

The University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work

Course Number:	SW 393R15	Instructor's Name:	Pamela Haynes, MSW, LCSW, DCSW, BCD
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Semester:	Fall 2013	E-Mail:	phaynes@austin.utexas.edu
Meeting Time/Place and Room:	Monday 8:30 am to 11:30 am 2.112	Office Hours:	By Appointment Room 3.104A from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm Mondays

COUPLES COUNSELING

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as a seminar for students in the clinical concentration and will cover intervention approaches used in couples therapy. It will be taught from a systems perspective and will include an overview of models and methods drawn from evidence based research. The primary focus of this course will be to blend theory and application. This course will require the student to participate in both theory based and experiential learning and will incorporate simulations and case presentations to elucidate the approaches discussed.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to compare and contrast theory-based interventions which incorporate intrapsychic and interpersonal theory including an understanding of emotions, physiology and communication.
2. Demonstrate the ability to explore and resolve social work values and ethical dilemmas in selecting and implementing interventions for couples.
3. Understand the importance of awareness of self as a parallel process to the application of interventions with couples.
4. Identify the implications of race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, substance abuse and domestic violence on assessment and intervention with couples.
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5. Understand and integrate theory using empirical, evidence-based best practice research.
6. Demonstrate the ability to review the elements of a treatment approach assess the effectiveness and elicit clinical input that heightens awareness and examines interventions in light of cultural perspective and desired outcome.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course will include a variety of teaching methodologies designed to achieve the beginning mastery of theoretically-grounded advanced practice skill competencies with couples. Learning activities will include reading, writing, discussion, lectures, videos, simulations and experiential exercises. Students will video-tape simulations as a tool for learning assessment and intervention skills. Students will present a case and solicit feedback from other students in order to identify strategies to improve their effectiveness in intervening with couples. Students will also be encouraged to develop insights into "the use of self" through observations and self reflection. Simulations will be monitored to facilitate the assessment of skill competencies.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

Gurman, A.S.(Ed.) 2008 Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy. New York; The Guilford Press.
Gottman, J. S. (2004). The Marriage Clinic Casebook. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Reading List

Readings are available on Blackboard

- Atkinson, B., (2005) *Emotional Intelligence in Couples Therapy; Advances from Neurobiology and the Science of Intimate Relationship*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Brown, E.: (2001) *Patterns of Infidelity and Their Treatment*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner-Routledge
- Glasser, W.(2001) *Counseling with Choice Theory, The New Reality Therapy* (formerly, *Reality Therapy in Action*). New York: HarperCollins
- Gottman, J. (1999) *The Marriage Clinic*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company
- Jacobson, N., Gottman, J (1998). When Men Batter Women, New Insights into Ending Abusive Relationships. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Johnson, Susan: (2004) *The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy: Creating Connection*. New York: Brunner-Routledge (2nd ed)
- Johnson, Susan: (2005) *Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy with Trauma Survivors: Strengthening Attachment Bonds*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Johnson, S.M & Whiffen, V. (Ed.). (2003) *Attachment Processes in Couples and Family Therapy*. New York: Guilford Press
- O'Hanlon, W. & Hudson, P.: (1994) *Rewriting Love Stories*. New York: W.W. Norton
- Peluso, P. (Ed.). *Infidelity: A Practitioner's Guide to Working With Couples in Crisis*, New York: Routledge.
- Sullivan, C. & Cottone, R.R.: (2006) Culturally Based Couple Therapy and Intercultural Relationships: A Review of the literature. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 14(3) 221-225.

V. Course Requirements

The grade for the course will be based on the student's ability to demonstrate (a) knowledge and methods from the major models couples counseling and (b) effective interventions for resolving couples issues. Grading will be based primarily on total points accrued from each of the four major assignments. However, professional skills, which are embodied in class attendance, punctuality participation, promptness in completing assignments and as well as clear and concise writing skills, will be factored into the final grade. Points listed on assignment descriptions are maximum points given for excellence in detail, relevance and thoroughness.

Written assignments should be typed and **double spaced**. Single space and/or fonts under **12 pt** will incur a penalty (one point per page) as will extra pages. The preferred method is to turn in the paper in a hardcopy, but papers may be emailed to your instructor when necessary. APA (6th Ed) citation style must be used for referenced information.

1. History and Assessment (not to exceed 5 pages)

Students will be divided into groups of three (with an added group of two or four depending on the class size) and will create history and background for a "simulation couple" they will play this semester. To prepare for these simulations students will construct an assessment package.

