

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 523 - Clinical Social Work
Practice with Families

Summer 2002
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CODE OF CONDUCT:

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu)

THE HONOR STATEMENT:

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity (Hilltopics, 2002).

DISABILITY:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for service.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on the family as a unit of assessment and treatment in clinical social work practice. Concepts related to understanding and analyzing family dynamics and interactional patterns as understood from the perspective of major family therapy models are presented. Techniques of treatment are considered in terms of their application to families with varied system and individual problems and to families from varied social and cultural backgrounds. Consideration is also given to family-centered practice in different social work fields of practice, plus the influence of the therapist's own experiential family on one's intervention style.

RATIONALE:

Social work has traditionally emphasized the influence of the environment and interpersonal relationships on human behavior. Clinical practice with families is both a natural extension of this stance and integral to social work practice from an ecological/systems perspective.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of the course, a student is able to demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of major concepts used in understanding the dynamics of family interaction and a family-centered approach to social work practice from an ecological/systems perspective.
2. An understanding of how factors such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexual orientation may affect interactional patterns both within the family and in their exchange with community systems, including agencies and clinical practitioners.

3. Knowledge of selected major approaches to clinical practice with families (intergenerational, structural, strategic, solution-oriented) as well as techniques associated with these approaches.
4. The ability to assess both the strengths and vulnerabilities of families, and establish sound treatment contracts that encourage families to select their own optimal solutions.
5. The ability to develop interventions, based upon sound assessment, that are directed toward achieving the purpose and goals of clinical treatment.
6. An understanding of major ethical issues associated with clinical practice with families, and an ability to formulate decisions consistent with the ethical guidelines of the profession of social work.
7. An understanding of how to evaluate the outcomes of clinical practice with families.
8. An understanding of the study process of one’s own family of origin, and the significance of these personal historical data for the enactment of the clinical practitioner role in working with clients from diverse backgrounds.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION PLAN:

Class sessions will include lectures and discussions to clarify and supplement assigned readings. Additionally, use will be made of role playing and simulation, videotape review, case summary analysis, and other learning activities designed to amplify the application of concepts and techniques in clinical family practice. Students are expected to attend class and to prepare for the sessions by reading and thinking about assigned materials.

Written assignments, participation, and grades are related as follows

- Class attendance/participation 20%
- Student family of origin genogram 30% Due Mon., June 24
- Student written analysis and evaluative critique
of simulated family experience 20% Due on date of in-
class family
presentation.
- Student role in class presentation on simulated
treatment process with their contrived “family” Selected dates
30% (June 26 & July 1)

Use of or reference to actual case material in class/simulation settings and written work should be made in a manner that thoroughly disguises the identity of the client(s). Discussion of actual case material must be held in the strictest confidence.

TEXTS:

(Required) Dorothy Stroh Becvar and Raphael J. Becvar (fourth edition, 2000). *Family Therapy: A Systemic Integration*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

(Supplemental) Ann Hartman and Joan Laird (1983). *Family-Centered Social Work Practice*. New York: Free Press.

COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE:

<u>Sessio n</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topics/Readings</u>	<u>Simulation Family</u>
1	Mon., June 3	<p>Course introduction and overview.</p> <p>Special Topic: The Genogram.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monica McGoldrick/Randy Gerson, Ch. 2, "Constructing genograms." • Bernhardt/Rauch. "Genetic family histories: An aid to social work assessment." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept explained. • Guidelines amplified • Simulation groups selected, formed • Family type determined • Individual role(s) discussed • Summary for instructor
2	Wed., June 5	<p>Initial contact with family: A new context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 5, "Therapeutic interventions and strategies". • Hartman/Laird, Ch. 7, "Getting started: Contracting and interviewing". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice the initial interview, each taking a turn • Begin constructing simulation family genogram • Amplify problems, goals.
3	Mon., June 10	<p>Family strengths and family vulnerabilities at the level of process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 6, "Family process" • Boyd-Franklin, Ch. 1, "Black, Afro-American families in therapy: An Overview." • GUEST DEMONSTRATION OF SIMULATION INTERVENTIONS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraise the strengths of the family. • Note evidences of family resiliency. • Imagine how the family can "invent" its own optimal solutions and emerge hardier from its adversity.

