Family Systems Theory
COUN-5540
S1 2021   Section BG   3 Credits   01/04/2021 to 03/05/2021   Modified 12/13/2020

Meeting Times

Class will meet weekly Online, on ZOOM during the Spring 1, 2021 Term on Wednesday evenings.
Call 919-708-3357 to make an appointment on the ZOOM Site before or after the class session. (Please no emails or Text messages for appointments).

Dr. D

Contact Information

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Description

COUN 5540 Family Systems Theory

This course defines and explores counseling work within 'systems' through the lens of counseling theories adapted to systems and general systems theory. The historical context of family therapy is explained and expands to current theoretical approaches to counseling with families including multicultural influences. Also, students will explore the influence of their own family of origin and compare and apply this to what they have learned. Self-growth experiential activities are associated with this course content.

Content Areas: Family systems theory, helping relationships, systems counseling.

Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUN 5540 – Course Standards</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Upon successful completion of this class students will be able to:</td>
<td>Chapter Readings, Exams and Genograms</td>
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Knowledge

1. Recognize the importance of family, social networks, and community systems in the treatment of mental and emotional disorders (CACREP Standard CMHC C.8.)
2. Integrate systems perspective with theories of individual and family development and transitions across the life span (CACREP Standard II.G.3.a)

Chapter Readings and Exams
“My Family” Project and Capstone Project

Skills
Utilizes a systems perspective that provides an understanding of family and other systems theories and major models of family and related interventions (CACREP Standard II.G.5.e)

Exams and “My Family” Project, and Capstone Project

Materials

Required:

Other professional journal articles and or chapters as required by the course instructor/faculty.

Deliverables

Activities

1. Class Participation

Class participation includes being prepared, being engaged, and appropriately presenting your own thoughts and concerns regarding readings assigned and topics discussed. Effective verbal communication is critical in counseling. Classroom discussion provides an opportunity to practice expressing one’s self and to exchange ideas with others in a safe and supportive setting. Sharing ideas and the ability to present your thoughts in a concise manner are key and essential traits for counselors.

Reading Assignments and class discussion participation Students are expected to complete ALL the assigned readings on time and be able to speak coherently (evidence they have read the material) in class discussions. The instructor will guide discussions, but students will carry them (fill with content). It will be obvious if you are not familiar with the reading. Note that you have to be familiar with the reading, i.e., to be able to carry on an intelligent discussion about it, not simply have read it.

a. Experiential Activities and Sharing Experiential exercises/activities will be part of this course. Students are expected to fully participate and share their reflection of these experiences. Students are to give respectful feedbacks to one another and abide by confidentiality, i.e., what is said in the classroom stays in the classroom walls.

Attendance

Be sure you arrive on time for each class session. The instructor will automatically take attendance at the beginning of each class. Absences will result in a significant loss of learning, which will not be recouped through borrowing a classmate’s notes. This is an accelerated program, assignments and readings come due sooner than non-accelerated programs—be prepared. Students are required to meet the expectations of the accelerated program. Students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. All students are expected to arrive in class prepared to participate in all activities.

Self-disclosure is a requirement of CACREP and the ACA Ethical Code(2014). However, you chose how much you disclose. While self-disclosure is required for counselors in training, understand that if you disclose what has, may, or will harm yourself or another, confidentiality will be broken, and appropriate responses and steps will be taken by the course instructor. Understand that if you state that you were physically, mentally, emotionally or otherwise abused at some point, you will be asked...
about the perpetrator (in private) as required by mandated reporters and may be required to meet with the faculty outside of class. Confidentiality is a key practice for counselors. Be sure you show evidence in class and out of class whenever client information is being discussed.

All students are subject to appropriate academic penalty for incomplete or unacceptable work, and or for excessive or unexcused absences.

Use of All electronic, technological, and Wi-Fi devices (computers, cell phones, pagers, I Pods, and so forth), is prohibited during in person/face-to-face class time. If the instructor notices a student on the phone or device, the student will be addressed in private by the course instructor for resolution and may be referred to the Counseling Advisory Committee (CAC) for Remediation and appropriate consequences.

If the course is meeting remotely (Zoom, Webex), students may not attend to phones, texting, emailing, or surfing the web unless directed to do so by the course instructor.