The narrative will include:

- A description of the presenting problem,

- The strengths and challenges of the relationship,
 - One or two issues over which the couple is gridlocked (Atkinson, Chapter 5, Gottman Chapter 4)
 - Summary of Gottman's Seven Questions as they relate to your couple (Gottman Chapter 4)
 - A relationship history using the Oral History Interview (Gottman, 398-99), Adapt questions to fit your couple, for example, if they are not married change questions referring to marriage; i.e. change "how is your marriage different than when you first got married?" to "how is your relationship different than when you first got together?"
 - A brief family history
 - The Meta-Emotion Interview (Gottman, 402).
- The interviews need to be written as a summary. Each student's work will be graded separately.
One copy should be turned in (hard copy) to the professor.

20 points maximum

Going over the page limit, single spacing will be penalized.

2. Couple Therapy Simulation and Analysis

(a) Students will tape a DVD of three role plays. Each simulation (role play) will be limited to 30 minutes duration. Each student will alternate playing members of the couple created in section 1 and therapist (so that each student has an opportunity to play the therapist). Each therapist will demonstrate a variety of different techniques discussed in class and covered by the readings, but should not be limited to these. Students are encouraged to use different techniques from those of their group mates.

(b) Students will need to schedule a room in the LRC to tape simulations. **(The LRC rooms must be scheduled early in the semester to avoid schedule conflicts. Also you must bring your own DVD-R disk. Speak with the staff about which type to purchase.)**

(c) Analysis – After each session, students will view and critique the video using the critique guide provided on Blackboard in the assignments section. Group members may work on this part of the assignment together but each student must turn in his/her own analysis. Each student's work will be graded separately. There are 3 analysis: one for the student playing the therapist and two for viewing your group members' simulations. There are different requirements for the analyses; Therefore please review the rubrics before taping your simulations. (7 page maximum for all three.)

30 point maximum

3. Case Consult

Each group will schedule a time for a case consult which will be delivered after the completion of their second simulation. The presentation should include:

- background summary,
- presenting problem,
- treatment approach and interventions,
- treatment challenge – a question about treating this couple that could improve your effectiveness as a therapist.

At the end of the presentation the presentors will ask questions that illicit input regarding the treatment challenge or dilemma and request for input from the rest of the class. The presentors will facilitate a class discussion.

The entire presentation should take approximately 30 minutes.

20 points maximum

4. Diversity Review and Discussion

Students will choose a social identity, community or population they would like to explore regarding intimate partnerships. While individuals normally identify with a variety of populations, for this assignment we will be putting a primary focus on only one aspect of an identity. Such as, but not limited to, the following: arranged marriage, LGBT relationships, military couples, cross culture couples, interfaith marriages, polyamory relationships, unmarried couples, blended families, African American, Latino, Asian American / other ethnic couples.

This assignment has two parts:

1) Gather information from online sources, journal articles, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, educational slides and personal interviews, when possible. Provide at least **three such sources**. Identify strengths, needs, values, biases, stereotypes, traditions and attitudes would need to be considered in working with this population. Identify one or two couple therapy approaches that have been shown to be effective with this population. If 'evidence based' approaches are not found, identify approaches that could be classified 'considerations.' Prepare an annotated bibliography and post it on Blackboard.

Write a **two to three page summary** to include (a) a critical discussion of the findings themselves, (b) a thoughtful consideration of the information gathered including questions the approaches raise and (c) a review of your own biases and how they may have shifted or remained the same during this assignment.

The goal of this assignment is to raise awareness and encourage thoughtful discussion and cannot be comprehensive. It is in no way is meant to imply homogeneity within a population and in fact may actually provide examples of a vast array of differing perspectives

2) Prepare a presentation for the class **with the other students who chose this population**. Plan to review your findings and then lead a class discussion including any theories you have formulated about the effectiveness of treating this population in couples counseling. Anticipate that the presentations and discussion will take approximately 30 minutes.

Grading will take into consideration the quality & variety of your sources (*For example if you choose to interview someone; the length of time spent, quality of questions asked, how you chose the person/people. If you chose readings, quality of the source, explanation of how you chose the article and the quality of the articles chosen.*) and the quality of your discussion.

30 points total maximum (20 for the paper and 10 for the class discussion). You will be graded separately on your papers and as a group in the class discussion.
Going over the page limit, single spacing will be penalized.

