

Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition
University of Guelph

**FRAN 6100: Clinical Issues in Couple and Family Therapy:
Trauma and Resilience**

Winter 2014

Instructor	Ruth Neustifter, Ph.D. RMFT
Room	CFT Centre Room F
Class Time	Wednesdays 8:30 am – 11:20 am
Office Hours	Tuesdays 1:00-2:20pm
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COURSE OUTLINE

Course Description

This seminar focuses on clinical issues related to trauma and resilience in couple and family therapy, with emphasis on forms of violence and abuse in relationships, and on resilience, resistance and hope in the face of such violation. Participants will be invited to critically examine the social contexts in which violence occurs, to deconstruct notions of trauma and violence and to consider how discourses of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, age and other categories of identity and power mutually influence one another in all aspects of the experience of violation and abuse. We will consider a number of approaches for understanding and responding to trauma, drawing on texts from psychology and psychiatry, in addition to those selected from the field of couple and family therapy. A primary focus of this course will be on discerning and expanding repertoires of protest, resistance, and resilience.

Specific Objectives

1. To explore and evaluate selected approaches to trauma and resilience from the fields of psychology, neurobiology and couple and family therapy, and to identify the unique contributions as well as the potential limitations of these approaches. (EG-1, ESLO 1a)
2. To develop a critical understanding of key concepts in "trauma therapy", including violence, abuse, trauma, resilience, resistance, accountability, safety, reconciliation, and forgiveness. (EG-1, ESLO 1a)
3. To examine the ways in which discourses of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality (and/or nation-building) and age mutually influence one another in both social discourses and embodied experiences of trauma and how the contradictions within these discourses can also provide sites of resistance. (EG-4, ESLO 4a)
4. To enhance practical clinical skills in discerning the presence of violence and trauma, approaching conversations with individuals, couples and families, creating safety, and facilitating generative conversations which promote accountability and change. (EG-1, ESLO 1b, 1c)
5. To critically reflect on one's own assumptions about and constructions of power, powerlessness, violence, abuse, trauma, resilience, resistance and hope. (EG-4, ESLO 4a, 4b, 4c)
6. To begin to develop one's own unique and preferred clinical positions and responses. (EG-1, ESLO 1c; EG-2, ESLO 2b)

7. To enhance the ability to make choices about how and when to remain in connected dialogue with clients, colleagues, supervisors and self when faced with disturbing clinical material, complex explanations, challenging ethical dilemmas, diverse and sometimes opposing viewpoints, and our own powerful reactions. (EG-1, ESLO 1b)

AAMFT Selected Core Competences and CFT Program Expected Student Learning Outcomes

AAMFT CC #	Sub-domain	AAMFT SELECTED CORE COMPETENCIES (CCs)
2.1.1	Conceptual	Understand principles of human development; human sexuality; gender development; psychopathology; couple processes; and family development and processes (e.g., family, relational, and system dynamics).
2.1.2	Conceptual	Understand the major behavioral health disorders, including the epidemiology, etiology, phenomenology, effective treatments, course, and prognosis.
6.1.1	Conceptual	Know the extant MFT literature, research and evidence-based practice.
6.3.1	Conceptual	Read current MFT and other professional literature.
6.3.3	Executive	Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation in the literature.
6.4.1	Evaluative	Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application.

CFT PROGRAM EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (ESLOs)
<p>EG-1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>ESLO (1 a) Students will critically compare selected historical and leading-edge couple & family therapy approaches and analyze key implications for clinical practice.</p>
<p>ESLO (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.</p>
<p>ESLO (1 c) Students will articulate the theoretical basis and practice implications of their preferred approach to couple & family therapy, including an examination of the congruency with the underlying values and assumptions of the approach and their personal professional positioning.</p>
<p>EG-2 SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY AND CRITICAL EVALUATION</p> <p>Educational Goal: Students will develop a professional identity encompassing an interdisciplinary sensibility, informed by relevant research-based information from related disciplines (family therapy, sociology, psychology, social work, health, etc.) and supported by the principles of critical appraisal of knowledge.</p>
<p>ESLO (2 b) Students will demonstrate an ability to write coherently about integrating theory, research, and practice skills related to their professional work.</p>
<p>EG-4 SOCIAL CONTEXT AND POWER RELATIONS</p> <p>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.</p>

ESLO (4 a) Students will critically analyze how their social location, values and beliefs shape their professional identity.
ESLO (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.
ESLO (4 c) Students will demonstrate awareness of and sensitivity to multi-dimensional aspects of diversity in the everyday lives of clients, including an ability to explore and articulate with clients the pertinence of potential social location issues on their experience of current concerns for therapy.
ESLO (4 d) Students will learn strategies to explore and address issues of diversity, marginalization, discrimination, and abuse in therapy with clients.

