

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY RELATIONS
& APPLIED NUTRITION
University of Guelph

FRAN 6120 Theories & Methods of Family Therapy I
Winter 2012

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Garrett LaFosse, M.Sc., RMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor

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Office Hours: By appointment

CLASSES: Thursdays, 11:30am – 2:20pm

Course Description

In this course we will critically examine and compare several important approaches in the field of couple and family therapy [EG-1]. Our analysis will cover the assumptions underlying these conceptual frameworks and the therapy practices that relate to each set of ideas. Each perspective will be considered within the historical-political context in which it emerged and with respect to major paradigm shifts in the field more generally. Attention will be given to how individual and family differences are taken into account, and to how issues of diversity, privilege and marginalization are addressed by each approach [EG-4].

Note that relevant Educational Goals [EG] and Expected Student Learning Outcomes [ESLO] are attached below. For a complete listing of these, see the Student Orientation Manual.

Course Objectives

1. To increase knowledge of selected foundational family therapy concepts, theories and techniques; and to attend to the socio-historical context in which these frameworks have emerged as well as the distinctions that can be made between them. [EG-1]
2. To attend to systemic and contextual dynamics which influence the practice of family therapy (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, larger systems, social context); and to develop awareness of the power relations associated with the theories and methods presented. [EG-1&4]
3. To develop understanding of the application, strengths, and limitations of selected models of family therapy, particularly as they relate to different cultural and ethnic groups, as well as other marginalized groups. [EG-1&4]
4. To develop skills for understanding and locating the preferred models of therapy utilized by other therapists and practitioners, along with a respect for these multiple perspectives. [EG-1&4]
5. To participate in collaboratively creating, together with all class participants, a learning environment in which there is a respectful acceptance of conflicting perspectives, complex explanations and challenging ethical dilemmas.[EG-4]

Educational Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes	Incorporation and Assessment
EG-1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS	
Educational Goal: Students will gain a broad understanding of the range of epistemological assumptions and core theoretical frameworks within the field of couple & family therapy, including an historical and critical analysis of significant theoretical issues and developments.	Didactic content, assigned reading; class discussion; graded presentation (assignment 1) and written assignments 1,2,3.
Expected Student Learning Outcome (1 a) Students will critically compare selected historical and leading-edge couple & family therapy approaches and analyze key implications for clinical practice.	Class discussions and graded assignments 1,3.
Expected Student Learning Outcome (1 b) Students will demonstrate verbal and written ability to critique and to apply theoretical conceptualizations of selected post-modern/social constructionist couple & family therapy approaches to case-study and client situations.	Class discussions and graded assignments 2,3.
Expected Student Learning Outcome (1 c) Students will articulate the theoretical basis and practice implication of their preferred approach to CFT; including an examination of the congruency with the underlying values and assumptions of the approach and their personal professional positioning.	Graded assignment 2.
EG-4 SOCIAL CONTEXT AND POWER RELATIONS	
Educational Goal: Students will integrate a sophisticated sensitivity to diversity into their professional identity as a couple and family therapist, privileging attention to social location/socio-cultural context and including an understanding of social justice issues and awareness of how direct and systemic marginalization, discrimination, and abuse may impact people's everyday lives.	Didactic content; assigned readings; class discussions; graded assignments 2, 3.
Expected Student Learning Outcome (4 b) Students will develop abilities to critically and reflexively analyze power relations of a given situation and/or embedded in the construction of knowledge, including attention to one's own participation in these processes.	Analysis in class discussions and graded assignment 2, 3.

Note that various Core Competencies are demonstrated across a variety of courses in the CFT program. The following are integrated into this course and demonstrated through your preparation and participation in class, as well as in your graded assignments.

AAMFT Competency	Sub-Domain	Competency	Demonstration of Knowledge
1.1.1	Conceptual	Understand systems concepts, theories, and techniques that are foundational to the practice of couple and family therapy.	Participation in class discussions; graded assignments 1 & 3
1.1.2	Conceptual	Understand theories and techniques of individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy.	Participation in class discussions; graded assignments 1,2, & 3
4.1.1	Conceptual	Comprehend a variety of individual and systemic therapeutic models and their application, including evidence-based therapies and culturally sensitive approaches.	Participation in class discussions; graded assignments 1,2, & 3
4.1.2	Conceptual	Recognize strengths, limitation, and contraindications of specific therapy models, including the risk of harm associated with models that incorporate assumptions of family dysfunction, pathogenesis, and cultural deficit.	Participation in class discussions; graded assignments 1,2, & 3
6.1.1	Conceptual	Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice.	Preparation of class readings for discussion, graded assignments 1,2, & 3
6.3.1	Executive	Read current MFT and other professional literature.	Preparation of class readings for discussion, graded assignment 1 & 2
6.3.3	Executive	Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation literature.	Preparation of class readings for discussion, graded assignment 1 & 2
6.4.1	Evaluative	Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application.	Participation in class discussions. Graded assignments 1,2, & 3

Class preparation and learning context

All class participants and the instructor have a shared responsibility for creating a respectful and positive learning environment. Differences in perspective and experiences can enrich learning for everyone and there is an expectation that all members of the class will listen with respect and curiosity to the ideas of others, as well as presenting their own ideas for discussion. Class preparation includes reading assigned articles and chapters prior to each class, and thinking about how the ideas presented might be applied in therapeutic practice. This course is designed to utilize the unique resources, diverse perspectives and evolving learning goals that each class member brings to this learning context. Classes will include didactic presentations, discussion of readings, videotape vignettes, and experiential activities and role-play exercises.