2. Mid Term and Final Exams

There will be two exams consisting of multiple-choice and short answer questions.

3. Family of Origin - Three Generation Paper and Genogram

A. Using the concepts provided in the Gladding textbook, students will complete a double spaced 8-page minimum paper (including cover/title and references pages) using APA Style.

Types and Functionality of Families (Chapter 3, pages 56 through 79)

- Type of Family
- Healthy and Dysfunctional Family Qualities
- Family Life Stressors
- Family Structure and Functionality
- Coping Strategies of my Family
- Implications of Health in Working with Families

Each of the above sections should be 2 to 3 paragraphs in length.

B. Genogram

Each student will construct a three generational genogram of his or her family. Class time may be provided to complete this project.

4. Case Conceptualization as Applied to Family Counseling

The Case Conceptualization paper will be written in APA Style, with no less than 8 and no more than 12 double spaced pages (including title/cover and references pages) (No abstract page). Use as a subject a family with which you have worked. Use one theory chapter from Gladding, chapters 9-16, and integrate that theory and your lessons into your case conceptualization of the case study.

Part I: Provide a brief overview of your selected theory from Gladding, chapters 9-16, to include each of the following content areas as headings/subheadings:

- Name of the theory
- Key tenets of theory
- Role of the counselor
- What creates behavior change
- Techniques used in this theory

Part II: Conceptualize your family case as a counselor thinking through the lens of your selected theory from Part I, and include the concepts/lessons you learned from the text and from class. Write as the counselor treating the family to address the following:
Describe the assessment phase of counseling with this family. Explain the presenting family concern/issue.

- What is the family’s stated goal(s) for counseling?
- Is your goal(s) for counseling different from their stated goal?
- How does this theory conceptualize/frame the family’s issues?
- Specify how your theory created behavior change in this
- Describe the techniques you used with this family.
- Use at least two references from counseling sources, in addition to the Gladding text, to describe the empirical evidence for success with this theoretical
- Use proper parenthetical citations for all References

Correct Grammer: Evaluation

Grading:

Attendance Participation = 50 pts.
Mid Term Exam = 50 pts.
Final Exam = 50 pts.
My Family Paper = 60 pts.
Genogram = 40 pts.
Conceptualization Paper = 50 pts.
Total = 300 pts

Note: Use your Grammar and Spell check features in your word processor.

On all written assignments, a counselor’s written word significantly relates to their professional credibility. Therefore, points will be taken for grammar, spelling, syntax error, and APA format discrepancies and will be deducted from the assignment’s final grade.

NOTE: All projects are to be completed and submitted on or before the due date and time.

Schedule

Week 1: Course Introduction and Syllabus Review.
Gladding, CH 1, The History of Family Therapy: Evolution and Revolution
Gladding, CH 2, The Theoretical Context of Family Therapy
Gladding, CH 3, Types and Functionality of Families; and reading on The Genogram (on Canvas)

Week 2: Gladding, CH 7, The Process of Family Therapy; and reading on Systems (on Canvas)

Week 3: Gladding, CH 7, The Process of Family Therapy; and reading on Systems (on Canvas)

Week 4: Gladding, CH 5, Working with Culturally Diverse Families

Week 5: Gladding, CH 4, Working with Single-Parent and Blended Families
Course Policies

Due to the nature of this course, and the materials and assignments, professional conduct and member confidentiality is especially important.

Self-Awareness, Safety of Disclosure, Appropriate Interpersonal Skills and ACA Code of Ethics:

In the interaction between class members, self-disclosure and personal examination will occur. All interactions fall under the same umbrella of confidentiality as do client/counselor relationships, i.e., what is discussed in the class stays in the class and is not discussed with other students outside of the course or friends. Any violations of the ethical standards will be dealt with accordingly. Maintaining confidentiality is the primary ethical principle of counselors. If a student fails to maintain the confidentiality of clients or classmates, the student risks a failing grade in the course. In addition, the instructor will refer the breach of confidentiality to the Counseling Advisory Committee for disciplinary action of the student.

