

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

<b>Course Number:</b> SW 393R3	<b>Instructor:</b> Carmen R. Valdez, Ph.D.
<b>Unique Number:</b> 60010	<b>Email:</b> crvaldez@utexas.edu
<b>Semester:</b> Fall 2019	<b>Office:</b> 1701 Trinity St., HDB 4.812
<b>Meeting Time:</b> Mondays at 5:30pm	<b>Office Phone:</b> 512-495-5388
<b>Meeting Place:</b> SSW 2.122	<b>Office Hours:</b> Thursdays 1:00pm-2:30pm, 5:30pm-8:30pm, & by appt.

### **Theory and Methods of Family Interventions**

#### **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. 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;
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;
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;
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;

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;
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;
7. Implement and evaluate the effectiveness of family interventions.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

Class format is both didactic and interactive. 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. The combination of these approaches will provide opportunity for theory and skill development in family practice.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Nichols, M. P. & Davis, S. D. (2020). *The essentials of family therapy* (7th ed.). Pearson.

Additional readings will be posted at Canvas.

### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Analysis of transgenerational patterns with genogram.

Purpose: a) To begin to understand Bowenian family theory through application; b) become familiar with the genogram method of assessing transgenerational patterns of functioning and dysfunction within family systems; c) to consider the role of your own family dynamics in your development as an individual and your development as a mental health professional.

Directions: Complete a three (four if you have children) generational genogram of your own family system.

Part A: Construct the genogram. Directions will be provided in class and are available in the additional readings. A complete genogram representation requires quite a bit of family history research! You should begin this assignment early.

Part B: Genogram analysis. The purpose of the written analysis is to demonstrate your understanding of Bowenian theory as reflected in your evaluation of the genogram. The key to the genogram analysis is the multigenerational transmission of anxiety as reflected in symptomatic behavior. Your genogram analysis should not exceed 5 pages (typed, double-spaced). Turn in your family genogram with your paper. **30 points.**

Important note: The genogram is a highly personal assignment. Thus it is the policy of this course that assignments that are recommended for completion with one's own family, may also be completed with a volunteer family to avoid any coercive disclosure of personal information by the student. Students who wish to complete assignments with their own family data will be asked to sign a self-disclosure consent form and include this with the assignment (the genogram). To protect student confidentiality, please note that only the instructor will read and grade this assignment.

2. Team analysis of couple interaction patterns

Purpose: To develop conceptualization and treatment planning skills through analysis of couple transactional processes from various models.

Directions: During the second class on couple's therapy, the instructor will hand out case scenarios for pairs of students. Two of the pairs will discuss how they would conceptualize the couple dynamics and interactions from a couples' therapy model covered in class, and the other three pairs will match interventions from that model to the conceptualized dynamics and interactions. Pairs will meet for 20 minutes and then present to the rest of the class. **10 points.**

3. Group presentations

Purpose: To become familiar with a variety of family forms, challenges, and diversity dimensions.

Directions: Pairs of students will select one topic to discuss in class on the designated day. Students will be expected to lead the discussion and contribute their own ideas to the topic. Ideas for group presentations may come from the Walsh book, which I will bring to class, or from another pre-approved source. Topics will be approved by the professor prior to the group presentation. Presentations will be 40 minutes each, including questions from peers in class. **20 points.**

4. Family therapy role-playing and staffings

Purpose: To obtain an applied understanding of the concepts of family therapy through two weekly role-playing of a family session.

Directions: You will role-play a family therapy session every week based on a scenario distributed in class. Weekly role-plays will be of the same family. Role-plays will be done in groups of 5 each. You will take turns each week being the therapists and the family. After each role-play, you will spend 15-20 minutes discussing the presenting concerns, family interactions and dynamics, diversity observations, and treatment goals. These will be turned in to the professor at the end of class (one per group). **15 points.**

5. Final integrative family assessment

Purpose: To integrate all of the above assignments into a comprehensive family assessment and treatment plan.

Directions: Pairs of students will complete a report based on the family that was role-played during class. You will write an evaluation of this family's functioning in the form of a psychological report, and to develop a treatment plan and progress notes based on any of the family/couples' therapy models studied in the course.

