

**Niagara University
Graduate Counseling Program
Spring 2006**

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Or, TBA with professor

Note: Please turn off your cell phone when entering class.

A. Course Number, Title & Schedule

EDU 668A: Family Counseling

Thursday 4:20-7:05 PM

Dunlevy Hall (DN) 219

Examination of personal family dynamics through the use of different theories will facilitate our lecture and in-class discussions. Beginning skills in family counseling will be developed through role playing, small group discussion, reading the text, lecture and occasional videos. The class is practioner-oriented, with a constructiveness philosophy emphasizing the student as an active learner. The course also examines issues of multiculturalism (such as age, gender, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, etc.) in a dynamic 21st century global society.

B. Educational Philosophy/Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework of the Niagara University College of Education forms the basis for the graduate programs in counseling. NU's College of Education has adapted a constructivist approach to teaching, which incorporates an active learning module and the reflective practitioner inside the classroom and in practicum/internship. EDU 668 (Family Counseling) also serves as a theoretical, practical and evaluative role for students in the graduate programs of Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling.

The conceptual framework of the graduate counseling programs also follows the requirements of the **Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)- the professional accreditation for counseling programs**. This course addresses the following CACREP Core Areas:

Eight CACREP Core Areas*

- a. Professional Identity: *Addressed in Edu 668.*
- b. Social and Cultural Diversity: *Addressed in Edu 668.*
- c. Human Growth & Development: Not addressed.
- d. Career Development: Not addressed.
- e. Helping Relationships: *Addressed in Edu 668.*
- f. Group Work: Not addressed.
- g. Assessment: *Addressed in Edu 668.*
- h. Research and Program Evaluation: Not addressed.

*Note: The Eight CACREP Core Areas are addressed throughout the curriculum. This course meets four of the eight CACREP Core Areas. Core areas not addressed in this course are addressed in other courses.

C. Number of Credits:

Three (3) Credit Hours

D. Text: (Available in the NU Bookstore)

Gladding, S. T. (2002). *Family Therapy: History, Theory, and Practice* (3rd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

E. Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Shift the counseling focus from individual dynamics to family system dynamics, with sensitivity to multicultural and meta-cultural issues.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of counseling strategies and approaches learned from reading and discussion of various family counseling theories.
3. Construct genograms/family assessments and use them appropriately in counseling with families.
4. Demonstrate role-play skills in dealing with difficult parent, child and adolescent issues.
5. Demonstrate skills in dealing with family issues of divorce, separation, grief, domestic violence, sexual orientation, addictions and sexual abuse.
6. Become an active participant in in-class discussion.

Note: Students who complete this course successfully will have achieved the learning outcomes above have completed the minimum educational requirements for counseling families as per the Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

F. Methods of Instruction

Classes will include a variety of instructional strategies including issue driven, active question-answer discussion style class. To maximize learning, it is expected that students will be active participants in all classes. Classes will be oriented based on the assumption that students have read the material assigned prior to each class. Out of class reading assignments are essential to the development of skills and in-class success. Also, each class will conclude with a mock family role-play, composed of student participants.

Note: In cases of student absences, that student will complete a two-page overview of the reading material and give to the professor by the following class. *If a student misses more than two classes, a grade of incomplete (I) will result and the student will be required to retake the course.*

G. Class Outline and Assignments (S=Silence; M=Music for focusing activity)

Date	Topic
Jan. 19	Introduction and class expectations, selection of mock families. (S) Chaps: 1, 2 & 3: Individual and Family life cycles, healthy and dysfunctional characteristics. Choose Mock Family's.

Jan. 26 Chaps: 4 & 5: Family Process and Bowenian approach. (Family A Role-Play) (M)

Feb. 2 Chap.: 6: Experiential Family Therapy (Family B Role-Play) (S)

Assignment #1: With your presentation group, prepare an Experiential family therapy role-play of an interview with a “family” facing a problem you and your “family” partners devise. Include a genogram of the “family” and a brief introduction to the “family” and the issues. You will be acting out this role-play in class. The overview of the genogram should take 5 minutes and the role-play should take **25 minutes. (30 points)**

Feb. 9 Chaps: 7: Cognitive Behavioral Approaches (M) (Family A Role Plays)

Feb. 16 Chap. 8 Structural Family Therapy: Video: View and Critique (Family B Role-Play) (S)

Due: Assignment #2: Write a behaviorally or cognitive behaviorally oriented role-play of an interview with a “family” facing a problem with a child or adolescent. Include a genogram of the “family”, a brief introduction to the “family” and the problem. Write the family members dialogue on line one, and then respond as “counselor” on the next line. Limit the interaction to no more than eight (8) pages (double-spaced). **(20 points)**

Feb. 23 Chap.: 9 Strategic/Systemic Family Therapy: Culturally Diverse families (Family A Role-Plays) (M)

Mar. 2 Chap. 10 Solution Focused Family Therapy (Family B) (M)

Mar. 9 Chap. 11 & 12 Single Parent & Blended Families

Due: Assignment #3: This assignment will be a group project. Each “family” will demonstrate an in class, Solution-Focused or Narrative approach to a family problem. Include a brief family history, including the problem that brought the family to counseling. One member will play counselor, while the others play family members. 25 minutes. **(20 points)**

Mar. 16 No Class: Winter Recess

Mar 23 Chapter 13 Culturally diverse families (Family A Role-Play) (S)

Mar. 30 No Class: ACA National Conference

Apr. 6 Chapter 14 Domestic Violence & Sub. Abuse (Family B Role-Play) (M)

- Apr. 13** **No Class: Easter Break**
- Apr. 20 Professional Video on Family Counseling (TBA)
(Family A Role-Play) (S)
- April 27 Ethical & Legal Issues in Family Counseling
(Family B Role-Play) (M)
- May 4 Professional Video. No Role Plays. Term paper Due (S)

Due: Assignment #4: Students will write an 8-10 page typed paper outlining the nuances of a particular form of family counseling. This will include what the student sees as the relative strengths and weakness of the therapeutic approach. Paper will be developed as per APA guidelines regarding referencing. See the attached guidelines for term papers **(20 points)**

- May 11 **Final Class.** Video and Discussion. (*Attendance optional. Four points for Students who view and Critique video.*) (M)

H. Evaluation Process/Grading Scale

Assignment # 1: 30 points	100-98= A+	
Assignment # 2: 20 points	97-93= A	71-69=C-
Assignment # 3: 20 points	92-90= A-	68- Below = F
Assignment # 4: 20 points	89-86= B+	
In Class Discussion: 10 points	85-82= B	
	81-78=B-	
	77-75= C+	
Total = 100 points	74- 72= C	

I. Bibliography

American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) at:
[http:// www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org)

American Counseling Association (ACA) at: <http://www.counseling.org>

American Family Therapy Association (AFTA) at: [http:// www.afta.org](http://www.afta.org)

American Psychological Association (APA) at: <http://www.apa.org>

Carlson, J. D., Sperry, L., & Lewis, J. A. (1997). *Family therapy: Ensuring treatment Efficacy*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Halford, W. K. (2001). *Brief therapy for couples: Helping partners help themselves*. New York: Guilford.

International Association for Marriage and Family Counseling (IAMFC) at:
<http://www.iamfc.org/>

J. Focusing Time:

The first five minutes of class time will be reserved for a focusing exercise. This allows us to detach from busy lives so that we can better focus on the topic at hand. The methods of focusing will vary from silence one week, to reflective music the next. This exercise is meant to encourage contemplation and reflection and is not intended to promote a particular religious or spiritual ideology.

K. Disability Accommodations

Any student eligible for and needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor no later than the first two weeks of the semester. Students should also notify the Coordinator of Specialized Services (located on the first floor of Seton Hall, ph. (716) 286-8076) of their particular situation and special needs. Niagara University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities.

L. The Writing Center:

Even graduate students occasionally need assistance with writing mechanics. Students are encouraged to utilize the Writing Center on the first floor of Seton Hall (286-8536). Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 1:00-4:00 PM.

M. Counseling Services

Counseling services are provided for all Niagara University students free of charge. The office of Counseling Services is located in the lower level of Seton Hall (286-8536). *Counseling services are confidential.*

N. Academic Honesty:

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses or purchases “ghost” written papers. Plagiarism also occurs when a student knowingly utilizes the ideas of or information obtained from another person. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be dealt with by administering the guilty candidate an F for the course.

O. Term paper Rubric and Guidelines:

Use of APA Style Guidelines (See attachment)