Course Evaluation:**1. Group Presentation: 30%****Due date: When readings assigned**

The objective of this exercise is to facilitate class discussion and to provide the class with an overview of key concepts, strengths, and limitations of the selected approach and compile this into a class handout in the form of a chart [EG-1, ESLO 1a.]. Working in groups of 2 or 3 (including at least one group member from each of the first- and second-year cohorts) you will facilitate in-class discussion and learning of this specific theoretical framework. All such presentations will be based on readings from weeks two to seven of the course.

In preparation for facilitating the in-class discussion, your group will access **three** additional readings/resources to augment the class readings. These will also be provided in the class handout/chart.

The chart should include and identify key language, terms, and concepts. You should aim for brevity and clarity. Please include the following headings:

- Key Concepts (including underlying epistemology)/ Goal of Therapy/ Methods/ Position of Therapist (Role)/Principles of Change
- Socio-historical context in which the model was developed
- Strengths
- Gaps or limitations
- Advances or modifications over time
- List of additional resources your group used in preparation.

(Note: All group members within the same group will receive the same grade)

2. Reflective Journal: 30%**Due date: March 29, 2012**

The objective of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to critically analyze, in writing, the models within a social constructionist theoretical framework covered during weeks 8-10 [EG-1, ESLO 1b, ESLO 1c]. Following each day of class (during weeks 8-10, only), write a 2-4 page reflection on how the ideas raised and the theories and methods discussed might fit or not fit with your own approach to clinical work, your own values and beliefs, and how you believe they might be experienced by your clients. In particular, you will also demonstrate your ability to attend to diversity and your own social location, as well as the power dimensions associated with these models of family therapy [EG-4, ESLO 4b]. (8-10 pages total, double-spaced, 11 or 12 point Times New Roman Font.)

3. Major Paper: 40%**Due date: April 7, 2012**

The objective of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate, in writing, your critique and understanding of the application, strengths and limitations of two selected models [EG-1, ESLO 1a, 1b] (one modern approach from weeks 2-7, and one postmodern theory from weeks 8-10) of family therapy while paying particular attention to issues of diversity and potential marginalization [EG-4, ESLO 4b]. In this paper you will compare how these two different models could be applied to

a particular family problem that you are working with, or a particular family problem that you are interested in learning or thinking more about. Whatever source you choose, the people and situations you describe in this paper should not be identifiable to the instructor, and the account should be believable.

For each of the two approaches:

- Present the relevant aspects of the family situation within the theoretical frameworks you have chosen.
- Describe the applicable concepts and practices that would be utilized by the therapist in working with this couple or family. Include a description of the initial presentation and meeting between therapist and family, and an overview of what the course of therapy might include.
- Following this descriptive presentation, include your thoughts on what this therapy experience might be like from the clients' perspective, and also from the therapist's perspective.
- To conclude each section, outline some of the ways in which systemic or contextual factors such as gender, race/ethnicity/culture, sexual orientation, etc., may be addressed or overlooked within this particular approach to working with this specific family.
- Finally, end your paper with some remarks about a post-modern critique of the two models you have presented. For example, are there ways in which both fail to take into account important postmodern constructionist principles? [10-12 pages, 11-12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with one inch margins]

Extensions for the submission of written work may be given for medical or compassionate reasons.

Class members are expected to inform the instructor immediately and in writing (email is best) should an extension be required. Keep an electronic copy of each assignment you hand in. Any assignments submitted by email are not considered submitted until you receive an email message from the instructor confirming that the document has been received and has no problems with being opened and read.

Course and Instructor Evaluation

You are invited to talk to the instructor, outside of class time, if you have suggestions for changes at any point during the course. At the halfway point in the semester, we will review the course to date. You will have an opportunity for formal evaluation of the course and instructor at the end of the course.

Absences/Class Attendance

This course depends heavily on collaborative and active engagement of class members in learning activities. In the unlikely event that you are unable to attend class, or know in advance that you will be late, please contact the instructor by email (lafosse@golden.net) **prior to class**. If you must leave class early, please advise the instructor in advance.

Access to Course Readings

*Readings are available through the D2L Course website (logon to Courselink using your U of G user name and password). You will be able to read these papers on-line or save them to your own directory to read electronically. Note that **you are not allowed to use the CFT Centre printer to print course readings – this is a very important reminder.** Printing readings for your own use does not violate copyright laws, and printers are available at a cost at various on-campus locations (you will need a vendacard from the main library).*

Course Schedule and Required Readings
(Subject to revision) (*indicates group presentation)

Week 1 January 12 INTRODUCTION; OVERVIEW OF CFT FIELD; GENOGRAMS

***Week 2 January 19** FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY (BOWEN)

Kerr, Michael E. (1981). Family systems theory and therapy. In A.S. Gurman & D.P. Kniskern (Eds.), *Handbook of family therapy: Volume 1* (pp. 226-264). New York: Brunner/Mazel.

