation components will include:

- Overall critical analysis, thought, clarity, and organization of the paper
- Use of specific instances from the role play in formulating analyses
- Structure of the paper, i.e., grammar, spelling, punctuation; **N.B.** Failure to write thoughtfully, carefully, and proofread as evidenced by these errors will result in the loss of points

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

<u>Course Requirement</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Exams (2 @ 30% each)	60%	A = 94.0 – 100%
Presentation of Group Technique (Group Grade)	15%	A- = 90.0 – 93.9%
Researched Family Role Play (Group Grade)	10%	B+ = 87.0 – 89.9%
Family Role Play Reflection Paper (Individual Grade)	15%	B = 84.0 – 86.9%
		B- = 80.0 – 83.9%
		C+ = 77.0 – 79.9%
		C = 74.0 – 76.9%
		C- = 70.0 – 73.9%
		D+ = 67.0 – 69.9%
		D = 64.0 – 66.9%
		D- = 60.0 – 63.9%
		F = 59.9% and below
TOTAL	100%	

VIII. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

2. Professional Conduct in Class

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

3. Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication

Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g., blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

4. Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

5. Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed

accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before exams. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

6. Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

7. Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

E-mail is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their e-mail for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently — daily, but at minimum twice a week — to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

8. Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

9. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

10. Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

11. Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the professor uses Blackboard — a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu> — to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, and to post grades. Blackboard is used to provide access to PowerPoint presentations of lecture materials and pre-exam review materials. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is intended only as a guide. Students should complete the readings as they are outlined, in order to space them evenly throughout the semester. This is especially important since the exams will cover the required readings for that period of time. The student is responsible for all readings whether or not the material is covered in lectures.

WEEK	DATE	DESCRIPTION/TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1	9/9	Introduction & Overview of Course	Syllabus
		Theoretical Framework	Chapters 1-2 (Janzen)
		The Evolution of Family Therapy	Chapter 2 (Nichols)
2	9/16	Basic Techniques of Family Therapy	Chapter 3 (Nichols)
		Evidence-Based Treatment	Chapter 3-4 (Janzen)
3	9/23	Strategic Family Therapy	Chapter 6 (Nichols)
			Chapter 10 (Janzen)
		Structural Techniques	Chapter 7 (Nichols)
			Chapter 6 (Janzen)
4	9/30	Bowen Family Systems Therapy	Chapter 5 (Nichols)
		Video TBD	In-Class Video and Discussion
5	10/7	Small Group Presentations	Presentations
6	10/14	Small Group Presentations	Presentations
7	10/21	Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (FOR EXAM #2)	Chapter 10 (Nichols)
			Chapters 7 & 11 (Janzen)
		"Jeopardy" for Exam #1	
8	10/28	Exam #1	Covers all Lectures, In-Class Discussions/Activities, Small Group Presentations, Chapters 1-4, 6, 10 (Janzen), Chapters 2, 3, 5-7 (Nichols), and Video(s)
		Meet in groups for Group Role Plays	In-Class time for groups

WEEK	DATE	DESCRIPTION/TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
9	11/4	Family Role Play Outlines Due	<i>Researched family role play outlines due today</i>
		Solution-Focused Brief Therapy	Chapter 12 (Nichols)
		Narrative Therapy	Chapter 5 (Janzen)
10	11/11	Researched Family Role Plays	<i>Group role play summaries due today</i>
11	11/18	Researched Family Role Plays	<i>Remaining Group role play summaries due today</i>
		Video TBD	In-Class Video and Discussion
12	11/25	Researched Family Role Play Paper Due	<i>Role Play Reflection Papers due today</i>
		Video TBD	In-Class Video and Discussion
		“Jeopardy” for Exam #2	
13	12/2	Exam #2	Covers Lectures, In-Class Discussions/Activities, Chapters 10, 12, & 13 (Nichols), Chapters 5, 7, & 11 (Janzen) Video(s), and RFRPs