

**DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY RELATIONS AND APPLIED NUTRITION
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH**

RESEARCH ISSUES IN COUPLE AND FAMILY THERAPY

FRAN*6180

Fall 2019

Course Outline

Instructor: Gabrielle E. Pitt, RECE, RSW, PhD (SW/Med)
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Office Hours: By appointment, Mondays, 11:15 am – 12:15 pm
Class Time: Mondays, 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Room: MAC, Room 245

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The focus of this course is on CFT research issues related to evidence-based practices, therapeutic outcome, and therapeutic process [EG-2]. The course includes an introduction to CFT efficacy research and the importance of evidence-based practice, a review of quantitative and qualitative research methods and exemplary research, and an examination of ethical considerations in conducting research with couples and families. In addition, the course focuses on specific research examining treatment efficacy for selected clinical issues affecting the health and functioning of couple and family systems. Skill-training for research-informed therapists and researcher-practitioners, including accessing research literature, critical appraisal of knowledge, and knowledge-translation strategies is also incorporated into the course.

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

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of this course, the successful student will be able to:

1. Articulate an awareness of the current state of outcome/efficacy/evidence-based research in CFT. (broad knowledge of current discourse in field, professional challenges, areas of growth/development)
2. Articulate a broad understanding of current research methods (and associated core principles) utilized within the field of CFT, including qualitative and quantitative methods and analysis, and measurement tools that are utilized widely in research outcome studies as well as clinical assessment.
3. Articulate the difference between outcome and process research, and describe the associated implications for understanding therapy interventions, interactional processes, and the process of change.
4. Review in writing, for a professional audience, a specific (limited) area of current research in the field of CFT that includes a coherent description of primary findings together with a synthesis of the current state of research including clinical applications and gaps or limitations of extant literature.
5. Utilize knowledge translation skills to present research findings and implications (in a specific topic area) in language and terms oriented to a lay audience.

6. Critique professional published research, assessing the quality of research studies and program evaluation literature in terms of the congruence between theoretical orientation, methodological approaches and claims related to clinical implications, as well as taking a critical perspective with respect to the consideration of various social locations and marginalized populations, and potential biases and values associated with these approaches to CFT research.

AAMFT SELECTED CORE COMPETENCES AND CFT PROGRAM EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

CFT PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL GOALS (EGs) AND EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (ESLOs)	INCORPORATION & ASSESSMENT
<p>SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY AND CRITICAL EVALUATION <i>[EMPHASES ADDED]</i></p> <p>Educational Goal: Students will <i>develop a professional identity</i> 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>Didactic content; assigned and selected readings; class discussion; Assignments #1, #2, #3</p>
<p>ESLO 2 a. Students will <i>develop an appreciation for the core principles</i> of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate the merits of social science research.</p>	<p>Didactic content; assigned and selected readings; class discussion; Assignments #1, #2, #3</p>
<p>ESLO 2 b. Students will <i>demonstrate an ability to write coherently</i> about integrating theory, research, and practice skills related to their professional work.</p>	<p>Assignments #1, #2, #3</p>
<p>ESLO 2 c. Students will <i>have knowledge of current research</i> developments in the couple & family therapy field, including empirically validated and evidence-based therapy approaches</p>	<p>Didactic content; assigned and selected readings; class discussion; Assignments #1, #2, #3</p>

** 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 (numbers in parentheses refer to course requirements and evaluation items listed below).*

AAMFT COMPETENCY		DEMONSTRATION OF KNOWLEDGE
CONCEPTUAL – TO UNDERSTAND, PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE		
2.1.7	Understand the concepts of reliability and validity, their relationship to assessment instruments, and how they influence therapeutic decision-making.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignment #2, #3

3.1.1	Know which models, modalities, and/or techniques are most effective for presenting problems.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignment #2, # 3
6.1.1	Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3
6.1.2	Understand research and program evaluation methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, relevant to MFT and mental health services.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3
6.1.3	Understand the legal, ethical, and contextual issues involved in the conduct of clinical research and program evaluation.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #2, #3
PERCEPTUAL – TO PERCEIVE, ABILITY TO MAKE PERTINENT AND RELEVANT OBSERVATION		
6.2.1	Recognize opportunities for therapists and clients to participate in clinical research.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3
EXECUTIVE – TO DO, SKILL DEVELOPMENT		
6.3.1	Read current MFT and other professional literature.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3
6.3.3	Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation literature.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3
EVALUATIVE – TO EVALUATE, CONSIDER APPLICATION		
2.4.3	Evaluate the accuracy and cultural relevance of behavioural health and relational diagnosis.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #2, #3
6.4.1	Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application.	Participation in class discussions; graded Assignments #1, #2, #3

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Organization of this research issues course is based on the assumption of shared responsibility for developing a cooperative and non-competitive learning environment where students can responsibly and constructively voice ideas and explore new possibilities for understanding research issues and their clinical work. Throughout its duration, the course will evolve as students and their Instructor dynamically interact using these resources.

