

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

<b>Course Number:</b>	393R3	<b>Instructor's Name:</b>	Jack Nowicki, LCSW
<b>Unique Number:</b>	61995	<b>Office Number:</b>	SWB 3.130 C
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall 2011	<b>Office Phone:</b>	892-6888 (H) 328-6860 (W)
		<b>E - Mail</b>	<a href="mailto:jnowickisfbt@gmail.com">jnowickisfbt@gmail.com</a>
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	W 2:30-5:30 Rm 2.116	<b>Office Hours:</b>	M, 4:15–5:30 or by appointment

---

**THEORIES AND METHODS OF FAMILY INTERVENTION**

**I. Standardized 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. Standardized Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester, 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/APB 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: Readings and in class activities & skill building exercises

**EP2.1.4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.**

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

Objectives 3

Assignment: In class activities, skill building exercises, cookbook

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

**CL/APB6** Apply empirically supported evidence to practice

Objectives 5

Assignment: Cookbook

**EP 2.1.7. 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: In class activities, skill building exercises, cookbook

**EP2.1.10a. Engagement.**

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

Objectives 6

Assignment: In class activities, skill building exercises, cookbook

**EP2.1.10c. Intervention**

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

Objectives 7

Assignment: Cookbook

**III. Teaching Methods**

This class provides opportunities for both theory and skill development. Family practice models will be presented through a combination of lectures, demonstrations of practice interventions, experiential skill-building exercises, and class discussions integrating the course readings, and an essay exam testing students' knowledge and ability to communicate.

**IV. Safety Policy**

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 practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

**V. Required Texts**

- Janzen, C. Harris, O., Jordan, C. & Franklin, C. (2006). *Family treatment: Evidenced-Based practice with populations at-risk*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Gehart, D. (2010). *Mastering competencies in family therapy*. Pacific Grove, CA: Cengage Learning.

**Online Readings:**

- All additional readings are available on Blackboard

## **VI. Course Requirements**

The grade for the course will be based on the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge and methods from the evidenced-based models of family therapy and effective interventions for solving family problems. Class attendance, participation, and promptness in completing assignments are considered when assigning the grade. There are three major assignments. This is a professional practice class and each student is expected to demonstrate behavior that meets the criteria of the National Association of Social Workers code of ethics and meets the standards for professional practice of social work.

## **VII. Class Policies**

Students are expected to read the assigned readings (some students use study groups), attend each class meeting, contribute to class discussions, and participate in skill-building exercises. Failure to attend class regularly (missing more than two 2 class sessions) may result in a lower grade for the course, at the instructor's discretion. As soon as students know that they will not be able to attend class, they should e-mail or call the instructor. See section VIII.4 for grading details.

No late assignments will be accepted except in extreme emergencies and then only with permission of the instructor. If students are in an emergency situation they contact the instructor and negotiate a new due date. All late assignments will be assessed point penalties at a rate of 5 points a day.

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 at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class.

## **VIII. Course Assignments**

1. **Essay Exam: (30% of your grade)** There will be an essay exam based on the readings, lectures, and discussions. The exam will be given as scheduled on the course outline. Make-up exams are not given unless there are unusual extenuating circumstances.

A note about essay exams: My intent in giving essay exams is for students to learn to manage information (readings, class discussion, etc.), improve their ability to communicate, and to test students' application of knowledge and skills in practical situations. A goal of graduate education is to integrate and apply your education, and essay exams are a practice in which this can occur. As practice for this, we often will engage in discussion groups related to the readings at the beginning of class. Exams also challenge and encourage students to the high standards of a graduate education:

students have a chance to demonstrate their knowledge of family therapy and explain their individual understanding by use of examples, comparisons, and critiques.

2. **Class Participation (30% of your grade)** This course is practice related. Each class includes “Group Discussion Activities” and/or “Skill-building Exercises” as opportunities for students to share what they are learning or practice the attendant skills. There are opportunities for students to use their own family history and life experiences in these activities and exercises; therefore, we will discuss class personal sharing and make agreements about keeping our stories confidential if necessary.

