

FRAN 6130 – Theories and Methods in Couple and Family Therapy II

Fall 2014

COURSE OUTLINE

(Revised and adapted from Course Outline originally developed by Dr. Lynda Ashbourne)

Instructor: Anna Dienhart, Ph.D. **Phone:** (cell) 519-820-7607 *(use only for emergencies related to course)*
Office: CFT Rm. **Office Hours:** by appointment
e-mail: adienhar@uoguelph.ca
Response by next working day. Do not expect a response on weekends.
CLASSES: **Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Course Description

This course features a critical examination of selected couple and family therapy (CFT) theory and practice models [EG-1], including both foundational and current models with a particular emphasis on models primarily oriented to couple therapy. Selected models for in depth study include: Structural, Emotionally Focused, Gottman’s Sound Relationship House, Cognitive Behavioral, and Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy [ESLO 1a]. The course may cover other models more generally for comparison purposes. A major component of the course involves analysis of the assumptions underlying the conceptual frameworks and the therapy practices that relate to each set of ideas using a framework of “critical examination” [ESLO-1a]. In the context of this course, a “critical examination” framework refers to a practice of expanding sensitivity to diversity, particularly attending to power relations, the intersection of social locations, the experience of clients from marginalized groups, and issues of social justice as these influence the practice of therapy [EG-4; ESLO-4b].

Course Objectives

1. To increase knowledge of selected couple therapy theories and techniques, together with related concepts, and discern the differences between these approaches. [EG-1]
2. To understand issues of diversity, power, and privilege as they relate to: [EG-1 & EG-4]
 - a. the development of knowledge in the CFT field,
 - b. the specific concepts and practices of different approaches,
 - c. the applicability of approaches to specific client populations, and aspects of professional training.
3. To develop skills for critical analysis of CFT theories and practices. [EG-1]
4. To enhance oral and written communication skills, as well as ability to engage in generative dialogues, specifically related to the application of these selected CFT models. [EG-1 & EG-4]
5. To participate in creating, collaboratively with all class members, a learning environment in which there is a respectful acceptance of conflicting perspectives, complex explanations, and challenging ethical dilemmas. [EG-4]

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

| Educational Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes | Incorporation and Assessment/Evaluation |
|--|---|
| 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. | |
| 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. | Incorporated through course readings; class discussions. Assessment/Evaluation: Assignments 1 and 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. | Incorporated through course readings; class discussions. Assessment/Evaluation: Assignments 1, 2, and 3. |
| 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. | |
| 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. | Incorporated through class discussions. Assessment/Evaluation: Assignments 1 and 2. |

Note that various AAMFT 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 marriage and family therapy. | Participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 1. |
| 1.1.2 | Conceptual | Understand theories and techniques of individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy. | Participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 1. |
| 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 and 2. |
| 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, and 3. |
| 6.1.1 | Conceptual | Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice. | Preparation of class readings and participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 3. |
| 6.3.1 | Executive | Read current MFT and other professional literature. | Preparation of class readings and participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 3. |
| 6.3.3 | Executive | Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation literature. | Preparation of class readings and participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 3. |
| 6.4.1 | Evaluative | Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application. | Preparation of class readings and participation in class discussions; Graded assignment 3. |

Organization

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, hence 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 in a manner that opens up space 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 review of clinical consultations by important therapists in the field of family therapy, experiential activities, and role-play exercises.

Course requirements include the following:

1. **Readings:** An important aspect of this course is the guided exposure to theories and methods of family therapy practice. The assigned readings have been carefully chosen to provide, as much as possible, the ideas associated with these theories and methods in the words of their initiators and practitioners together with current clinical research and application. **The assigned readings, therefore, are a critical element in understanding the theoretical framework and practice implications associated with each approach.** Two to four readings are assigned for each class. **It is expected that you will read ALL of these materials thoroughly (more than once) prior to class.**

*Readings are available through CourseLink (logon using your UofG user name and password – readings are on 'Content' tab). You will be able to read these papers on-line or save them to your own directory to read electronically. Note that **you may not use the CFT Centre printer to print course readings.***

2. **Class Discussion:** Discussion of weekly assigned readings provides an opportunity to extend individual understanding of the material by exposure to others' perspectives and active critical examination. Class discussions will combine open dialogue and guided exercises. You are **expected to attend class each week and come prepared to present your own ideas and to engage in dialogue** with other class members. See Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain (below) for ideas about the level of class discussion in which we will engage. You will also be expected to take a "critical" perspective as you reflect on these readings – see Appendix A for examples of this perspective.