Be sure to evaluate the family's functioning including the social variables that might affect family transactional patterns. These variables are not limited to but include ethnicity, social class, family developmental life cycle stage, ability/disability, sexual preference, gender identity, gender roles, employment, and any special circumstances,

such as adoption, chronic illness, and acculturation. Limit your final integrative assignment to 8 typed, double-spaced pages. **25 points.**

## VI. GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

Overview	Point/% value	Due date
#1: Analysis of family of origin with the genogram	30	10/14
#2: In class team analysis of family interaction patterns	10	10/21
#3: Group presentations	20	10/28-11/11
#4: Family role-plays and staffings	15	11/25-12/2
#5: Integrated family assessment report	25	12/11
Total	100	

Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality of the writing (grammar and sentence structure) as well as the content. *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association –Sixth Edition* format should be used. Assignments should be carefully proofread and errors corrected (e.g., punctuation, typos, spelling) or points will be lost. Graded papers will not be available until one (1) week after papers are due (longer for the genogram assignment).

## VII. CLASS POLICIES

1. Attendance and absences: Students are expected to attend class sessions promptly and regularly, and participate in an interactive and collegial manner with the Professor and Teaching Assistant, both in the classroom and in CANVAS discussions.

Students will be allowed 1 absence. Informing the Professor of upcoming absences is expected, but does not constitute an ‘excused absence.’ All absences will count towards the one that is allowed across the semester. Students are expected to catch up on the material missed while absent (including slides, readings, and video, if applicable), with their classmates. If a student has a trip planned or other plans that might interfere with

class attendance, they should arrange their schedule in a manner that takes into account traffic patterns, flight cancelations, work hours, family needs, etc.

In cases where a student missed more than the allowed absence, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade. In extenuating circumstances of absence, students are to notify the professor as soon as possible and provide documentation of reason for absence (eg: doctor's note; bill from a towing company; or similar). Students are responsible for any in-class homework that may be missed due to absences.

2. Use of electronics in class: Please turn off cell phone ringers and refrain from text messaging and other non-class activities during the class period. Laptop computers are also not allowed unless discussed with instructor first for the purposes of taking notes or required for specific learning needs. Checking email and working on outside class assignments is easy to detect, is not acceptable, and will be reflected in student's final grade. If student is expecting an emergency call that must be answered, please notify professor in advance and step out of the classroom to answer the call.

3. Participation and engagement: The instructor is often aware of students who are not paying attention or are involved in something other than what is happening in class. The instructor will discuss this with that student during a break or outside of class.

Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Reading assignments will not be reviewed in totality in class but might be discussed. Failure to demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade. The instructor is unable to determine student's understanding of the assigned material or learning objectives if they do not participate in class discussions and group work.

The instructor and students have the ethical responsibility to their colleagues to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting.

Eating in class is not allowed as it is distracting to the person eating, those around the student, and the instructor. Since this is a long class and during meal time, please eat prior to class, during the break (15 minutes) or after class.

4. Assignments: Assignments are due IN CLASS on the date noted, unless other arrangements have been made with the professor. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. Late assignments will lose one point per day of grade (including 2 points for the weekend). Assignments turned in on the due date, but later in the day following class, will be graded minus one point. In dire emergencies, such as acute hospitalization, the instructor will require both written notice and any notes/rough draft materials the student has completed prior to the due date to determine point deduction. Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.

5. Accommodations: Students are expected to notify the instructor during the first week of class of any learning needs (e.g., use of laptop, seating arrangement, extension on

assignments) they might have which must be documented through the Office of Student Services.

## **VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**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.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM.** The professor expects students to act as 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. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

**UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS.** Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at [512-471-3515](tel:512-471-3515) or online at: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

**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 that 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.

**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://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

**USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

**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). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, New link: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>

**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, examination, work assignment, or 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.

**TITLE IX REPORTING.** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrgsexualharassment.pdf>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed firearms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

**CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY.** Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

**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 for keeping the university informed about a change of 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 between 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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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.