Students are graded on the following aspects of participation: active class involvement and discussion, demonstrating an understanding of family therapy techniques, and evidence of having read the readings. Class involvement is graded based on the student’s self-evaluation and the instructor’s observation of class participation. The class participation grade is not only determined by the quantity of participation behaviors (utterances, arm waving, etc) but also on the quality of the participation; i.e. having salient contributions, reflecting preparation and knowledge of the material, and raising thought-provoking and/or \_\_\_\_\_ contributions.

3. **Cookbook of Family Therapy Practices (Techniques) (40% of your grade)**. Students will develop a comprehensive cookbook of practice techniques from one of the clinical frameworks described in this class: Strategic, Structural, Cognitive Behavioral, Solution-Focused, and Narrative/Collaborative. Students may work individually or in teams. Each approach must be included. These ‘cookbooks’ are to be presented as DTPs (“a means of publishing reports, advertising, etc, to typeset quality using a desktop computer”<sup>1</sup>) and we will be copying and exchanging them so that each class member can benefit from the others’ work. These cookbooks should read like an annotated bibliography on the included practice techniques. Each practice technique must be operationally defined (expressing the working method) and described so the reader can follow the method in steps (like in a cookbook). Each completed practice “recipe” must include a description about the purpose of the practice, details about using (when, where, and with whom), the evidence base for the practice, and the group’s rating of the practice on a group-developed scale. Ratings can be given similarly to how the major EBP Clearinghouses rate programs. (There are a few sample cookbooks listed on the class Blackboard).

#### 4. **Course Grades**

A note on Grading: “I do not *give* grades; I record students’ *achievements!* Students *earn* grades”<sup>2</sup>. From my vantage point, what matters is *learning*. In the study of family therapy, there is no way students can learn everything in 13 weeks. My goal is to increase students’ knowledge base beyond the level brought to the class: unusually high grades lead me to think I am not pushing hard enough, just as low grades indicate that I am pushing too hard. My goal is for the truly industrious and motivated students to stand out and the average students to recognize that they get out of the class what they put into it. Finally, grades, I think, should be viewed as a measure of understanding, integrating, and applying the course materials. I start the semester

---

<sup>1</sup> Definition retrieved online from Dictionary.com at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/desktop+publishing>

<sup>2</sup> Miller, S. (2000) Thoughts about lessons and grades. Sue Miller’s Homepage. Retrieved online August 20, 2010 from <http://academics.hamilton.edu/biology/smiller/lessonsgrades.html>

imagining that the whole class is “B” students and it is up to students to achieve their way out of that grade.

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:		Grading scale:
Essay Exam	30%	90–100 = A (excellent work)
Class Participation	30%	80–89 = B (good work)
Intervention Manual	40%	70–79 = C (average work)
		60–69 = D (poor work)
		< 60 = F (failing)

## IX. Course Schedule (Tentative)

### (1) August 24: Course Overview and Introduction to Family Therapy

### (2) August 31: Introduction to this Family Therapy Class

#### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 1-5; Review family therapy and background for the field of marriage and family therapy.

Janzen, et.al.: Ch 1-2; Introduction to evidence-based family treatment.

Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2007) The field of family social work. In Collins, Jordan, & Coleman's *An introduction to family social work*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole; pp. 1-40.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

### (3) September 7: Foundations of Family Therapy & Systems Theory

#### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 7-8; Theory and foundations of family therapy

Becvar & Becvar (2009) *The paradigmatic shift of systems theory*. In *Family therapy: A systemic integration*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Pearson; pp 65-85.

Becvar & Becvar (2009) *Postmodernism and family therapy*. In *Family therapy: A systemic integration*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Pearson; pp 88-100.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

### (4) September 14: The Move to Evidence-based Practice in Family Therapy (continuation of Class 2)

#### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 7-8; Theory and foundations of family therapy

Janzen: Ch 3; Beginning evidence-based treatment

Franklin, C. & Hopson, L., (2007) *Facilitating the use of evidence-based practice in community organizations*. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(3), 377-404.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(5) September 21: Family Models: Strategic Family Therapy**

### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 9; Systemic & Strategic Therapies

Janzen: Ch 10; EB Family Treatment of Substance Abuse. [review Janzen, Strategic Approach, pp 45-49]

Fisch, R. (2004). What have you done lately? MRI Brief Therapy. *Journal of Systemic Therapies* 23 (4), 4-10.