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain

(from www.ntlf.com/html/lib/suppmat/84taxonomy.htm)

1. **Knowledge.** Remembering information -- *Define, identify, label, state, list, match*
2. **Comprehension.** Explaining the meaning of information -- *Describe, generalize, paraphrase, summarize, estimate*
3. **Application.** Using abstractions in concrete situations -- *Determine, chart, implement, prepare, solve, use, develop*
4. **Analysis.** Breaking down a whole into component parts -- *Differentiate, distinguish, discriminate, compare*
5. **Synthesis.** Putting parts together to form a new and integrated whole -- *Create, design, plan, organize, generate, write*
6. **Evaluation.** Making judgements about the merits of ideas, materials, or phenomena -- *Appraise, critique, judge, weigh, evaluate, select*

Levels 1 & 2: During class time, we will be ensuring that there is some time for class members to ask specific questions related to the first two levels of Bloom's taxonomy – for example, you will take responsibility for asking questions to clarify your own understanding of the information presented (in readings, class discussions, videos, etc.) and your comprehension of its meaning.

Levels 3 – 6: Our primary emphasis in class will be in the areas of Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.

Questions and comments generated by such discussion are most constructive when they **enhance our collective ability to:**

- (i) apply theories and methods to the practice of couple therapy
- (ii) make useful distinctions between theories and within certain applications of specific theories and methods
- (iii) generate an understanding of how various theories and methods "fit" with current practices and how they have contributed to the evolution of family therapy theory and practice.

3. **Course Projects and Student Learning Evaluation:** The course requires every student to complete three major projects, as follows:

Assignment 1 – Role-play and written review of model application:

See Assignment 1 description. This project involves participating with members of a small group to conduct a role-played demonstration of a specific CFT model and a written project submitted by the group. All members of the group will receive the same grade.

Role play dates assigned, with written assignment due two week later.

Evaluation: 25%

Assignment 2 – Applied Critical Analysis and Theory Reconstruction:

See Assignment 2 description. This project involves critical analysis of a selected therapy model and its application to a fictional couple (as depicted in a selected movie), as well as critical reconstruction of the model to more fully account for applicability to diverse issues or sub-cultures.

Evaluation: 45%

Due Date: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 by mid-night

Assignment 3 – Facilitation of class readings:

See Assignment 3 description. In a group of two or three classmates, you will facilitate the class discussion of readings. Grades will be individually assigned with acknowledgement of group efforts and co-ordination. Sign up for available weeks. Group planning is required outside of class time. Self-evaluation of contribution and effectiveness is due one week after group presentation in class. Grades assigned to individuals.

Evaluation: 30%

Extensions for the submission of written work will be given for medical or compassionate reasons. **Class members are expected to inform the instructor in advance, and in writing, should an extension be required.**

Keep a copy of each assignment you hand in. Any assignments submitted by e-mail are not considered submitted until you receive an e-mail message from the instructor confirming receipt.

Late penalties will be applied at a rate of 2% per day to assignments submitted after midnight on the due date or previously arranged extension.

General Academic Guidelines Applicable to Course

Instructor feedback - the University of Guelph is committed to providing students with appropriate and timely feedback on their work. Instructors must provide meaningful and constructive feedback prior to the 40th class day. **Class members are expected to inform the instructor if sign-up for Assignments 1 and 3 do not allow for feedback on at least one of these assignments prior to October 30, 2014.** Alternative arrangements for instructor feedback prior to Oct. 30th will be made if this is the case.

Academic Misconduct - The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2012-2013/genreg/sec_d0e1634.shtml

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 e-mail (adienhar@uoguelph.ca) or phonemail (519-820-7607) ***prior to class***. If you must leave class early, you are expected to advise the instructor in advance.

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without prior consent of the instructor [or, where appropriate, student or guest presenter] and notice to all class participants. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for this course and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without further written consent.

Accessibility: The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

(Subject to revision – you will be advised of any revisions well in advance of the course day affected)

Week 1 Sept. 4 INTRODUCTION: EMPIRICAL SUPPORT, CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES, COUPLES
(Time provided at end of class for initial meeting of group members)

Week 2 Sept. 11 STRUCTURAL FAMILY THERAPY: A FOUNDATIONAL APPROACH

Simon, George (2008). Structural couple therapy. In A. Gurman (Ed.), *Clinical handbook of couple therapy* (4th ed.) (pp.323-349). New York: Guilford.