We will be learning from each other in addition to the text throughout the semester. Therefore, it is important that everyone feels safe, comfortable, and free to discuss and elaborate on their thoughts around their developing knowledge and skills. In class, it is important for each of us to be respectful of one anothers positions; relating to others in an empathic manner occurs in class just as with clients. You are encouraged to make your feelings and thoughts known, yet, to do so in a "counselor manner", i.e., respecting the position of listener while giving voice to your thoughts and using your budding counselor attending skills. This is an opportunity for you to practice and evidence your basic skills of empathy, warmth, genuineness, and congruence by communicating in a manner consistent with a good counselor. The building of trusting alliances with your classmates is as important as doing so with your clients. Therefore, you will be practicing some of the same skills when participating in class as in counseling sessions with your clients one day.

Further, openness to supervision and instruction by the instructor can become an issue for some students and is, therefore, emphasized here. Openness to supervision is defined as: accepting supervision—both individual and in class; recognizing your own personal strengths, weaknesses, needs, and beliefs; sensing personal and professional impact on others, both positive and negative; accepting and applying feedback from instructor; seeking out needed experiences, feedback, etc., in a proactive way; and accepting feedback in a non-defensive manner with a professional attitude.

Students who do not evidence openness to supervision and or appropriate interpersonal skills are subject to remediation by the Counseling Advisory Committee at the campus. See the student handbook and or catalog for further detail.

ACA Code of Ethics (2014)

Counselors [Counselor-in-training] have a responsibility to read, understand, and follow the ACA Code of Ethics and adhere to applicable laws and regulations (see C.1.). Students and supervisees have a responsibility to understand and follow the ACA Code of Ethics. Students and supervisees have the same obligation to clients as those required of professional counselors (see F.5.).
Cell Phones

Turn off all cell phones during class unless otherwise advised by the instructor. Respect for others when you are with them is a key trait for counselors. Insure you are evidencing it in and out of class.

Social Networks

Use of any social networks is prohibited in class; and no information discussed in class is permitted to be referred to or related on any form of social network or public forum. If a student does so, the student will be dropped from the course, no questions asked and no refund made, and the student will be referred to remediation. This course involves respect and confidentiality of comments and discussions. You are here to learn from your classmates and instructor; hence, outside social networking or phone is not tolerated.

Confidentiality is a key practice for counselors. Insure you are evidencing it in class and out of class.

Students may use computers during class time for note taking for this course only. Students are not permitted to be working on any other courses or work other than the Family Systems course documents during class time. Integrity is a key trait for counselors. Insure you are evidencing it in class.

Academic Integrity

All of your work in this class should be original to you and to this class. You are expected to explore, analyze, and discuss the ideas of others, but you must give them proper credit through citations and references. You may continue to explore an area of interest, but you must do new or additional research and writing.

Recycling papers from other coursework is not acceptable.

According to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association(2001), plagiarism involves presenting the work of another as if it were your own work. It is particularly important that you give appropriate credit to others when you use their work. If you paraphrase someone else’s work, you must also give them credit with a citation.

All students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism and to avoid committing plagiarism in their written work. Plagiarism will not be excused by ignorance on the student’s part. If you believe that you do not have a clear understanding of plagiarism, see your instructor immediately and before any written work is turned in. Honesty is a key trait for counselors. Insure you are evidencing it in and out of class.

Course Attendance:

The University reserves the right to drop students who do not attend class the week of the term/semester. Absences will result in a significant loss of learning, which will not be recouped through borrowing a classmate’s notes. Students are expected to attend all class sessions of every course. It is expected that you will come to class having completed the reading assignments and will ask questions and participate in
all activities. You may also be asked to self-disclose in a training environment.

The student is subject to appropriate academic penalty for incomplete or unacceptable makeup work, or for excessive or unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence (one without a doctor’s note or funeral notice of immediate family) = loss of 15 attendance points. Being more than 10 mins late = loss of 4 attendance points. Not participating in discussion = loss of 6 attendance points for the day.

Note:

To achieve the objectives of this course, this syllabus may be revised at the discretion of the instructor without prior notification or consent of the student.

Institutional Policies

Academic Policies

Academic policies provide students with important rights and responsibilities. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with all academic policies that apply to them. Academic policies for undergraduate students can be found in the Undergraduate Studies Catalog; graduate students should review the Graduate Studies Catalog.