Sells, S.P. (1998). A model for change. In *Treating the Tough Adolescent*. New York: Guilford Press.

Szapocznik, J. & Williams, R.A. (2000). Brief strategic family therapy: Twentyfive years of interplay among theory, research and practice in adolescent behavior problems and drug abuse. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 3(2), 117-134.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(6) September 28: Family Models: Structural Family Therapy**

### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 10; Structural Therapy

Janzen: Ch 6; EB Treatment of Families with Multiple Problems... [review Janzen, Structural Approach, pp 30-38]

Hammond, R.T., & Nichols, M.P. (2010). How collaborative is structural family therapy? *The Family Journal*, 1, (18), 55-61.

Henggeler, S. W. (1999). Multisystemic therapy: An overview of clinical procedures, outcomes, and policy implications. *Child Psychology and Psychiatry Review*, 4, 2-10.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(7) October 5: Family Models: Functional FT & Behavioral Family Therapy**

### Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 13; Behavioral & Cognitive-behavioral Family Therapies

Janzen: Ch 8; Treatment for Families with Chronically and Terminally Ill Members... [review Janzen, Social Learning Approach, pp 49-55]

Franklin, C. & Jordan, C. (1999) Functional family therapy: An example of a specific behavioral family therapy model. In Franklin & Jordan's *Family Practice: Brief Methods for social work*. Pacific Grove, CA: pp.83-103.

Jacobson, N. S., & Christensen, A. (1997). Overview of integrative couple therapy. In *Integrative couple therapy* (pp. 86-102). Norton: New York.

§ *Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(8) October 12: Family Models: Cognitive-behavioral Family Therapy**

### Required Readings:

Janzen: Ch 4; EB Treatment for Families Headed by Single Parent

Prince, S. E., & Jacobson, N. S. (1995). A review and evaluation of marital and family therapies for affective disorders. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 21(4), 377-401.

Jacobson, N. S., & Christensen, A. (1997). Overview of integrative couple therapy. In Integrative couple therapy (pp. 86-102). Norton: New York.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(9) October 19: Family Models: Solution-Focused Brief Therapy**

Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 14; Solution-Based Therapies

Janzen: Ch 5; EB Treatment of Families with Aging Members

Nowicki, J. & Arbuckle, L. (2009) Social workers as family counselors in a non-profit, community-based agency. In A. R. Roberts, A., (Ed) *Social worker desk reference*. New York: Oxford U. Press, pp. 45-53.

Kim, J., Smock, S., Trepper, T, et.al. (2010) Is solution-focused brief therapy evidence-based? *Families in Society* (91)3, pp 300-306

Zamarripa, M. (2009) Solution-focused therapy in the south Texas borderlands. *Journal of Systemic Therapies* (28)4, pp. 1-11.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(10) October 26: Hour 1: Essay Exam**

### **Continue SFBT / The Move to Evidence-Based**

Required Readings:

Trepper, T., McCollum, E., et.al. Solution focused therapy treatment manual for working with individuals. Research Committee of the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Assn. Retrieved March 2008 online from the SFBTA, <http://www.sfbta.org/researchDownloads.html>

§ *Group Discussion Activity*

---

## **(11) November 2: Family Therapy Models: Narrative & Collaborative**

Required Readings:

Gerhart: Ch 15; Collaborative & Narrative Therapies

Freedman, J., & Combs, G (1996). Opening space for new stories. In J. Freedman & G. Combs (Eds.), *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities* (pp. 42-76). New York: Norton.

Freedman, J., & Combs, G (1996). Story development. In J. Freedman & G. Combs (Eds.), *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities* (pp. 77-112). New York: Norton.

Freedman, J., & Combs, G (1996). Questions. In J. Freedman & G. Combs (Eds.), *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities* (pp. 113-143). New York: Norton.

Monk, G. (1997). How narrative therapy works. In G. Monk, J. Winslade, K. Crocket, & D. Epston (Eds.), *Narrative therapy in practice: The archeology of hope*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass.