Organization

The design of this course is based on the assumption that all seminar participants bring unique and valuable resources to the academic endeavor. Each individual has much to offer including: knowledge and experience related to taking a “helping” role (professional and/or volunteer); their own specific life experiences; previous educational experiences, a variety of specific passions and talents; and the wisdom passed down to them from previous generations and through their ethnic heritage. Each person also has much to learn from the others in the group. Correspondingly, the pedagogical approach for this course emphasizes learner-centered activities, mutual support, and collaborative sharing of resources among colleagues. It is expected that there will be respect for diverse views, curiosity about differences, and the development of a seminar environment where generative dialogue will flourish.

The following course activities are required:

1. Readings and Class Discussions. [ESLO 1a. CC 2.1.1., 6.1.1., 6.3.1., 6.4.1.]

From the vast literature written on the topic of trauma and resilience, specific publications have been selected to supplement the course texts. All readings are required. It is expected that students will read the course materials thoroughly prior to the assigned class date. Readings will usually be discussed in class; if readings are not discussed directly, having read them will be necessary for class discussion and activities. Please note that guest lectures are scheduled, in large part, based on the availability of the speakers who are generously donating their time and expertise to the course. Their subject therefore may not match with that week's readings.

Your required texts to be purchased for the class are:

Counseling Victims of Violence: A Handbook for Helping Professionals (2nd Ed.)

Sandra L. Brown

ISBN: 0-89793-463-6

Something Terrible

Dean Trippe

Please consider purchasing the PDF for \$0.99 at <http://www.tencenticker.com/somethingterrible/> in order to support the artist. If this is not possible for you, I have Mr. Trippe's written permission to share the PDF with you; you will find it on CourseLink. In either case, we do not have permission to share the PDF outside of the course.

Recommended texts that are not required are:

Dragonslippers: This is What an Abusive Relationship Looks Like

by Rosalind B. Penfold (2006)

Available from: <http://www.dragonslippers.com>

Growing Free: A Manual for Survivors of Domestic Violence
and
A Therapist's Guide to Growing Free: A Manual for Survivors
Both by Wendy Deaton & Michael Hertica (2001)

2. Class Discussion Points [ESLO 1b, 2b, 4a, 4b, 4d]

(Due by 9am on the Tuesday before each class, posted to the appropriate discussion board.)
Prior to each class for which at-home reading material is listed (starting Week 2), each student is to offer one substantive question or statement for discussion per reading/chapter (except Chapter 13). These prompts will be used to stimulate class discussion throughout the semester. Each conversation prompt must be linked to the reading (including a page number) and posted online to the correct section of the discussion boards. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that their question is unique compared to previously posted questions, and it is therefore recommended that no student wait until the last minute. If the question relies on outside media, (news article, other reading, image or other artwork, etc.) it must have a full APA reference in your post as well as a link to access it online for free. Prompts are expected to be 1-3 sentences in length each, plus any needed APA references. The scoring of this assignment is such that two days may be missed without penalty.

3. Community-Focused Outreach Project [ESLO 1c, 2b, 4c]

(Part 1 due: Week 7 / Evaluations of Part 1 due: Week 8 / Part 2 due: Week 11)

This is a three-part assignment representing the mid-term and final projects for the course. The details of this assignment and the accompanying grading rubrics and checklists are found on CourseLink.

4. Group Case Consultations. [ESLO 1b, 2b. CC 2.1.1., 6.1.1., 6.3.1., 6.4.1]

(Second half of the semester x 2)

This semester will include scheduled opportunities for case consultations. Students may volunteer to facilitate a consultation with a small group from the class. On the week prior to the consultation, the volunteering students are to provide their consultation group(s) with a non-identifying description of the general trauma-related factors at issue so that the consultation group may consider and prepare resources prior to the next class. Should a student suspect they have, have had, or may at some point have, an existing relationship or knowledge of those involved in the case they should switch groups or excuse themselves from the class immediately.

Details for the grading of consultations are available in the assignment description on CourseLink. Group Case Consultations do not replace or count as clinical supervision. Confidentiality is expected and required of all students.

NOTE: Written assignments are to be submitted to the instructor through the dropbox on CourseLink, where the date and time of submission will be noted. The most recent use of APA formatting for citations and references is always expected, including for class materials.

Disclosure of Personal Information: CFT Program Guidelines

The CFT Program recognizes that professional development in the CFT field is often enhanced by the exploration of the personal-professional interface. Students are encouraged to thoroughly explore this interface. In specific instances where a student's personal history/experience closely parallels the course subject matter and/or client situation, it is particularly important to be self-reflective. Generally, a student should only reveal as much information to faculty and colleagues as s/he is comfortable

sharing. The evaluation of student performance in this course is not dependent on student disclosure of personal information.

Confidentiality

All students in the course must have read the AAMFT Code of Ethics and signed the CFT Program Oath of Confidentiality form before the third class meeting.

Evaluation

Student Evaluation

Class Discussion Points (3 pts each, 7 days required)	21%
Outreach Project (2 parts and 1 evaluation: 20/20/20)	60%
Group Case Consultations (9.5 pts each, 2 scheduled)	19%

Course and Instructor Evaluation.