Undergraduate Studies Catalog

The Undergraduate Studies Catalog contains academic policies that apply to all undergraduate students. The academic policies and information section of the catalog contains important information related to attendance, conduct, academic honesty, grades, and more. If you are an undergraduate student, please review the catalog each academic year. The current Undergraduate Studies Catalog is at:

http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/

Graduate Studies Catalog

The Graduate Studies Catalog contains academic policies that apply to all graduate students. The academic policies section of the catalog contains important information related to conduct, academic honesty, grades, and more. If you are a graduate student, please review the catalog each academic year. The current Graduate Studies Catalog is at:

http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/

Grading

The Grades section of the academic catalog outlines the various grading systems courses may use, including the information about the final grade reported for this class.

Undergraduate

http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/academic-policies.html#grading

Graduate

http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/academic-policies.html#grades

Incomplete

There are important policies that govern grades of Incomplete (I), including the circumstances under which Incomplete grades are granted, deadlines for completion, and consequences should the remaining course work not be completed. It is the responsibility of a student who requests an Incomplete to ensure that he/she understands and follows the policies.

Grade Appeals
Instructors are responsible for assigning grades, and students should discuss grade issues with the instructor. Policies and procedures for appealing grades are available in the appropriate catalog.

**Academic Honesty Policy**

Webster University is committed to academic excellence. As part of our Statement of Ethics, we strive to preserve academic honor and integrity by repudiating all forms of academic and intellectual dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and all other forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and is subject to a disciplinary response. Students are encouraged to talk to instructors about any questions they may have regarding how to properly credit others’ work, including paraphrasing, quoting, and citation formatting. The university reserves the right to utilize electronic databases, such as Turnitin.com, to assist faculty and students with their academic work.

The University’s Academic Honesty Policy is published in academic catalogs:

**Undergraduate**

[http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/academic-policies.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/academic-policies.html)

**Graduate**

[http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/academic-policies.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/academic-policies.html)

As a part of the University’s commitment to academic excellence, the Academic Resource Center provides student resources to become better acquainted with academic honesty and the tools to prevent plagiarism in its many forms:

[http://www.webster.edu/arc/plagiarism_prevention/](http://www.webster.edu/arc/plagiarism_prevention/)

**Statement of Ethics**

Webster University strives to be a center of academic excellence. The University makes every effort to ensure the following:

- The opportunity for students to learn and inquire freely
- The protection of intellectual freedom and the rights of professors to teach
- The advancement of knowledge through scholarly pursuits and relevant dialogue

To review Webster University’s statement of ethics, see the Undergraduate Studies Catalog and the Graduate and Studies Catalog:

**Undergraduate**

[http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/overview.html#ethics](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/overview.html#ethics)

**Graduate**

[http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/ethics.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/ethics.html)

**Important Academic Resources**

**Academic Accommodations**

Webster University makes every effort to accommodate individuals with academic/learning, health, physical and psychological disabilities. To obtain accommodations, students must identify themselves and provide documentation from a qualified professional or agency to the appropriate campus designee or the Academic ADA Coordinator at the main campus. The Academic ADA Coordinator may be reached at 314-246-7700 or disability@webster.edu.

If you have already identified as a student with a documented disability and are entitled to classroom or testing accommodations, please inform the instructor of the accommodations you will require for this class at the beginning of the course.

**Academic Resource Center**

Additional support and resources may be accessed through the Academic Resource Center (ARC). Support and resources include
academic counseling, accommodations, assistive technology, peer tutoring, plagiarism prevention, testing center services, and writing coaching. Visit [www.webster.edu/arc](http://www.webster.edu/arc) or Loretto Hall 40 on the main campus for more information.

**Student Success Portal**

Webster University’s Student Success Portal, powered by Starfish, is a communications tool to connect students with faculty members and campus support services. It allows faculty and staff members to communicate with you regarding academic achievements as well as areas where support may be helpful. You may use the portal to contact faculty and staff members for assistance and to arrange meetings. Activity in the portal will be communicated to your Webster University email account. The Student Success Portal is available via your course home page in WorldClassRoom or via Connections. Learn more about the Student Success Portal at [http://www.webster.edu/success/students.html](http://www.webster.edu/success/students.html).