Ryan, D. & Carr, A. ( 2001). A study of the differential effects of Tomm's questioning styles on therapeutic alliance. *Family Process*, 40, 67-77.

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(12) November 9: Random Practices Supplementing Family Therapy Motivational Interviewing / Crisis Intervention**

### Required:

Janzen: Ch 9; Child Abuse & Other Family Violence

Almeida, R., Dolan-DelVecchio, K., & Parker, L. (2008) Remembering context: Transforming family therapy. In Almeida, Dolan-DelVecchio, & Parker's Transformative family therapy (pp. 1-21). New York: Pearson.

§ Note: Several additional readings to be added here! MI, Experiential FT, Use of Metaphors; other skills useful with systems...

§ *Group Discussion Activity or Skill-Building Exercise*

---

## **(13) November 16: Random Practices, Continued**

---

## **(14) November 23: Share and Discuss Completed Cookbooks**

---

## **(15) November 30: Class Evaluation and Wrap-up!**

### **Classics in Family Therapy**

Ackerman, N.W., Beatman, F.L., & Sherman, S.N. (Eds.)(1967). *Expanding theory and practice in family therapy*. New York: Family Service Association of America.

Bowen, M. (1976). Family therapy and family group therapy. In D. Olson (Ed.), *Treating relationships*. Lake Mills, IA: Graphinc

Fisch, R., Weakland, J.H., & Segal, L. (1985), *The tactics of change: Doing therapy briefly*. Washington: Jossey-Bass.

Gurman, A.S. & Kniskern, D.P. (1991), *Handbook of family therapy: Volume II*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Haley, J. (1963), *Uncommon therapy: The psychiatric techniques of Milton H. Erickson*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Haley, J. (1987), *Problem solving therapy*. Washington: Jossey-Bass.

Jacobson, N.S. & Margolin, G. (1979). *Marital therapy: Strategies based on social learning and behavior exchange principles*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Olson, D. (1976). *Treating relationships*. Lake Mills, IA: Graphinc.

Satir, V. (1964). *Conjoint family therapy*. Palo Alto, CA: Science & Behavior Books.

Thyer, B.A. (1989). *Behavioral family therapy*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

White, M. & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W.W. Norton.

### **Journals and Publications in Family Therapy**

Family Coordinator (until 1979) and then became Family Relations (published quarterly)

Families in Society (formerly Social Casework Journal)  
Family Service of America



National Council on Family Relations  
1219 University Avenue, S.E.  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

11700 West Lake Park Drive  
Milwaukee, WI 53224

Family Process (published quarterly)  
The Nathan W. Ackerman Family Institute  
149 East 78th Street  
New York, NY 10021

Journal of Family Counseling (until 1977) then  
International Journal of Family Counseling (quarterly)  
Transaction, Inc.  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Journal of Family Issues (published quarterly)  
Sage Publications, Inc.  
275 South Beverly Drive  
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Journal of Family Psychotherapy (published bi-monthly)  
The Haworth Press, Inc.  
10 Alice Street  
Binghamton, NY 13904-1580

Journal of Family Social Work  
Haworth Press  
Florida State University  
School of Social Work  
Tallahassee, FL

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

Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling (until 1978)  
then 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

Topics in Family Psychology and Counseling  
Aspen Publishers, Inc.  
200 Orchard Ridge Dr.  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Journal of Family Therapy  
Institute of Social and Applied Psychology  
University of Kent at Canterbury  
Kent, CT2 7CZ  
United Kingdom

The Psychotherapy Networker (Formerly, The Family  
Therapy Networker) (published bi-monthly)  
A magazine for mental health professionals  
Family Therapy Networker  
7703 13th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20012

## **Practice Guidelines Available on-line**

[www.aamft.org/](http://www.aamft.org/) American Assn. of Marriage and Family Therapists

[www.psychguides.com](http://www.psychguides.com) Psychiatric Treatment Guidelines Page

[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org) The American Psychological Association publishes Practice Guidelines and Guidelines for interpreting the Plethora of Guidelines that exist.

[www.socialworkers.org/practice/default.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/default.asp) NASW's practice page