Midway through the class, students will be asked to submit informal course evaluations to the instructor. Formal written course/instructor evaluation will take place at the end of the course. The instructor invites class members to provide her with feedback and suggestions for changes at any point over the term. This may be done verbally, by email, or anonymously through campus mail.

Absences/Time

The course design emphasizes collaborative learning among participants. You are responsible for attending to the best of your ability, catching up on any missed information, and keeping your in-class obligations. You are also responsible for taking good care of yourself as an adult, and as such special arrangements do not need to be made with the instructor so long as it does not become a barrier to your learning and active participation in the class. The instructor does, however, appreciate a quick note knowing that you're okay if you've missed all or part of class. Should you need to miss class due to a triggering topic, please provide the instructor with your alternate plans in advance (or as soon as you become aware) for learning the material.

Late and Missed Assignments

All assignments submitted by dropbox on CourseLink must be submitted before the due date and time in order to be considered on time. Do not wait until the last minute in order to avoid unfortunate penalties related to technological difficulties. Assignments that are 1 minute to 1 week late will have a penalty of 10% deducted before any points lost during grading. Assignments submitted more than 1 week to 2 weeks late will have a penalty of 30% deducted before any points lost during grading. No assignments will be accepted more than 2 weeks late. Assignments that are submitted late will likely take longer to grade and return; this is a consequence the student should anticipate when submitting late. It is not necessary to advise this instructor of a late assignment; such decisions on how you structure your time are up to you.

Departmental regulations on meeting course requirements are as follows: When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement due to illness or compassionate circumstances, you are

required to advise the course instructor in writing, giving your name, address, phone, and email address contact information. Where possible, this should be done in advance of the missed work or event, but otherwise, just as soon as possible after the due date. If appropriate documentation of your inability to meet that specific course requirement is necessary, the instructor will request it of you.

Academic Misconduct

Students are required to familiarize themselves with the University of Guelph policies. Review the website: www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/calendar/genreg.

Accessibility

Accessibility is of high priority and importance to the instructor. Should you need accommodations for documented or undocumented considerations of any nature, please request a meeting with the instructor immediately. The instructor will do her best to create a learning environment that is both conducive and fair to all students and herself. It is important to discuss this at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as the concern is known, in order to provide adequate time for any possible changes.

If your assignment cannot be submitted through dropbox on CourseLink because it cannot be made digital in nature, then it is necessary to meet with the instructor as far in advance as possible to agree upon another method of timely submission and fair evaluation.

A Note of Appreciation

Thank you for allowing me to teach you this subject.

This course is full of difficult topics, ideas, thoughts, statistics, therapy techniques, and realities about the startling ways in which people and relationships get hurt and harm each other. You will likely also find it brings up difficult memories, realizations, feelings and more for you. Working with trauma has done the same for me, and always will, but I have had many years to develop my own special approaches for doing this work while staying healthy and hopeful. Self-care isn't an abstract idea when it comes to doing trauma learning and work; it's an ethical necessity. While it is essential that you be well-informed about this topic, it is equally essential that you be kind to yourself during this class. Please appreciate your amazing self and strive not to isolate yourself as you process the content of this course.

It is with deep appreciation for you that I approach this class. I apologize at the start for asking you to consider things that are painful to think about, and for learning things that few people really want to know. Your dedication to this area of training speaks deeply of your dedication to your clients. You are making our world a better place by ensuring that every one of your clients has someone who can offer unique understanding, compassion, and healing in some of the most difficult experiences a person can face.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS (schedule subject to revision)

NOTE: Guest lectures may be added, canceled, or rescheduled and they are unlikely to match the week's readings . Please read anyway, the materials are important and will be discussed.

Week	Reminders	Readings/Activities
Week 1		Power in The People: Strengths and Hope Something Terrible
Week 2	Discussion Prompts	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapters 1 & 2 Guest Lecture: Anne Bergen, ICES (9-10am)
Week 3	Discussion Prompts	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapters 3 & 4
Week 4	Discussion Prompts	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapters 5 & 6
Week 5	Discussion Prompts	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapters 7 & 8 Guest Lecture: Judah Oudshoorn, Context of working with male abusers (9am+)
Week 6	Discussion Prompts	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapter 9 Mid-point Course Evals Guest Lecture: Sally Ludwig, Eco-Trauma (9am+)
Week 7	Discussion Prompts Consultation Prep Outreach Part 1	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapter 10 Consultations

Week 8	Discussion Prompts Outreach Evaluations	Counseling Victims of Violence: Chapters 11, 12, 13
Week 9	Discussion Prompts	Sexual Orientation Microaggressions Care of Others and Self: A Suicidal Patient's Impact
Week 10	Discussion Prompts	The Role of Pets in Family Systems and Family Therapy Two hours of reading from http://www.glowinthewoods.com (2 Prompts required)
Week 11	Outreach Part 2 Consultation Prep	Consultations Final Outreach Project Presentations
Week 12		Final Outreach Project Presentations Final Course Evals