**University Library**

Webster University Library is dedicated to supporting the research needs and intellectual pursuits of students throughout the University’s worldwide network. Resources include print and electronic books, journal articles, online databases, DVDs and streaming video, CDs and streaming music, datasets, and other specialized information. Services include providing materials at no cost and research help for basic questions to in-depth exploration of resources. The gateway to all of these resources and services is [http://library.webster.edu](http://library.webster.edu). For support navigating the library’s resources, see [http://libanswers.webster.edu/](http://libanswers.webster.edu/) for the many ways to contact library staff.

**Drops and Withdrawals**

Drop and withdrawal policies dictate processes for students who wish to unenroll from a course. Students must take proactive steps to unenroll; informing the instructor is not sufficient, nor is failing to attend. In the early days of the term or semester, students may DROP a course with no notation on their student record. After the DROP deadline, students may WITHDRAW from a course; in the case of a WITHDRAW, a grade of W appears on the student record. After the WITHDRAW deadline, students may not unenroll from a course. Policies and a calendar of deadlines for DROP and WITHDRAW are at:

- **Undergraduate** [http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/enrollment.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/enrollment.html)
- **Graduate** [http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/enrollment.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/enrollment.html)

Academic Calendar - [http://www.webster.edu/academics/academic-calendar/](http://www.webster.edu/academics/academic-calendar/)

Current tuition rates, policies, and procedures, including details of pro-rated tuition refunds, are available in the “Tuition, Fees, and Refunds” section of Webster’s Academic Catalogs:

- **Undergraduate** [http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/tuition.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/undergraduate-catalog/tuition.html)
- **Graduate** [http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/tuition.html](http://www.webster.edu/catalog/current/graduate-catalog/tuition.html)

**Student Handbook and Other Important Policies**

Student handbook and other non-academic policies may apply to you and may impact your experience in this class. Such policies include the student code of conduct, privacy, technology and communications, and more. Please review the handbook each year and be aware of policies that apply to you. The handbook is available at:

Sexual Assault, Harassment, and Other Sexual Offenses

Webster University makes every effort to educate the community to prevent sexual assault, harassment, and other sexual offenses from occurring, and is committed to providing support to those affected when this behavior does occur. To access information and resources or to review the Policy on Sexual Assault, Harassment, and Other Sexual Offenses, visit:

http://www.webster.edu/sexual-misconduct/

Research on Human Subjects

The Webster University Institutional Review Committee (IRB) is responsible for the review of all research on human subjects. The IRB process applies to all Webster University faculty, staff, and students and must be completed prior to any contact with human subjects. For more information on the IRB, visit:

http://www.webster.edu/irb/index.html

Course Evaluations

At the end of this course, you will have the opportunity to provide feedback about your experience. Your input is extremely valuable to the university, your instructor, and the department that offers this course. Please provide your honest and thoughtful evaluation, as it helps the university to provide the best experience possible for all of its students.

Important Technology Information

Connections Accounts

Webster University provides all students, faculty, and staff with a University email account through Connections. Students are expected to activate their Connections account and regularly check incoming University email. Students may choose to have their University email forwarded to an alternate email address. Connections account holders can call the Help Desk (314-246-5995 or toll free at 1-866-435-7270) for assistance with this setup. Instructions are also provided on the Information Technology website at:

http://www.webster.edu/technology/service-desk/

WorldClassRoom

WorldClassRoom is Webster’s Learning Content Management System (LMS). Your instructor may use WorldClassRoom to deliver important information, to hold class activities, to communicate grades and feedback, and more. WorldClassRoom is available using your Connections ID at:

https://worldclassroom.webster.edu/

Webster Alerts

Webster Alerts is the University’s preferred emergency mass notification service, available free to current students, faculty and staff at all US campuses. By registering a valid cell phone number and email address, you will receive urgent campus text, voice mail and email communications. Valuable information concerning a range of incidents affecting you - from weather-related campus closures, class delays and cancellations, to more serious or life-threatening events - are immediately and simultaneously delivered through multiple communication channels. To register for Webster Alerts, visit:

http://www.webster.edu/technology/services/webster-alerts/

Campus Information

Webster University - Fort Bragg Campus

Location:
Bragg Teaching and Education Center, Fort Bragg (BTEC)
4520 Knox Street, Building number 1-3571, Wing B, Room 101

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 71728
Fort Bragg, NC 28307

Office Phone:
910-436-9802