VI. Course Grading Criteria

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:		Grading scale: 100 – 94 = A 93 – 90 = A- 89 – 87 = B+ 86 – 84 = B 83 – 80 = B- 79 – 77 = C+ 76 – 74 = C 73 – 70 = C- 69 – 67 = D+ 66 – 64 = D 63 – 60 = D- 59 and below = F
History & Assessment paper	20%	
Couples Simulations	30%	
Diversity paper & Discussion	30%	
Case Consult	20%	
History & Assessment for Simulated Couple	Date Due	September 23
Diversity paper & Discussion	Date Due	October 7
Couples Simulations	Date Due	October 21
Diversity Discussions	Dates	October 21 & 28
Case Consult	Dates	November 18 & 25
Graduate students must earn a minimum grade of C in the course for credit toward graduation; also, graduate students must maintain an overall 3.0 average.		

VII. Class Policies

Assignments:

Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. The penalty will be assessed by **subtracting 5 points per day**. Exceptions will be made only in the case of an extreme emergency and with the permission of the instructor to be given **24 hours prior** to the due date.

Professional Conduct in Class:

Students are expected to act like professionals in class. This means arriving at class on time, being prepared to participate in the class discussion, and showing respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment students will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, you will be expected to engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Attendance:

Regular and punctual class attendance and class participation is expected. Please notify the professor **in advance** of any anticipated absence. Missing more than one class or leaving class early without prior approval and a valid excuse (such as a medical appointment with documentation) **is cause for reduction in the final grade (generally 3 points per unexcused absence)**.

Confidentiality:

Personal disclosure is not an expectation or a requirement of this course. However, it is appropriate and often helpful for students to reveal personal information during class as it relates to our learning about specific topics. Students are expected to hold these discussions in confidence and adhere to all professional codes of confidentiality concerning this class.

Scholastic dishonesty:

It is expected that the work handed in will be your own. Academic dishonesty violates social work values and will result in referral to the Dean's office and dealt with according to the policies of the University which are as follows: 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/>).

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.

Disabilities:

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class. The student should remind the professor of any assignment accommodations no later than five business days before an assignment is due. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

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.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email 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>.

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.

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>.

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're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

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 (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. 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.

Samples:

Occasionally the instructor may ask students for a copy of their papers to use as a sample paper for future students. If asked, the students are under no obligation to agree and may decline without fear of reprisal. If they agree, they will be asked to sign a form indicating that the permission was given freely.

Feedback

During this course the students are encouraged to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including through anonymous surveys about how the professor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important to insure that together the professor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.

Laptops, cell phones, text messaging

The use of laptops, cell phones, and text messaging during class is prohibited. This prohibition includes I-pads and all other electronic devices.

VIII. Course Schedule

Date	Description	Text/Readings
September 2	No Class	Labor Day
September 9	Overview & Introduction Class policies	Gottman Chapter 4 Atkinson Chapter 5

	<p>Introduction to Couples Counseling</p> <p><u>Sign up for diversity review</u></p>	Gurman Chapter 2
September 16	<p>Marital Success a Gottman Overview and video</p>	Gurman, Chapter 5 Schwartz Gottman Chapter 1 Gottman Chapters 3 & 6
September 23	<p>Marital Success Continued Gottman Video</p> <p>Assessments due <u>Sign up for case consult date</u></p>	Gottman Chapters 7, 8, 10 & 14
September 30	<p>Emotion Focused Therapy for Couples Overview</p> <p>Johnson Video</p>	Gurman Chapter 4 Johnson Chapter 1 Johnson and Whiffen Chapters 1 & 6
October 7	<p>PETC Overview Johnson Video</p> <p>Diversity Paper due</p>	Atkinson Chapter 2, 4 & 6
October 14	<p>Object Relations Couples Therapy Overview</p> <p>Brief / Strategic Approaches to Couples Counseling Overview</p> <p>Madanes Video</p>	Gurman Chapter 6 Schwartz Gottman Chapter 10 Gurman Chapter 10 Schwartz Gottman Chapter 12
October 21	<p>Diversity Discussions: Arranged marriages LGBT relationships Military couples Polyamory relationships Cross cultural couples African American / other ethnic couples</p> <p>Simulations due</p>	Johnson and Whiffen Chapter 15 Sullivan and Cottone Culturally Based Couple Therapy and Intercultural Relationships: A Review of the Literature- Diversity Discussions Gurman Chapters 24
October 28	Diversity Discussions continue	Schwartz Gottman Chapter 7 & 8
November 4	Affairs: Getting the Message	Peluso Chapter 8 Brown Section 1 Gurman Chapter 14 Schwartz Gottman Chapter 4

November 11	Special Considerations: Substance Abuse, Domestic Violence, Previous Trauma, Step-family issues	Jacobson and Gottman Chapters 2 & 8 Gurman 18 Johnson (Trauma) Chapter 2 Schwartz Gottman Chapters 3, 6, 9 & 13
November 18	Case Consults	O'Hanlon Chapter 6
November 25	Case Consults	Schwartz Gottman Chapters 5
December 2	Countertransference, Legal & Ethical Issues & Termination Evaluations	Schwartz Gottman Chapters 2 & 14 Atkinson Chapter 13 Gurman Chapters 26

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Bibliography

Students are encouraged to read the literature associated with the Family Therapy model of choice. Some of the materials will be on reserve in the LRC. Other materials can be found at the Perry-Casteñada Library.

