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COURSE SYLLABUS

HSMF 601

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING I

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course considers the dynamics of marriage and family relationships from a systems perspective. The emphasis is on understanding family and other systems theories, the structure and function of marriage, various aspects of the marital relationship and family systems, and models of family and systemic interventions. Considerations from a historical perspective are presented along with current developments within marriage and family systemic models.

RATIONALE

This course is designed to cover the numerous and varied marriage and family theories, as well as the history of marriage and family therapy. The information in this course is designed to equip counselor trainees for practice and to successfully complete the licensure exam.

HSMF 601 is intended to introduce the student to the concept and philosophy of marriage and family therapy. The student will be required to understand the systems philosophy and six major theoretical frameworks within the marriage and family therapy field. The student will understand such core content areas as: marriage and family history, key theoretical figures, ethics and legal matters, counseling issues, some techniques, current trends, and future themes. This is the first marriage and family course; thus, it is designed to teach foundational materials necessary to pass state licensure examinations.

I. PREREQUISITES

None

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASES

Goldenberg, I., Stanton, M., & Goldenberg, H. (2017). *Family therapy: An overview*. (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN: [9781305092969](#).

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company. ISBN: [9780393705096](#).

Ripley, J. S., & Worthington Jr., E. L. (2014). *Couple therapy: A new hope-focused approach*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. ISBN: [9780830828579](#).

Disclaimer: The above resources provide information consistent with that required by state licensing boards in the class subject area. Liberty University does not necessarily endorse specific religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these resources.

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Microsoft Office

D. GenoPro Software

The student will need this software to complete his/her Family Genogram Project. A university license for free downloads has been purchased for the HSMF 601 student. The student will use the address below to download the software to his/her laptop or desktop computer: [GenoPro Software](#).

GenoPro is a Windows platform software, but the student can run GenoPro on his/her Macintosh. However, the student will need special software. The minimal software requirements are Windows for Mac and Parallels or VMwareFusion. If the student has an old Mac, he/she can run GenoPro on Virtual PC. For complete directions on how to accomplish this, see the link below: [GenoPro Software for Mac](#).

E. The Holy Bible

III. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- A. Examine and critique the historical development of marriage and family counseling.
- B. Attribute and demonstrate appropriate ethical and legal consideration related to marriage, couple, and/or family counseling.
- C. Articulate aspects of various professional organizations, standards of practice, credentialing, and licensure in the field of marriage and family counseling.
- D. Differentiate and apply a variety of marriage and family models and theories related to the many counseling orientations.
- E. Discuss and integrate knowledge of family life cycles/stages, various family systems, contemporary families, family health and wellness, cultural variances in families, and family phenomenology.
- F. Critique and hypothesize how crises, trauma, abuse, divorce, and disasters affect the family system.
- G. Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards established by ACA, AACC, AAMFT, and the IAMFC codes of ethics.
- H. Integrate biblical principles and secular theories in a responsible, eclectic manner.
- I. Select and apply techniques from various counseling orientations/models to case studies and family situations.
- J. Design an interview with a family member and generate a family genogram tracing multigenerational patterns of behavior, attitudes, and/or pathology.
- K. Analyze and hypothesize various family dynamics that have shaped the family system over the life span using the genogram interview and data.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

C. Group Discussion Board Forums (6)

For this collaborative discussion board, the instructor will place the student into a group at the beginning of the course. Each group will be assigned based on alphabetically listed last names. The student will complete 6 Group Discussion Board Forums throughout this course. The student is required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 500 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the

student is required to reply to 1 classmate's thread. Each reply must be at least 400 words. Each reply must cite at least 1 source. These discussion board activities are designed to allow the student to discuss, articulate, analyze, and integrate the various aspects of marriage and family counseling, as well as to learn how faith can be integrated within counseling. (MLO: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K)

D. Family Genogram Project

The student will use the GenoPro software and the McGoldrick et al. textbook to prepare a family genogram of at least 3 generations of his/her family system. The student will also write a 5-page paper in current APA format analyzing his/her genogram. (MLO: H, J, K)

E. Family Counseling Approach Research Paper

The student will write a research paper/formal literature review on 1 of the specific approaches to family counseling. The research portion of the paper must be at least 6 pages in current APA format and must use a minimum of 12 scholarly references. This assignment must also include a personal integration section in which the student will integrate his/her own faith and family counseling approach. The personal integration section must be at least 4 pages and must maintain the same formatting as the research section. (MLO: A, D, E, H)

F. Exams (4)

Each exam will cover the Reading & Study material for the assigned modules/weeks. These exams will require the student to synthesize, compare and contrast, and demonstrate graduate-level integration of the materials covered in the course. Each exam will be open-book/open-notes, consist of 50 multiple-choice questions, and have a 1-hour and 30-minute time limit. (MLO: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I)

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Group Discussion Board Forums (6 at 50 pts ea)	300
Family Genogram Project	150
Family Counseling Approach Research Paper	150
Exam 1 (Modules 1–2)	100
Exam 2 (Modules 3–4)	100
Exam 3 (Modules 5–6)	100
Exam 4 (Modules 7–8)	100
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = [940–1010](#) A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

C. Late Assignment Policy

If the student is unable to complete an assignment on time, then he or she must contact the instructor immediately by email.

Assignments that are submitted after the due date without prior approval from the instructor will receive the following deductions:

1. Late assignments submitted within one week of the due date will receive a 10% deduction.
2. Assignments submitted more than one week late will receive a 20% deduction.

3. Assignments submitted two weeks late or after the final date of the course will not be accepted.

4. Late Discussion Board threads or replies will not be accepted.

Special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, personal health issues) will be reviewed by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

D. Tests/Exams

1. For timed tests/exams, students are required to complete the exam within the assigned time. For students who exceed this time limit a penalty of 1 point may be deducted for each minute they exceed the assigned time limit.
2. Students must take the exam during the assigned module/week. Late submissions will be penalized at 5% per day, cumulative, with no test/exam being accepted seven (7) days after the original due date without written approval from the professor. Whenever possible, this approval must be sought prior to the test/exam due date.

E. Dual Relationship

The faculty is responsible to interact with counseling students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty is responsible to avoid dual relationships with students such as entering a student-counselor or student-pastor relationship. Thus, the faculty does not provide personal counseling addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student is in need of personal or professional counseling, then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor in their community.

F. Limits of Confidentiality

In the event of a student's disclosure, either verbally or in writing, of threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator, or supervisor will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the appropriate program chair or online dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

G. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact the Liberty University Online Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at luoodas@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Balwick, J. O., & Balwick, J. K. (2007) *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home* (3rd ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. ISBN: [9780801032493](https://www.bakeracademic.com/9780801032493).
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- Kostenberger, A. J., & Jones, D. W. (2004). *God, marriage, and family: Rebuilding the biblical foundation*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books. ISBN: [9781581345803](https://www.crosswaybooks.com/9781581345803).
- Napier, A., & Whitaker, C. (1978). *The family crucible: The intense experience of family*

therapy. New York, NY: Harper Perennial. ISBN: [9780060145682](#).

Papp, P. (1994). *The process of change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. ISBN: [9780898625011](#).

Worthington, E. (1993). *Marriage counseling: A Christian approach to counseling couples* (2nd ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. ISBN: [9780830817696](#).

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