McGoldrick, Monica (2005). History, genograms, and the family life cycle: Freud in context. In B. Carter & M. McGoldrick (eds.), *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives. Third Edition.* (pp. 47-68). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

***Week 3 January 26** FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY (PART II)

Carter, Betty, & McGoldrick, Monica (2005). Coaching at various stages of the life cycle. In B. Carter & M. McGoldrick (Eds.) *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives* (pp.436-454). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

LaSala, Michael C. (2000). Lesbians, gay men, and their parents: Family therapy for the coming out crisis. *Family Process, 39*(1), 67-82.

Green, Robert-Jay (2000). "Lesbians, gay men, and their parents": A critique of LaSala and the prevailing clinical "wisdom". *Family Process, 39*(2), 257-266

LaSala, Michael C. (2002). Walls and bridges: How coupled gay men and lesbians manage their intergenerational relationships. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 28*(3), 327-340.

***Week 4 February 2** OBJECT RELATIONS FAMILY & COUPLE THERAPY

Scharff, J. & Scharff, D. (2008). Object relations couple therapy. In Alan Gurman (Ed.) *Clinical handbook of couple therapy* (pp. 167-195). New York: Guilford Press.

Middleberg, Carol V. (2001). Projective identification in common couple dances. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 27*(3), 341-352.

***Week 5 February 9** CONTEXTUAL THERAPY

Boszormenyi-Nagy, Ivan, Grunebaum, Judith, & Ulrich, David (1991). Contextual therapy. In A.S. Gurman & D.P. Kniskern (Eds.), *Handbook of family therapy: Volume II* (pp. 200-238). New York: Brunner/Mazel.

***Week 6 February 16** CONTEXTUAL THERAPY (PART II)

Dankoski, Mary E., & Deacon, Sharon A. (2000). Using a feminist lens in Contextual Therapy. *Family Process, 39*(1), 51-66.

Hargrave, Terry D. (1994). Families and forgiveness: A theoretical and therapeutic framework. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families, 2*, 330-348.

February 23 – Winter break/no class

***Week 7 March 1** MILAN SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Cecchin, Gianfranco (1987). Hypothesizing, circularity, and neutrality revisited: An invitation to curiosity. *Family Process, 26*(4), 405-413.

Denborough, David (Ed.). (2001). *Family therapy: Exploring the field's past, present & possible futures* (Chapter 4) Systemic practice: An interview with Gianfranco Cecchin, pp. 31-37). Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Tomm, Karl (1984). One perspective on the Milan systemic approach: Part 1. Overview of development, theory and practice. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 10(2), 113-125.

Week 8 March 8 CONSTRUCTIVISM & SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Gergen, Kenneth (2001). Psychological science in a postmodern context. *The American Psychologist*, 56, 803-813.

Andersen, Tom (1992). Reflections on reflecting with families. In Sheila McNamee & Kenneth J. Gergen (Eds.), *Therapy as social construction*. London: Sage Publications.

Week 9 March 15 NARRATIVE & DIALOGIC APPLICATIONS

Anderson, Harlene & Goolishian, Harold (1992). The client is the expert: A not-knowing approach to therapy. In S. McNamee & K.J. Gergen (eds.), *Therapy as social construction* (pp. 25-39). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Penn, Peggy (2001). Chronic illness: Trauma, language and writing: Breaking the silence. *Family Process*, 40(1), 33-52.

White, Michael (1993). Deconstruction and therapy. In S. Gilligan & R. Price (Eds.), *Therapeutic conversations* (pp.22-61). New York: W.W.Norton.

Shachar, Razi (2008). Using the 'failure conversations map' with couples experiencing fertility problems. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 2008(3), 13-23.

Week 10 March 22 THE JUST THERAPY APPROACH

Waldegrave, Charles (2000). 'Just Therapy' with families and communities. In G. Burford & J. Hudson (Eds.) *Family Group Conferencing: New directions in community centred child and family practice*. Hawthorne, New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Denborough, David & Waldegrave, Charles (2003). Therapy as metaphorical reflection. In C. Waldegrave, K. Tamasese, F. Tuhaka, & W. Campbell (Eds.) *Just Therapy – a journey* (pp.121-130). Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Waldegrave, Charles (1998). The challenges of culture to psychology and postmodern thinking. In M. McGoldrick (Ed.) *Re-visioning Family Therapy: Race, culture and gender in clinical practice*. New York, Guilford Press.

Week 11 March 29

Class debate – students will engage in an informal (and hopefully fun) debate by applying 3 different models covered in the course to a family scenario. (Students will sign-up for this exercise during first class – Jan 12, 2012.)

Week 12 April 5 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Flaskas, Carmel (2005). Relating to knowledge: Challenges in generating and using theory for practice in family therapy. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 27, 185-201.

Larner, Glenn (2009). Integrative family therapy with childhood chronic illness: An ethics of practice. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 30, 51-65.