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topics and Readings
1	Sep. 9	Orientation to Course, Attachment & Systems Theory <i>Read:</i> Nichols chs. 1, 3; Byng-Hall article
2	Sep. 16	Foundations of Family Therapy & Bowen Family Systems <i>Read:</i> Nichols ch. 4; McGoldrick genogram chapters on constructing and interpreting genograms
3	Sep. 23	Structural Family Therapy <i>Read:</i> Nichols ch. 6
4	Sep. 30	Cognitive-Behavioral Family Therapy <i>Read:</i> Epstein et al. chapter; Nichols ch. 9
5	Oct. 7	Solution-Focused Family Therapy Narrative Therapy <i>Read:</i> Nichols chs. 10-12;
6	Oct. 14	Working with Couples I <i>Read:</i> Gottman & Gottman ch. 5 <b><i>Due: Family Patterns with Genogram</i></b>
7	Oct. 21	Working with Couples II <i>Read:</i> Gottman ch. 11; Knudson-Martin article

		<b>In-class Team Analysis of Family Interaction Patterns</b>
8	Oct. 28	Family Support Programs <i>Read:</i> Statham & Holtermann article; Valdez et al. article <b>1 Group presentation</b>
9	Nov. 4	Family Life Cycle, Stress, and Resilience <i>Read:</i> Price, Price, & McKenry ch. 1; <b>1 Group presentation</b>
10	Nov. 11	Varying Family Forms & Challenges <b>3 Group presentations</b>
11	Nov. 18	NO CLASS Listen to recording of Ethical Considerations in Family Therapy
12	Nov. 25	Family Assessment <i>Read:</i> Carlson article Report-Writing and Feedback Discuss guidelines for case report <b>Family Role-plays and Treatment Planning</b>
13	Dec. 2	Evidence based Family Therapy <i>Read:</i> Nichols ch. 14, Sexton et al. article Working with Families in Schools and the Community <i>Read:</i> Rojano article; Kim et al. article; Valdez 2018 article <b>Family Role-plays and Treatment Planning</b>
14	Dec. 9	Course Wrap-up Future directions in the treatment of families
15	Dec. 11 (Wed.)	<b><i>Due:</i> Integrated Family Assessment Report</b>

## X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Byng-Hall, J. (1995) Creating a Secure Family Base: Some Implications of Attachment Theory for Family Therapy. *Family Process*, 34, 45-58.

- Carlson, C. I. (2003). Assessing the family context. In C. R. Reynolds & R. W. Kamphaus (Eds.). *The handbook of psychological and educational assessment of assessment of children*, Vol. 2 (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford.
- Epstein, N., Schlesinger, S., & Dryden, W. (1988). Concepts and methods of cognitive-behavioral family treatment. *Cognitive-behavioral therapy with families*, 5-48
- Gottman, J. M. (1999). *The Marriage Clinic: A Scientifically Based Marital Therapy* (ch. 11; pp. 267-280). Norton Professional Books.
- Gottman, J. M., & Gottman, J. S. (2008). Gottman Method Couple Therapy. In A. Gurman & J. Lebow (Eds.), *Clinical Handbook in Couple Therapy* (4<sup>th</sup> edition, ch. 5; pp. 138-164). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Kim, J.S. & Franklin, C. (2009). Solution-focused brief therapy in schools: A review of the outcome literature. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 31, 464-470
- Knudson-Martin, C. (2012). Why power matters: Creating a foundation of mutual support in couple relationships. *Family Process*, 52, 5-18
- McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R. Shellenberger, S. (1999). *Genograms: Assessment and Intervention*.
- Price, S. J., Price, C. A., & McKenry, P. C., (2009). Families coping with change: A conceptual overview. In S. J., Price, C. A. Price, & P. C. McKenry (Eds). *Families & Change: Coping With Stressful Events and Transitions* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage Publications.
- Rojano, R. (2004). The practice of community family therapy. *Family Process*, 43, 59-77.
- Sexton, T., Gordon, K. C., Gurman, A., Lebow, J., Oltzworth-Munroe, A. And Johnson, S. (2011), Guidelines for classifying evidence-based treatments in couple and family therapy. *Family Process*, 50: 377-392.
- Statham, J., & Soltermann, S. (2004). Families on the brink: the effectiveness of family support services. *Child and Family Social Work*, 9, 153 – 166
- Valdez, C. R., Abegglen, J., & Hauser, C. (2013). Fortalezas Familiares Program: Building sociocultural and family strengths in Latina women with depression and their families. *Family Process*, 52, 378-393.
- Valdez, C. R., Ramirez Stege, A., Martinez, E. , D'Costa, S. & Chavez, T. (2018). A community-responsive adaptation to reach and engage Latino families affected by maternal depression. *Family Process*, 57, 539-556.