Minuchin, Patricia, Colapinto, Jorge, & Minuchin, Salvador (2007). *Working with families of the poor* (2nd ed.), Chapter 3, Working in the system (pp. 34-64). New York: Guilford.

Week 3 Sept. 18 STRUCTURAL FAMILY THERAPY: APPLICATION TO COUPLE THERAPY

Rait, Douglas (2010). Opening steps: A structural approach to working with couples. In A.Gurman (Ed.), *Clinical casebook of couple therapy* (pp.232-254). New York: Guilford.

Ford, Jeffrey, Durtschi, Jared, & Franklin, Darrell (2012). Structural therapy with a couple battling pornography addiction. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 40, 336-348.

Week 4 Sept. 25 GOTTMAN'S SOUND RELATIONSHIP HOUSE THERAPY: EMPIRICALLY DERIVED

Gottman, John, & Gottman, Julie (2008). Gottman method couple therapy. In A. Gurman (Ed.), *Clinical handbook of couple therapy* (4th ed.) (pp.138-164). New York: Guilford.

Fraser, J.Scott, & Solovey, Andrew (2007). *Second order change in psychotherapy: The golden thread that unifies effective treatments* (Chapter 9, pp. 191-221). Washington, DC: APA.

Week 5 Oct. 2 GOTTMAN'S SOUND RELATIONSHIP HOUSE THERAPY: APPLICATION

Gottman, Julie (2004). Extramarital affairs: The pearl in the oyster. In J. Gottman (Ed.), *The marriage clinic casebook* (pp.47-68). New York: W.W. Norton.

Toth, Paul, Harnishfeger, Brady, & Shea, Andrew (2002). Chapter 17: Finding the silver lining: Counseling a couple in conflict. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 16, 269-285.

Week 6 Oct. 9 RESEARCH RELATED TO COUPLES THERAPY

Lebow, Jay, Chambers, Anthony, Christensen, Andrew, and Johnson, Susan (2012). Research on the treatment of couple distress. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38, 145-168.

Gurman, Alan (2011). Couple therapy research and the practice of couple therapy: Can we talk? *Family Process*, 50, 280-292.

Knudsen-Martin, Carmen (2013). Why power matters: Creating a foundation of mutual support in couple relationships. *Family Process*, 52, 5-18.

Week 7 Oct. 16 EMOTIONALLY-FOCUSED THERAPY: ATTACHMENT THEORY BASE

Johnson, Susan (2003). Introduction to attachment: A therapist's guide to primary relationships and their renewal. In S. Johnson & V. Whiffen (Eds.), *Attachment processes in couple and family therapy* (pp.3-17). New York: Guilford.

Johnson, Susan (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection*, Chapter 4: The basics of EFT: Tasks and interventions (pp.53-112). New York: Brunner Routledge.

Greenman, Paul, Johnson, Susan (2013). Process research on emotionally focused therapy (EFT) for couples: linking theory to practice. *Family Process*, 52, 46-61.

Week 8 Oct. 23 EMOTIONALLY-FOCUSED THERAPY: APPLICATION

Greenman, Paul, Young, Marta, & Johnson, Susan (2009). Emotionally focused therapy with intercultural couples. In M. Rastogi & V. Thomas (Eds.), *Multicultural couple therapy* (pp.143-165). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Greenberg, Leslie, Warwar, Serine, & Malcolm, Wanda (2010). Emotion-focused couples therapy and the facilitation of forgiveness. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 36(1), pp. 28-42.

Johnson, Susan, & Wittenborn, Andrea (2012). New research findings on emotionally focused therapy: Introduction to special section. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38, 18-22.

Johnson, Susan, & Zuccarini, Dino (2010). Integrating sex and attachment in emotionally focused couple therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 36, 431-445.

Week 9 Oct. 30 BEHAVIORAL COUPLE THERAPY - TRADITIONAL & INTEGRATIVE: THEORY

Christensen, Andrew, Wheeler, Jennifer, & Jacobson, Neil (2008). Couple Distress. In D. Barlow (Ed.), *Clinical handbook of psychological disorders: A step-by-step treatment manual (4th ed.)* (pp.662-689). New York: Guilford.

Ruff, Saralyn, McComb, Jennifer, Coker, Casey, & Sprenkle, Douglas (2010). Behavioral couples therapy for the treatment of substance abuse: A substantive and methodological review of O'Farrell, Fals-Stewart, and colleagues' program of research. *Family Process*, 49, 439-456.