- Donovan, J. : (2002) *Short Term Couples Therapy*. New York: The Guilford Press
- Gottman, J.M. and Silver, N. (1994). *Why Marriages Succeed for Fail*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Gottman, J.M. and Silver, N. (1999). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Gottman, John Mordechai (2002) *The Mathematics of Marriage Dynamic Nonlinear Models*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Gottman, John Mordechai (1997) *Meta-emotion : How Families Communicate Emotionally*. Mahwah, N.J.
- Gottman, John Mordechai (1979) *Marital Interaction : Experimental Investigations*. New York
- Hardway, M. : (2005) *Handbook of Couples Therapy*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons
- Johnson, S.M., Brent Bradley, J Furrow, A Lee, G Palmer, D Tilley & S Woolley: (2005) *Becoming an Emotionally Focused Couples Therapist : A Work Book*. N.Y. Brunner Routledge.
- Kelly, S. & Iwamasa, G.Y.: (2005) Enhancing Behavioral Couple Therapy: Addressing the Therapeutic Alliance, Hope and Diversity. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*. 12(1): 102-112.
- Kissen, M.: "Why Is Marriage So Difficult?" A Psychoanalyst's Perspective. *Journal of Psychoanalytic Social Work*. 10(2): 5-19.
- Schultheis,G., O'Hanlon, S., O'Hanlon, B.: (2010) *Couples Therapy Homework Planner*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons
- Tatkin, Stan & Hendrix, Harvell. (2012) *Wired for Love: Understanding how your Partner's Brain and Attachment Style can help you Defuse Conflict and Built a Secure Relationship*. California: New Harbinger Publications

Couples Therapy with Trauma Issues

- Basham, K. & Miehl, D.: (1998) Integration of Object Relations Theory and Trauma Theory in Couples Counseling with Survivors of Childhood Trauma, Part II: Theoretical Foundations. *Journal of Analytic Social Work*, 5(3): 65-78.
- Johnson, Susan M.: (2005) *Emotionally focused Couple Therapy with Trauma Survivors: Strengthening the Attachment Bonds*. New York: Gilford Press
- Maltz, W.: (2012) *The Sexual Healing Journey: A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Abuse* New York: Avon Books
- O'Hanlon, W. H. (1998). *Even From a Broken Web : Brief, Respectful Solution-Oriented Therapy for Sexual Abuse and Trauma*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Beck, A. T. 1988. *Love is never enough*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Ellis, A. 1977. The nature of disturbed marital interactions. In Handbook of rational-emotive therapy. A. Ellis and R. Greiger, eds. New York: Springer.
- Epstein, N. 1982. Cognitive therapy with couples. *American Journal of Family Therapy*. 10:5-16.

Solution Focused Therapy

- Berg, I. K. , & Miller, S. D. (1992). *Working with the Problem Drinker: A Solution Focused Approach*, New York: W.W. Norton

Psychoanalytic Family Therapy

- Dicks, H.V. 1967. *Marital tensions*. New York: Basic Books.
- Dicks, H.V. 1963. Object relations theory and marital studies. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*. 36:125-129.
- Donovan, J.M. 2004. *Short-term object relations couples therapy: The five step model*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Bowen Family Systems Model

- Lerner, H.G. (1989) *The Dance of Intimacy: A Woman's Guide to Courageous Acts of Change in Key Relationships*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lerner, H.G. (1985) *The Dance of Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing the Patterns of Intimate Relationships*. New York: Harper and Row.
- McGill, D. W. (1992). The Cultural Story in Multicultural Family Therapy. *Families in Society* 73(6):339-349.

Research, Spiritual, Gender and Ethnic considerations **Journals and Publications in Family Therapy**

Journal of Marriage and the Family (published quarterly)
National Council on Family Relations
1219 University Avenue, S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Journal of Marital and Family Therapy (published quarterly)
AAMFT Journal Business Office
1717 K Street N.W.

Washington, DC 20006
Journal of Systemic Therapy
Guilford Press
72 Spring Street, New York 10012

The Psychotherapy Networker (published bi-monthly)
A magazine for mental health professionals
7703 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20012
Practice Guidelines Available on-line
www.aamft.org/
www.psychguides.com