

Rutgers University, Graduate School of Education
15:297:508:A6 Family: Systems Development
Summer 2014

Dr. Caroline "CC" Clauss-Ehlers
Office: GSE 310
Course: Hybrid Format
In-class meetings Thurs 5:30-9:00 PM
Online Discussion/Activities
Room: 347
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Course Description

The origin of family dates back to prehistoric times and continues to play a major role in the socialization of children, transmission of culture, identification of role (i.e., parent, uncle, aunt, child, grandparent), supporter of economic status, and forum for intimacy. The systemic family therapist considers individual development in the context of larger family systems. From this perspective, movement in one family member will have an impact across the larger family system. To understand and effectively work with families, it is critical that the family counselor grasp a sense of the larger historical, cultural, relational, economic, and political realities that influence family development, coping, and distress (Gladding, 2007).

This hybrid course is experiential and didactic with lecture and skill-building activities offered throughout. The lecture component consists of didactic information related to assigned readings and selected topics in family counseling. Skill-building involves role-plays, mock family interviews, personal reflection activities, case discussions, and application of theory through in-class exercises. The online component of the course includes active discussions, posting of assignments, and engaging in an ongoing dialogue about the meaning of family in the 21st century.

Course Objectives

1. To increase your personal self-awareness about your own family and what it means to work systemically (CACREP II.K.1.a; CACREP II.K.1.b; II.K.5.d; II.K.6.a; II.K.6.b; II.K.6.f. standards).
2. To increase your understanding of systemic theoretical orientations to family work and the role of the family therapist (CACREP II.K.5.a; II.K.5.b; II.K.5.c; II.K.5.d; II.K.6.a; II.K.6.c; II.k.6.d. standards).

3. To increase your repertoire of counseling skills in work with families from diverse backgrounds who present a range of issues (CACREP II.K.2.a.; II.K.2.b; II.K.2.c.; II.K.2.d; II.K.2.e.; II.K.2.f. standards).
4. To understand ethical considerations specific to working with families (CACREP II.K.1.h; II.K.3.e; II.K.5.g; II.K.6.g; II.K.8.f. standards).
5. To understand the research literature associated with different family theories and what empirical studies suggest about the effectiveness of family counseling (CACREP II.K.1.c; II.K.8.c.; II.K.8.e. standards).
6. To understand current public policy as it affects families as well as the role of advocacy (CACREP II.K.1.f; II.K.1.g; II.K.2.a; II.K.2.c. standards).
7. To understand family development and transitions through the life cycle (CACREP II.K.3.a; II.K.3.c; II.K.3.d. standards).
8. To assess family functioning from a systemic, multicultural perspective (CACREP II.K.7.f; II.K.7.h. standards).

Class Format

This is a hybrid course, where about half of your learning will take place in classroom sessions and half will occur through our online community, along with the online assignments that are provided during the week. The in-class format is divided into two parts: lecture/discussion and role-play skill-building activities. Each class will incorporate both of these activities. All classes will involve active participation from students. The online component of the course will require posting responses and active online dialogue based on the week's readings and topic of discussion. There will also be activities posted online (and discussed in class) that students will be responsible for completing as indicated below.

Required Reading

Clauss-Ehlers, C.S. (2006). *Diversity training for classroom teaching: A manual for students and educators*. New York, NY: Springer.

Gladding, S.T. (2007). *Family therapy: History, theory, and practice* (5th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Pearce, J. (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy* (3rd ed). New York: Guilford Press.

Suggested Reading

Coleman, H.L.K., & Yeh, C. (Eds.). *Handbook of school counseling*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Course Requirements/Evaluation

Attendance to all classes is mandatory. Any absences must be approved by the instructor in advance, failure to do so will result in a 3 point decrease in the student's grade. No late assignments will be accepted.