Baucom, Katherine, Sevier, Mia, Eldridge, Kathleen, Doss, Brian, & Christensen, Andrew (2011). Observed communication in couples two years after integrative and traditional behavioral couple therapy: Outcome and link with five-year follow-up. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 79, 565-576.

Additional Reading (not required)

Gurman, Alan (2013). Behavioral couple therapy: Building a secure base for therapeutic integration. *Family Process*, 52, 115-138.

Week 10 Nov. 6 BEHAVIORAL COUPLE THERAPY - TRADITIONAL & INTEGRATIVE: APPLICATION

Brown-Bowers, Amy, Fredman, Steffany, Wanklyn, Sonya, & Monson, Candice (2012). Cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder: Application to a couple's shared traumatic experience. *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, 68, 536-547.

Sevier, Mia, & Yi, Jean (2009). Cultural considerations in evidence-based traditional and integrative behavioral couple therapy. In M. Rastogi & V. Thomas (Eds.), *Multicultural couple therapy* (pp.187-212). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Week 11 Nov. 13 DIVERSITY IN COUPLE/INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP THERAPY

Green, Robert-Jay, & Mitchell, Valory (2008). Gay and lesbian couples in therapy: Minority stress, relational ambiguity, and families of choice. In A. Gurman (Ed.), *Clinical handbook of couple therapy (4th ed.)* (pp.662-680). New York: Guilford.

Addison, Sheila, & Coolhart, Deborah (2009). Integrating socially segregated identities: Queer couples and the question of race. In M. Rastogi & V. Thomas (Eds.), *Multicultural couple therapy* (pp.51-75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Week 12 Nov. 20 COMMON FACTORS - HOW COUPLE THERAPY WORKS

Davis, Sean D., Lebow, Jay L., & Sprenkle, Douglas H. (2012). Common factors of change in couple therapy. *Behavior Therapy*, 43, 36-48.

Friedlander, Myrna L., Escudero, Valentín, Heatherington, Laurie, & Diamond Gary M. (2011). Alliance in couple and family therapy. *Psychotherapy*, 48, 25-33.

APPENDIX A

Questions Informed by a Postmodern Critical* Perspective to Ask and Consider in Relation to Course Readings

1. How would you identify the theoretical positions that are taken by these authors?
 - a. What assumptions, values and biases (stated and unstated) might be associated with these positions, with respect to CFT practice?
 - b. What are the implications of taking these positions in terms of:
 - i. what constitutes the presenting concern or 'problem' for couples attending therapy?
 - ii. what constitutes therapy interventions and how these are made?
 - iii. what constitutes the role of the therapist?
 2. How are clients or people seeking couple and family therapy services and their concerns or problems constructed within the approaches to therapy advocated by these authors?
 3. To what degree and in what ways are aspects of social location (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, class, age, ability, etc.) taken into account, discounted, included, or marginalized within this approach?
 4. What ethical questions could arise for therapists within this particular approach?
 5. How might you describe the complexities, inherent tensions, potential contradictions or complementary aspects of clinical practice within this approach? Does this approach allow for, or take into account, such complexities?
 6. Based on what you have read, how would you assess 'success' of therapy within this approach? How are these criteria constructed, on what assumptions and values are they based, and to what degree do these take into account diversity and context of human experience?
 7. How are issues of certainty/uncertainty, truth, and expertise considered within this particular approach?
 8. How are issues of power within couple/family relationships, in the therapeutic setting, or within the broader social context taken into account? Are these issues addressed explicitly? What could you say about unstated or implied assumptions about the power dimensions of relationships?
 9. How does your own life experience and social location influence what you attend to in this reading? What might others who have different experiences, locations, or identities hear/see that you don't?
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*note that the term "critical" is not used here in the sense of simply criticizing the negative aspects or weaknesses of a particular position. The term "critical" is used in the sense that:

1. Paolo Friere talks about conscientization or developing critical consciousness in order to attend to our own experience of marginalization, to identify oppression, and to act for social change. [see Friere (1997) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*]
2. The broader approach known as critical theory within the social sciences: a postmodern perspective that sees the importance of determining who has defined the knowledge we hold, of reflecting on what values are attached to our theories, and of building theory that is contextualized and pluralistic. [see Bengston et al., (2005) *Sourcebook of Family Theory and Research*; Klein & White (1997) *Family Theories*; De Reus et al., (2005) *Multicultural and Critical Race Feminisms: Theorizing Families in the Third Wave*, in Bengston et al.]