This course is specifically designed to provide a dynamic and interactive face-to-face learning process and to encourage active participation and collaboration among students and the Instructor. The students and the Instructor brings a wealth of valuable personal and professional experience that will benefit the learning of everyone in the course. There is also the assumption that people may have very different views about various topics which 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 own ideas for discussion. The Instructor’s hope is that this

class will be a place where everyone feels free to respectfully listen and challenge one another. At times this class may invoke some challenging emotions.

The classes will primarily be based on assigned readings and audiovisual materials. It is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss these materials. The Instructor attempted to limit the readings and course workload in order that everyone can have the time to read the materials prior to class discussion.

The Instructor's goal is to set the basic condition for the development of a constructive learning environment, including: (1) clarity with respect to power relations, (2) goodwill between class members, between the Instructor and class members, and between class members and the Instructor, (3) mutual respect, and (4) commitment to the intensive mutual learning process.

Reflection on Anticipated / Unanticipated Knowledge and Learning: Students will critically reflect on their knowledge and learning in relation to course materials, and class discussion. This reflection will be informal and ongoing, in addition to formal, Assignment 1, Integrative Reflection Paper, Part 1 and Part 2. Additionally, students will reflect on issues of: (a) their social location, values, and issues of power and dominant discourse(s) across various research issues, and client situations; (b) couple and family resilience in relation to each topic (discussed in weekly content, and in the presentations), as potentially experienced by individuals, couples and families; and (c) critically analyze information, synthesize information from a variety of sources, compare and contrast similar theoretical structures across different theories, and raise relevant examples to illustrate principles.

Student Feedback: The University of Guelph is committed to providing students with appropriate feedback on their work. The Instructor will provide students in the course with on-going, timely, meaningful and constructive feedback in relation to the assignments, and the course in general.

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. You will have an opportunity for formal evaluation of the course and Instructor at the end of the course.

Boundary Considerations. Discussions in this research issues course will often draw on the research and clinical experience of each student, both past and current work with clients. Discussions involving current client situations will only be used to illustrate the potential applicability of the research and clinical conceptualizations of the readings and class activities. If a student finds class discussions relevant to current client work, and wants to modify her/his current clinical approach based on this discussion, she/he/they should consult with the clinical supervisor.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Class Readings and Preparation – This course is designed to facilitate your reading of current research related to CFT practice as well as readings associated with your unique and particular interests in relation to the assignments, and research issues in CFT in general. It is expected that students read a minimum of two (2) readings thoroughly and critically per week – in most cases, one of these is an assigned reading and the second will be selected by you to fit your interests. You should attend class prepared to discuss your reflections and ideas related to both

readings in large and small discussion groups. All required readings will be discussed in class. If they are not discussed directly, having read/viewed them will be necessary for whatever class activity takes place.

IMPORTANT: As this is an applied course in which students will actively participate in the material covered, attendance at all classes is mandatory. If a student is unable to attend for whatever reason, the student is expected to notify the Instructor prior to the start of class, and it will be the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor about satisfying participation requirements that require substantive contributions to each class.

PERSONAL SELF-DISCLOSURE: CFT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The CFT Program recognizes that professional development in the field is often enhanced by exploring the interface between the personal and the professional. Students are generally encouraged to thoroughly explore this interface. Developing self-awareness is an important component of this course. This is particularly important in specific instances where their personal history and experience closely parallels the course subject matter and client situation. Generally, a student should only reveal as little or as much information as s/he is comfortable sharing with the instructor and colleagues. The evaluation of student performance is not dependent upon student disclosure of personal information.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Evaluation. This is a graded course. Each course requirement will be evaluated considering: (1) the comprehensiveness of the coverage of pertinent issues, (2) coherence of the analysis pertinent to the application to research issues and clinical work, (3) consideration of dimensions of social location, power, and privilege, (4) critical analytic focus, (5) clarity of presentation (oral and written), and (6) creativity or interesting nature of presentation. The final grade will be based on the following weights:

