COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will build on the content presented in course 540 (Theory and Practice of Interpersonal Practice). This course will present a theoretical analysis of family functioning and integrate this analysis with social work practice. Broad definitions of "family" will be used, including extended families, unmarried couples, single parent families, gay or lesbian couples, adult siblings, "fictive kin," and other inclusive definitions. Along with theories and knowledge of family structure and process, guidelines and tools for engaging, assessing, and intervening with families will be introduced. The most recent social science theories and evidence will be employed in guiding family assessment and intervention. This course will cover all stages of the helping process with families (i.e. engagement, assessment, planning, evaluation, intervention, and termination). During these stages, client-worker differences will be taken into account including differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other factors. Various theoretical approaches will be presented in order to help students understand family structure, communication patterns, and behavioral and coping repertoires. The family will also be studied as part of larger social systems, as having its own life cycles, and as influencing multiple generations. An overview will be given of current models of practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate a conceptual framework that takes into account individual and family needs, problems and experiences within the family, and resources and opportunities of the social environment. Within such a framework, students will be able to:
   a) identify the normative experiences, risks, and needed tasks as families move through each developmental stage.
   b) discuss these challenges, risks, and tasks as they apply to women, the poor, families of color, and gay and lesbian families.
   c) describe the resources, strengths, and effective family processes across diverse populations including those based on ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and class.
2. Apply family assessment frameworks that are ecological and family-centered and take into account the influence of oppressive social forces. Such assessments will account for the presence and impact of family violence, the presence and impact of substance abuse, and the impact that the students’ own value system has on their assessment formulations.

3. Establish a professional relationship with family members in order to engage in assessment, goal setting, and planning. The capacity to establish relationships with families will include an appreciation of cultural diversity and the unique strengths of nontraditional families.

4. Identify various models of prevention and intervention and explain the applicability of each model to the challenges faced by families. From an array of family-centered models of practice, students will select prevention and treatment interventions that can be applied to families and their larger social context.

5. Select appropriate outcome measures that are reliable and determined by agreed upon goals in order to evaluate the effects of family-centered interventions.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULUM THEMES

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed by considering the unique characteristics of families of various ethnic and racial groups and by tailoring engagement, assessment, goal setting, planning, and intervention to these characteristics. Assessment procedures will focus on strengths rather than deficits in family functioning.

- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed through a multi-systems perspective in which students will view the family as a system within, and affected by, a larger social structure. Family assessment will consider the impact of poverty and discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other factors in causing or maintaining families’ problems. Traditional solutions to family problems will be analyzed for their potential to maintain oppression. Empowerment models of practice will be stressed, including the involvement of natural helping networks and teaching advocacy skills to families.

- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed by identifying the family functions and processes which are useful for the successful development of its members. Prevention programs will be described that are designed to help the general population and at-risk families to avert problems before they develop (e.g. marital enhancement, parent education, premarital counseling, parent-school linkages, etc.).

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be addressed by discussing the relationship of theoretical and empirical knowledge to family practice, by describing the theoretical frameworks within which practice methods may be carried out, and by identifying and critiquing the techniques and outcomes of evaluation which have been used with each practice method.
RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Ethical dilemmas unique to family work will be presented, such as balancing individual and family goals, contracts regarding confidentiality and record-keeping, and addressing oppressive family structures. Presentation of value conflicts that exist toward families in society will be used to raise the students' awareness of personal and professional values.

REQUIRED TEXT


Coursepack available at Ulrich’s

Additional Required Readings are listed, by date, in the course outline and may be found on Reserve in the Social Work Library. Additionally all articles in the coursepack are on reserve in the Social Work Library.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Progress in the course will be assessed with one paper, one interview tape with accompanying paper, and several brief reports of exercises, reading and observations.

The paper must be 8-10 pages in length, typed and double-spaced. Use the writing and reference style of the American Psychological Association. Make appropriate reference to at least four of the required, suggested, or other readings. Special attention should be paid to methods of avoiding plagiarism, as described in your student manual. Outlines and more specific information will be provided for both the paper and the interview tape.

Paper (Due: June 17)

Assessment of Family Functioning (40% of the grade). Included should be an assessment of a family (hopefully one you are seeing but can be your own or one from a movie) including current societal conditions, and ethnic, gender and class variables that may be affecting the family. A genogram will also be part of the assignment.

Video or Audio tape (Due: July 15)

An intervention interview with a role-play family (40% of the grade). Included will be a written description of the hypothesis used, the intervention plan (including the style of therapy used), and a self-assessment of the treatment process (including a look at person of the therapist issues).
Class Assignments

There will be several brief reports or exercises throughout the term regarding observations and reactions to exercises in class. Most of these will be on a pass/fail basis with the grade of pass converted to an A for computation of the final grade (20% of the grade).