1. Family observation paper. You are to write a 3-page paper that describes a family you casually observe as they interact in natural surroundings (e.g., restaurant, grocery store). Your paper should detail the things you notice about who is in the family, what type of family this might be (e.g., nuclear, extended family), how family members appear to relate to one another, and qualities of health or "unhealth" in the family you observe. *The assignment is worth 20 points.*

2. Mock Family Genogram paper. With your team, you are to write a paper that describes your mock family's history incorporating theories and concepts discussed in class and the readings. Your paper is to include a family genogram that charts your mock family's experiences. The paper is to incorporate cultural aspects of your mock family and the McGoldrick reading that reflects your mock family's cultural background(s). Be sure to discuss pertinent patterns and trends identified across generations. A description of the paper will be handed out in class. You will also design a treatment plan with your team that is based on your mock clinical interviews as part of the paper. Discussion about treatment plan development will be reviewed in class. *The assignment is worth 30 points.*

3. Understanding substance abuse and recovery paper. You are to attend an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting to learn about addiction and its impact on family systems. After you attend the meeting, write a 4-page paper that provides a reflection of what you learned about substance abuse, its impact on families, the recovery process, and your own reaction to the meeting. *The assignment is worth 25 points.*

4. Mock family counseling case presentation. You will have the opportunity to present with your team on the family you "counseled" during the course of the semester. This presentation will include a review of the treatment plan you cultivated with your group as well as a discussion about themes relevant to the family, critical issues, and recommendations for future interventions. *The presentation is worth 20 points.*

5. Class & online participation/Skill building. This requirement is based on: 1) your willingness to complete homework assignments; 2) demonstration of understanding of assigned readings; and 3) ability to demonstrate significant skill as a family counselor through skill-building activities. Online participation is indicated by involvement and posting responses to online discussions and activities. *Skill building is worth 5 points.*

Academic Integrity

Note that the course corresponds with principles of academic integrity which means that students are not to plagiarize their work, use material without citing it, and submit similar work from another course for this course. See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Course Schedule and Readings

May 29 Unit 1. Understanding Families

5/29 In-Class Component: INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS FAMILY?

Gladding Chapter 1

Definition of Family Exercise; Clauss-Ehlers, Chapter 7

Mock Family Interview Activity: Getting to Know Your Family

Mock Family Outing

Treatment Plans

Family Observation Paper

First clinical interview

5/30-6/4 On-line Component: WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY FAMILY?

Life Cycle Development

Gladding Chapter 2

Assignment: *Family Observation paper that incorporates the concept of health and “unhealthy” in families: Continued online discussion about this assignment that is due in class 6/5*

June 5th Unit 2. Therapeutic Approaches

Family Observation paper due

6/5 In-Class Course Component: BOWENIAN & STRUCTURAL/STRATEGIC FAMILY COUNSELING

a) Bowenian Family Counseling

Gladding Chapter 9

Review of Mock Family Genogram Paper due in class 6/19

Genogram Handout

b) Structural & Strategic Family Counseling

Gladding Chapters 12 and 13

Tres Madres video

Second Clinical Interview

6/6-6/11 On-line Course Component: THE FAMILY THERAPY PROCESS & UNIQUE ISSUES IN FAMILY THERAPY I

- a) Continuation from 6/5 in-class discussion:
Tres Madres video questions
Discussion: Mock Family Genogram Paper & Treatment Plan Component
- b) Family Therapy Process:
Educational transitions in family therapy training
Gladding Chapter 7
- c) Substance abuse in Families
Gladding Chapter 16, pages 360-368

Assignment: *Understanding Substance Abuse and Recovery Paper due in class 6/12.*

June 12th Unit 3. Unique Issues in Family Therapy II

Understanding Substance Abuse and Recovery Paper due

6/12 In-Class Component: SPECIAL TOPICS FOR FAMILIES

- a) Culturally Diverse Families
Gladding Chapter 3
Clauss-Ehlers Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5
- b) Working with Couples
Video and Discussion: *The Angry Couple*
- c) Child Abuse in Families
Definition of Abuse Exercise
Clauss-Ehlers Chapter 12
Gladding Chapter 16, pages 377-382

6/13-6/18 On-line Course Component: UNIQUE ISSUES IN FAMILY THERAPY II

- a) Blended Families
Gladding Chapter 5
- b) Domestic Violence in Families
Gladding Chapter 16, pages 369-377
Clauss-Ehlers Chapter 13

Assignment reminder: *Mock Family Genogram paper due 6/19.*

June 19th Unit 4. Genogram Papers with Treatment Plans and Clinical Case Presentations

Mock Family Genogram paper due

- Final Clinical Interviews
- In-class Presentations on Counseling Work with Mock Families & Treatment Plans