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|---|-----|
| 1. Integrative Reflection Paper | 15% |
| 2. Critical Appraisal and Integration of Research | 55% |
| 3. Research Issues in CFT Presentation | 30% |

- 1. Integrative Reflection Paper 15%**
[ESLO 2a, ESLO 2b, ESLO 2c, CC 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, CC 6.3.1, 6.3.3, CC 6.4.1]

Through the completion of Part 1 and Part 2 of this assignment, students will demonstrate their ability to critically evaluate course material, in addition to their appreciation/understanding of the core principles of the research methodologies and issues discussed in the course (ESLO 2a). This assignment will also enable students to demonstrate their ability to integrate, reflect and write coherently about integrating theory, research, and practice skills related to students' current role as a CFT intern, and future role as a CFT (ESLO 2b). Additionally this assignment will provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of legal, ethical, and contextual issues discussed in the course (CC 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2.1), their ability to read and critique professional literature (CC 6.3.1, 6.3.3), evaluate what they are reading (CC 6.4.1), and reflect on their own practice and self as a therapist.

*Note – See Assignment Guidelines in the Content Section of the CourseLink site.

2. Critical Appraisal and Integration of Research 55%

[ESLO 2a, ESLO 2b, ESLO 2c, CC 2.1.7, CC 3.1.1, CC6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, CC 6.2.1, CC 6.3.1, 6.3.3, CC 2.4.3, CC 6.4.1]

This assignment is comprised of 3 parts, Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3. Each part is due at a designated date in the term. The intent of this assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to engage in expanding your knowledge base within a particular area of interest to you in Couple and Family Therapy [ESLO2c; CC 2.1.7, 3.1.1, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2.1, 6.3.1, and 6.3.3]. It will also allow you to demonstrate your ability to engage in critical appraisal of empirical literature related to clinical intervention and assessment [ESLO 2a, CC 6.4.1], and to express in writing a coherent integration of reviewed research that incorporates associated clinical implications [ESLO 2b].

*Note – See Assignment Guidelines in the Content Section of the CourseLink site.

3. Research Issues in CFT Presentation 30%

[ESLO 2a, ESLO 2b, ESLO 2c, CC 2.1.7, CC 3.1.1, CC6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, CC 6.2.1, CC 6.3.1, 6.3.3, CC 2.4.3, CC 6.4.1]

The intent of this assignment is to allow you to collaborate with a partner to demonstrate your ability to compile and present a case presentation, in addition your ability to read, evaluate, synthesize and present CFT research literature (ESLO 2a, 2b; CC 6.3.1, 6.3.3). This assignment will also provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge translation skills. In addition, your ability to be succinct as you demonstrate and present your knowledge and understanding of the topic and case, the literature, models or approaches, resources in the community, and ethical and legal issues. (ESLO 2c; CC 2.1.7, 3.1.1, 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 2.4.3, 6.2.1, 6.4.1). In pairs (1st year and 2nd year student), students will prepare a 40 minute presentation focusing on evidence based practice, practice informed research, and / or research informed practice, and knowledge transfer.

*Note – See Assignment Guidelines in the Content Section of the CourseLink site.

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS
(Subject to revision)**

Notes Regarding the Course Schedule and Readings:

- A pdf document outlining the schedule of weekly readings and assignment due dates will be posted in the Contents Section of the CourseLink site for this course.

Week Date	Topics	Assignment Due Dates
Week 1 Sept 9 th	Topic: Introduction to Course and Assignments, and Research Issues in Couple and Family Therapy	
Week 2 Sept 16 th	Topic: Evidence Based Practice in Relation to Couple and Family Therapy	Integrative Reflection Paper (15 %) DUE: Part 1 (5 %) – Monday, September 16th by 11:59 pm Please submit to Dropbox