Participation and Attendance

There is the expectation that attendance will be regular and that there will be no more than two absences. Participation in class is also expected. Much of the actual experience of this course is in the classroom. Therefore, if there are any problems with attendance, please contact me.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

May 6: {Introductions and Overview
   {Family Assessment (2 hour class)

   Required Readings:
   
   Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps 2, 3, 9, 12
   
   Worden: Chap. 1
   

May 13: Family Assessment (cont.)/Beginning Therapy

   Required Readings:
   
   Worden: Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5
   

   Recommended Reading:
   
   Minuchin, S., & Fishman, C. Family therapy techniques, Chaps. 3, 4.

May 20: Models of Family Therapy

   Required Readings:
   
   Nichols, M., & Schwartz, R. Family therapy: Concepts and methods, 4th Edition, Chaps. 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
   
   Worden: Chap. 6
June 3: Feminist Perspective and Gender Issues

**Required Readings:**

Carter & McGoldrick: Chap. 6, 7, 20

Mirkin, M. P. (1990) *The social and political contexts of family therapy* Part II.

(1991). Gays and lesbians are out of the closet. *Family Therapy Networker* (Jan./Feb.)

**Recommended Readings:**


June 10: Ethnicity, Class and Poverty Issues

**Ethnicity Issues:**

**Required Readings:**

Carter & McGoldrick: Chap. 4

McGoldrick, Giordano, & Pearce. *Ethnicity and family therapy* (2nd ed.). 
Read about your own ethnicity and one other group which interests you--we will do something in class about this.

**Recommended Readings:**

Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps. 8, 10

**Poverty and Class Issues:**

**Required Readings:**

Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps. 5, 19


Mirkin, Part III

June 17: Couples Therapy  

**Required Readings:**

- Carter & McGoldrick: Chap. 14
- Mirkin, Chap. 8

June 24: Family Therapy with Young Children

**Required Readings:**

- Carter & McGoldrick: Chap. 15
- *Family Therapy Networker,*
  - Sept/Oct 1999: "Discovering Our Children"
  - Sept/Oct. 1989 "Mothers are we ready to see them as real people"
  - May/June 1988 "Bringing up Father"
  - May/June 1999 “Running on Ritalin”
  - Sept/Oct 2000 “Makeup Schools Work”

July 1: Family Therapy with Adolescents

**Required Readings:**

- Carter & McGoldrick: Chap. 16
- *Family Therapy Networker,*
  - Sept./Oct. 1994 "Parents Under Siege"
  - May/June 1996, "Across the Great Divide"
  - July/Aug 2000, “Four Most Common Mistakes in Treating Teens”
July 8: Launching Children and Individual Issues

Required Readings:

Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps. 17, 13

(1998) “Healing the Family’s Oldest Rifts”
Family Therapy Networker (July/Aug)

July 15: Later Life and Aging VIDEO TAPES DUE

Required Readings:

Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps. 11, 18

Family Therapy Networker,
Nov./Dec. 1986 "Death in the Family"

July/Aug 1998 “Old is Not a Dirty Word”

Recommended Reading:

Dass, Ram. Still Here.

July 22: Divorce and Remarriage

Tape Presentations and Review

Required Readings:

Carter & McGoldrick: Chaps. 22, 23, 24, 25

Family Therapy Networker,
March/April 2001 “The 30 Years’ War”

Jan/Feb 2000 “Mother, Not-Mother”
Books On Reserve -- S.W. 623, Interpersonal Practice with Families
Katie Pelz-Davis
(w) 572-0882; (h) 663-4039


Minuchin, S., & Fishman, C. Family therapy techniques.


McGoldrick, Giordano, & Pearce. Ethnicity and family therapy (2nd ed.).

Dass, Ram. Still Here.

Journals

Family Therapy Networker,

Jan./Feb., 1991 "Gays and Lesbians are out of the Closet"

Nov./Dec. 1985 "Feminism: Shedding New Light on Families"

Sept./Oct. 1989 "Mothers Are we ready to see them as real people"

May/June 1988 "Bringing up Father"

Sept./Oct. 1994 "Parents Under Siege"

May/June. 1996 "Across the Great Divide"

Nov./Dec. 1986 "Death in the Family"

Nov./Dec. 1989 “Divorce”


March/Apr. 1998 “From Hedgehog to Fox”

Jan/Feb 2000 “Mother, Not Mother”

July/Aug 2000 “Four Most Common Mistakes in Treating Teens”
Nov/Dec 2001 “The Enigma of Psychotherapy

May/June 2000 “The Wall of Silence”

March/Apr 2001 “The 30 Years War”

Family Therapy Magazine, March/Apr 2002 “Culture and Color”