

Program Courses

Coun 575 Foundations of Couples, Marriage and Family Counseling (3 credits)

An introduction to the theory and methodology of marriage and family counseling. Attention is given to the major family interactional patterns that lead to family system breakdowns as well as the development of skills in the identification of such patterns. Family process assessment techniques, beginning work with families, dealing with resistance in family counseling, use of "self," doubling, sculpting, etc., are interventions that are taught using an experiential format.

Coun 573 Contemporary Couples, Marriage, and Family Systems (3 credits)

Focus on contemporary couples, marriage, and family systems as they exist in American society today. Explore the past, present, and future of these systems, including changing demographics and their implications for professionals.

Be able to:

- Critique current theory, research, and practice pertaining to marriage and family systems
- Describe past, present, and future historical trends related to marriage and family systems
- Analyze the relationship between the historical trends and their implications for the practice of marriage and family therapy

Coun 574 Family Life Cycle and Transitions (3 credits)

Examine family development as a foundational framework for family therapy. Consider symptoms and dysfunctions as they relate to tasks and challenges of reorganization at transition points within the developmental context.

- Understand the character, tasks, and challenges of reorganization of stages or phases of the intact middle-class American family life cycle
- Understand the character, tasks, and challenges of reorganization of divorce cycle stages or phases

- Analyze the impact of variables such as chronic illness, death, and alcohol abuse on the family life cycle
- Apply knowledge of family cycle issues, themes, and principles to a presented family situation
- Learn to develop and present a family life cycle model

Coun 572 Systemic Perspectives on Human Sexuality (3 credits)

Study the expression of human sexuality and intimacy across the life span, attitudes about sexuality, common problems of sexual functioning, and therapeutic interventions. Assess personal values and the process of sexual value development as well as review outcome research on current treatment models and controversies in the field. Discuss therapeutic approaches to sexual problems (common psychosexual disorders, sexual compulsion, and sexual symptoms of sexual abuse) from Freudian, psychodynamic, behavioral-cognitive, systems, postmodern, sexual crucible, and EMDR perspectives.

- Recognize personal attitudes about various aspects of sexuality and the effect of these on practice
- Increase ability to comfortably discuss sexuality with individuals and couples
- Discuss common sexual functioning problems (e.g., low sexual desire, disorders of arousal, orgasmic problems, vaginismus, sexual compulsion), therapeutic interventions and controversies, and outcome research
- Understand the impact sexual abuse has on sexuality and treatment considerations
- Describe sexual problems and therapy of the physically or mentally challenged and the chronically, physically, or mentally ill

Coun 578 Couples Therapy (3 credits)

Learn to conceptualize and intervene systematically with couple units. Attention is given to maintaining therapeutic balance, developing an intersystem treatment plan, and asking systemic/interactional questions. A major emphasis is supervised skill practice through role-play.

Coun 577 Family Therapy (3 credits)

Analyze the range of normative and paranormative problems experienced by family members, in particular, parental and parent-child relationships. Examine family case studies and participate in role-playing activities designed to enhance family therapy skills. For those in the master's program, this course is a prerequisite to internship.

Be able to:

- Analyze current theory and research pertaining to family therapy
 - o Understand similarities and differences between marital and family therapy
- Discern the cross-generational systemic nature of family problems and issues
- Understand therapeutic strategies when working with family members
- Understand, describe, and analyze prevailing conceptual treatment systems (e.g., strategic, brief therapy, and family mediation approaches)
- Appreciate the legal need for standards of practice and professional ethics

Coun 579 Advanced Systemic Interventions: Couples and Families (3 credits)

Analyze current therapeutic assessment tools and interventions grounded in systemic theory and research as they pertain to family transitions. Success in this course builds upon requisite mastery of major systemic concepts that have to do with systemic function, structure, and motivation as related to assessing similarities and differences between normative and paranormative marriage and family life transitions. Integrate appropriate systemic assessment with systemic therapeutic interventions in resolving crises resulting from family transitional difficulty, chronic illness, divorce, separation, remarriage, and death. This is the capstone course for the series.