Week 3 Sept 23 rd	Topic: Review and Critical Appraisal of CFT Research Ethical and Legal Issues related to Research in Couple and Family Therapy	
Week 4 Sept 30 th	Topic: Practice Based Research	Presentation # 1 and # 2 (30 %) Please submit accompanying documents to Dropbox (Note – the topic for the presentation is something of your choice – it does not have to coincide with the topic of the particular class)
Week 5 Oct. 7 th	Topic: Research Based Practice Quantitative Research	Critical Appraisal and Application of Research (55%) Due: Part 1 Monday, October 7 th by 11:59 pm (15%) Please submit to Dropbox
Week 6 Oct 14 th	Holiday--NO CLASSES SCHEDULED -- class rescheduled to Friday, November 29 (if needed)	
Week 7 Oct 21 st	Topic: Quantitative Research	Presentation # 3 and # 4 (30 %) Please submit accompanying documents to Dropbox (Note – the topic for the presentation is something of your choice – it does not have to coincide with the topic of the particular class)
Week 8 Oct 28 th	Topic: Qualitative Research	Presentation # 5 and # 6 (30 %) Please submit accompanying documents to Dropbox (Note – the topic for the presentation is something of your choice – it does not have to coincide with the topic of the particular class)
Week 9 Nov 4 th	Topic: Qualitative Research Mixed Methods Research	Critical Appraisal and Application of Research (55%) Due: Part 2 Monday, November 4 th by 11:59 pm (20%) Please submit to Dropbox
Week 10 Nov 11 th	Topic: Process vs. Outcome Research Discussion of Research Related to Specific Topics and Clients	Presentation # 7 and # 8 (30 %) Please submit accompanying documents to Dropbox (Note – the topic for the presentation is something of your choice – it does not have to coincide with the topic of the particular class)
Week 11 Nov 18 th	Topic: Knowledge Mobilization and Knowledge Transfer	Critical Appraisal and Application of Research (55%)

		Due: Part 3 Friday, November 22 nd by 11:59 pm (15%) Please submit to Dropbox
Week 12 Nov 25 th	Topic: Last Class – Wrap Up and Review of learning and next steps.	
Week 12 Nov 29 th	Rescheduled class (from Thanksgiving) (if needed)	Integrative Reflection Paper (15 %) DUE: Part 2 (10 %) – Friday, November 29th by 11:59 pm Please submit to Dropbox

Note – Issues related to children, adolescents, specific aspects of couple and family therapy (family composition), addictions, and physical and mental health will be woven into the course readings (required and suggested), the class discussions, the presentations, and the assignments.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

When you cannot meet course requirements:

When you find yourself unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the Instructor **via email**. Where possible, this should be done before the missed work or event, but otherwise, soon after the due date, and certainly no longer than one week later. Note: if appropriate documentation of your inability to meet that in-course requirement is necessary, the course instructor will request it.

Meeting deadlines:

It is the student's responsibility to meet all deadlines. If a student finds that he/she is unable to meet course requirements due to illness or compassionate reasons, the student must notify the Instructor via email **at least one calendar day before** the original due date (day and time) of the assignment. Extensions may be granted for exceptional reasons deemed acceptable by the Instructor. Extension requests will not be granted beyond one week, except in compelling circumstances.

Late assignments:

- Assignments that are not submitted by the original ***due date and time without authorized extensions*** will be considered late
- Late assignments will receive the following late penalty:
 - 3% of the total mark for the assignment if submitted late on the due date. 1% for each additional day after the due date, to a maximum of 7 calendar days, including weekends.
- ***Assignments without an authorized extension will not be accepted more than seven days following the original due date and time.***

COURSELINK

A course website supports the teaching and learning activities for this course. All information pertaining to the course will be updated regularly on CourseLink. Please ensure that you log in throughout the semester to check announcements, obtain copies of course outlines, instructions for assignments and course notes.

CORRESPONDENCE

All email directed to the Instructor must come from an official University of Guelph email address. Emails will be answered between Monday and Friday only, and you will receive a response within 24 - 48 hours if your email is sent from a uoguelph.ca address. You will not receive a response if your email is sent from a non-university account.

ELECTRONIC RECORDING OF CLASSES

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.

INSTRUCTOR /COURSE EVALUATION

Students are invited to complete formal written course/instructor evaluations at the end of the semester. The Instructor invites class members to provide any feedback at any time during the term.

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 Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. Students who need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, or who have emergency medical information to share, should speak to the instructor during the first two weeks of class to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made. It is your responsibility to make the instructor aware of these needs, and to take any steps that may be required on your part in order to achieve reasonable accommodation. Student accessibility services <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/> is an excellent resource.

REFERENCING

All assignments submitted must follow APA 6th Edition for style, formatting and referencing. http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/assistance/writing_services/resources/components/documents/apa.pdf

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity is an expectation in the course. It is the student's responsibility to present their *own original* work, and to represent the work of others following the APA 6th Edition. Students are encouraged to refer to the University of Guelph's Tutorial on Academic Integrity at <http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and 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.

Academic misconduct as seen by engaging in the following will not be tolerated. It is your responsibility to follow rules pertaining to academic misconduct found at:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml