

# WESTERN SEMINARY SACRAMENTO

**Family Systems Therapy**  
CNS 503M: 3 credit hours

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Fridays: Jan. 22, Feb. 12 & Mar. 26, 5:00pm – 9:55pm  
Saturdays: Jan. 23, Feb. 13, Mar. 27, 9:00am – 5:00pm  
AND Saturday Mar. 20, 9:00am – 3:00pm

## SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will include the theoretical and practical approaches to understanding and intervening with families. A review of the major family system theories will be covered.

### COURSE GOALS

The student will gain an understanding of Family Systems Theory and learn to identify and apply the concepts of several schools of family therapy through experiential exercises, lecture, and reading. Students will also be asked to formulate their own reactions to several of the most prominent schools of family therapy.

### COURSE CONTRIBUTION TO STATED DEGREE OUTCOMES

The objectives of this course are tied directly to the desired outcomes constructed specifically for the MFT degree for which this course is a requirement. Below are the formal degree outcomes which this class supports:

Upon completing the core M.A. Counseling curriculum, each M.A. student shall:

BE a person whose godliness is worthy of being emulated by others, and whose integrity imparts credibility to his/her ministry (SFS 501-504; CNS 506; overarching).

- motivated by a genuine love for God, others and self; (Loving God)
- reflects biblical balance and skill in life management, appropriately fulfilling those roles and responsibilities mandated by God; (Theology I and II)
- regularly practices the spiritual disciplines; (Intp. Scripture)
- aware of and applying biblical principles for forming new habits. (Theo. III)

KNOW the major theories of counseling and personality development (CNS 503; CNS 504; CNS 505; CNS 507; CNS 512).

- major themes of development across the life-span and how they impact the helping relationship; (Human Development and Psychopathology))
- the unique contributions of the major counseling theories; (Psych. Systems and Family Systems and Psych. Theory and Tech. and Marriage and Contemporary Issues)
- the systems approach to working with families and be able to apply; (Family Systems)
- principles of group dynamics and be able to apply principles in educational, therapeutic and support groups; (Group and Family Systems))
- foundational issues of work and career decision-making. (Disc. Devp Min. Potential)

KNOW HOW to think critically so that various truth claims can be effectively evaluated (THS 501-503; CNS 508; overarching).

- awareness of world view components and can articulate their own beliefs; (Intp. Scripture and Theo I, II, III and Integration and Practicum)
- familiarity with the unique contributions of world view systems other than their own. (Social and Cultural)

KNOW HOW to think like an effective counselor, able to face new and unique situations with self-efficacy, personal integrity, and professional competence (CNS 530-534, overarching).

- awareness of the characteristics and practices of an effective counselor, (Interpersonal Communication and Psych. Theory and Tech. and Practicum)
- mastery over personal skills and growing edges, (Practicum and Research))
- maintains a plan for growth and development. (Practicum)

KNOW HOW to accurately diagnose the major mental disorders and KNOW HOW to establish and implement an effective treatment plan for each (CNS 503; CNS 505 PSYCHOPATHOLOGY; CNS 531; CNS 532)

- working knowledge of the DSM IV; (Psychopathology and Practicum)
- familiarity with standard treatment approaches; (Psych. Theory and Techs. and Marriage and Contemporary Issues and Child Therapy and Substance Abuse and Child, Spouse and Elder Abuse and Psychopharmacology)
- ability to formulate and implement treatment goals and objectives.(the just above mentioned classes and Practicum)

KNOW HOW to build upon his/her seminary training to be a true life-long learner (CNS 530-534; overarching).

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Cognitive:

1. The students will be able to discuss and contrast the major theories and techniques of marriage and family therapy.
2. The students will be able to display an in-depth understanding of one selected theory.

Affective:

1. The students will relate family systems theory to their own family of origin dynamics.
2. The students will evaluate how the major theories fit with the students' personality, style, and beliefs.

Conative:

1. The students will practice the application of several theories through role-play, film review, and other opportunities.
2. The students will gain an understanding of how their own family of origin dynamics impact their development as a therapist.
3. The students will begin to formulate their own model for integrating their faith into their practice of therapy.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

*We are happy to announce that Western Sacramento is now an Amazon Associate. Any purchases (not just books) you make on Amazon using this link will mean that a minimum of 4% of the purchase price comes to Western. Please support your seminary by using this link for all your Amazon purchases.*

Click [here](#) to order texts and other products.

## **REQUIRED READING**

Gilbert, Roberta M. *The Eight Concepts of Bowen Theory*, 2006. Leading Systems Press

Goldberg, Irene & Goldberb, Herbert. *Family Therapy: An Overview with Infotrac*, sixth edition, 2003. Brooks/Cole. (Later editions are acceptable)

McGoldrick, Monica. *Genograms: Assessment and Intervention*, 2nd ed., 1999. W.W. Norton, New York.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

Bowen, M. & Aronson, Jason. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, 1978.

Guerin, Philip. *Family Therapy* New York: Gardner Press, 1976.

Haley, Jay. *Uncommon Therapy: the Psychiatric Techniques of Milton Erickson. M.D.*

Kerr, Michael & Bowmen, Murray. *Family Evaluation : An Approach Based on Bowen Theory.* W. W. Norton & Company, New York. . 1988.

Minuchin, Salvador. *Families and Family Therapy* or Minuchin, Salvador & Fishman, H. Charles. *Family Therapy Techniques.*

Napier, A. with Whitaker, Carl. *The Family Crucible.*

Satir, Virginia. *Conjoint Family Therapy.* and Satir, Virginia & Baldwin, Michele. *Satir Step By Step.* and Satir, Virginia. *People Making. Helping Families To Change.*

Whitaker & Bumberry. *Dancing with the Family.*

## **STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK (APA)**

Papers must be written to a near-thesis standard. That is, minimum format standards must be met, as defined below. English grammar, idiom, and spelling must be up to graduate level. Always include a strong introduction paragraph (declare what you intend to show the reader) and conclusion paragraph. Qualities valued include clarity, succinctness, and precision.

This course employs the APA (American Psychological Association) publication manual style guide. You can find the APA 5<sup>th</sup> edition in the library reference section. You can also find a simple, straightforward presentation of the format at these online sites:

- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/index.html>
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

For assignments that require the use of non-course texts and include a bibliography, of the resources mentioned in the bibliography for your project/paper, two must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each book as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

All work must reflect master's level use of the English language. Plagiarism will result in failure of assignment.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Reading (30% of grade)**

Reading assignments are to be done at the mastery level and completed **prior** to class sessions (**including the first class session**). The student will receive full credit for having

done the reading on time. Partial credit for reading completed after the due date is per the discretion of the instructor and generally not available. The reading provides the basis for students to participate meaningfully in the class discussions and exercises.

### **Class Presentation of Genogram (10% of grade)**

Students will present portions of their Genogram to the class as a case study. More information about this assignment will be provided in class. The class will have the opportunity to interact with the material presented. This will include a detailed description of portions of their Genogram as well as their assessments. If a student feels that it would be inappropriate or undesirable to present his/her Genogram to the entire class, an alternative class presentation topic can be negotiated with the instructor. Presentations will begin on March 20th. Students will sign-up for their time slot.

### **Papers (50% of grade / 25% each)**

There will be two papers which will be done according to Western Seminary standards. Late papers will be docked per the discretion of the instructor.

#### Genogram Paper (due 3/29/10)

Students will research and create a four (or more) generation Genogram on themselves. The Genogram will be prepared according to the guidelines in the required text *Genograms*. The review paper will be 10-12 pages of your own assessments and insights. Look at roles, patterns, addictions, intimacy levels, myths, power, communication, expectations, spirituality, function and dysfunction. This paper will include:

- Your thoughts on how your own family experience impacts you personally and professionally
- An assessment of your family of origin from a Bowen perspective.

#### Case Study Paper (due 4/9/10)

A 12-15 page case study based on your review of a family in a movie. A list of acceptable films will be made available in class. You will evaluate, discuss, and hypothetically treat the family from 2 different perspectives (Bowen Theory and a biblical / faith perspective). Additional reading / research will be necessary to prepare the students to explore the theory of their choice. Each evaluation will include:

- A discussion of what each family member would likely experience as the presenting problem
- A specific assessment of the family
- Goals, and interventions you would utilize with this family
- A discussion of how the members would likely respond to your interventions.

Summarize and contrast the advantages and challenges that each of your three perspectives would present with this family.

### **Participation (10% of grade)**

Students will be expected to invest themselves in the learning process by full participation in discussions, role-plays, Genogram interaction, and other activities.

## GRADING

• A+	99-100%	• C+	84-85%
• A	95-98%	• C	81-83%
• A-	93-94%	• C-	79-80%
• B+	91-92%	• D+	77-78%
• B	88-90%	• D	74-76%
• B-	86-87%	• D-	70-73%

## CLASS POLICIES

**Cover page:** To safeguard confidentiality, provide a title page as a cover for all assignments. Include your student mailbox number in the upper right corner of the cover page.

**Attendance and Late Assignments:** Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who miss class are responsible for missed work. Unexcused absences and tardiness will impact a student's grade. Students who anticipate an absence should discuss it in advance with the instructor. Students who miss two or more classes (or 1 Saturday class) will not pass the course, without a request for and the completion of additional assignments. Assignments submitted after the due date and time constitutes a drop in the student's letter grade for that assignment.

**Enrichment Students:** Enrichment students are encouraged, but not obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

**Incompletes:** Faculty members determine their own procedures and due dates for the completion of course assignments. The final deadline for submitting all course work is the last day of the semester as noted in the Academic Calendar (p.16). In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances, the instructor may, **if it is initiated by the student**, grant an extension. A temporary notation of "I" (incomplete) is assigned until a final grade can be determined. The maximum extension permissible is six weeks, **with assignments due to the professor for grading on Fri., 00/00/10**. All course assignments not completed by the extended deadline will be given a failing grade. Under no circumstances may this six-week period be extended except by petition and approval of the Administrative Committee.

**The Availability of Disability Services at Western Seminary:** Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students

with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ken Epp, at 503-517-1815/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1815. His office is at the Portland campus. Students at the northern California campuses may contact Carrie Priest (Student Services Coordinator – San José) or PJ Oswald (Director of Student Development – Sacramento), or they may contact Dr. Epp directly. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

## **LIBRARY AND INTERNET RESEARCH**

All class assignments with a research element require library research annotated as such in the bibliography. A minimum of two resources must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each resource as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

For complete library information including: hours of operation, interlibrary loan, local library resources, etc., please:

- Visit [www.westernseminary.edu](http://www.westernseminary.edu) .
- Click the link “Sacramento Campus” in the left navigation pane.
- Click the link “Library Resources” in the left navigation pane.

### **Reserve Collection**

The library carries all required readings for this course.

### **Print Resources**

Use the Western-Arcade Library catalog to find books and other materials. To search the library collection:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link “Search the Library Collection Online”.

### **Periodical & Research Databases**

As you complete your assignments for this course, don't forget about the resources in the Western research databases. Remember to evaluate and cite your information too. To access the Western research databases:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link “Research Databases” from the bottom menu.
- Click the link “Ebsco Host Research Databases”.
- Log in. [**User ID:** westsem / **Password:** seminary]
- Click the link “EBSCOhost Web”.
- Click the database(s) you wish to use. Start with *PsycARTICLES*.

To cite your information, consider the following APA composers:

<http://www.noodletools.com> and <http://www.citationmachine.net>

### Course Packs (if applicable)

To access the course pack(s) for this course:

1. Go to the library homepage: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC>
2. Click the link 'Course Packs'.

### Reference and Research Contact Information

David Holifield, M.A., M.L.S. / (916) 488-3720, ext. 7 /  
[dholfield@westernseminary.edu](mailto:dholfield@westernseminary.edu)

### COURSE SCHEDULE

All reading must be completed prior to class for which it is assigned.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
January 22 & 23	Introduction to Systems Theory Genograms Family Evaluation Psychodynamic Experiential Transgenerational	McGoldrick, ch. 1-8 Goldberg, ch. 1-8 <b>Reading Due 1/22</b>
February 12 & 13	Structural Strategic Milan Cognitive-Behavioral Psychoeducational	Goldberg, ch. 9-19 <b>Reading Due 2/12</b>
March 20, 26 & 27	Genograms and Integration	Gilbert, entire text <b>Reading Due 3/20</b>
March 29 & April 9		Genogram paper due Movie paper due