<u>Sessio n</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topics/Readings</u>	<u>Simulation Family</u>
4	Wed., June 12	<p>Intergenerational theory and techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 7, "Psychodynamic approaches." <p>NOTE: Emphasis will be on Bowenian intergenerational theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hartman/Laird, Ch. 10, "Assessment in time: The intergenerational perspective." Hartman/Laird, Ch. 11, "The intergenerational family system as a resource for change." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate suitability of Bowenian approach for work with one or more members of the simulation family. Practice interpreting genogram of the simulation family. Discuss, practice intervention possibilities.
5	Mon, June 17	<p>The structural way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 9, "The structural approach." Hartman/Laird, Ch. 12, "Inside the family: Inner system assessment." Hartman/Laird, Ch. 13, "The family unit as a resource and target for change." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate suitability of structural approach for work with simulation family. Construct the structural map of the simulated family. Interpret the meaning of the map, in terms of intervention possibilities, and practice these.
6	Wed., June 19	<p>Is "manipulation" unavoidable?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 11, "Strategic approaches and the Milan Influence." Hartman/Laird, Ch. 14, "Persistence, coherence, and paradox." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the suitability of the strategic approach for work with simulation family. Develop strategic intervention (s) possibilities, and practice these.
7	Mon., June 24	<p>Newer models of intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becvar/Becvar, Ch. 13, "Evolving therapeutic models". <p>Note: Emphasis will be on solution-focused approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate suitability of solution-focused approach for work with simulation family. Practice solution-focused techniques.

NOTE: PERSONAL GENOGRAM DUE

<u>Sessio n</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topics/Readings</u>	<u>Simulation Family</u>
8	Wed., June 26	Simulation family presentations:	
		#1 _____	

		#2 _____	

9	Mon., July 1	#3 _____	

		#4 _____	

NOTE: Written analysis of simulated family experience is due on the date of presentation.

10	Wed., July 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and review of course • Papers/analyses returned • Student evaluation of course 	
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Criteria for Course Assignments

1. Student family of origin **genogram**: Each member of the class is to submit a detailed personal genogram that chronicles the history of her or his family. Data should cover at least two generations prior to that of the student, plus the student’s own generation and any relevant family of procreation material. Use the format presented by Monica McGoldrick and Randy Gerson (1985; 1999), plus that of Bernhardt and Rauch (1993). Use side notes and time line to provide amplifying and interpretive data. Attach a brief note summarizing your major conclusions about implications for yourself as a “differentiated” clinical practitioner. Assignment due on **June 24** (30% of course grade.)

2. Student **analysis of simulated family experience**: Each class member will participate in an ongoing process, “simulated family group.” This experiential component will assist with the integration of theory and technique by affording students the opportunity to design and study a contrived “family” over the span of several weeks. “Family members” will determine their family composition and presenting problem(s), and will utilize weekly in-class opportunities to assess and “treat” the system/individual problem(s) through role play and role reversal of both therapist(s) and family member(s). There will be opportunity to “try out” intergenerational, structural, strategic, and solution-focused assessment and treatment options. A **5-page analysis** of one’s individual experience in the group, in terms of preparation to do clinical work with families as a differentiated therapist, is due on the date of the in-class simulation family presentation (20% of course grade).

3. **Group class presentation**: Simulation family groups are to prepare and present to the class a “family interview” (or excerpts from several interviews with the family). Presentations should clearly demonstrate the application of techniques of intervention selected to facilitate the therapeutic process, and be based on an assessment of “the problem” (both system and symptom) and the interaction and dynamics of the simulated “family.” The class presentation should include discussion of and analysis of the interactional process which identifies clearly the approach(es) to family therapy utilized in assessment and intervention, plus any significant ethical or technical issues which were dealt with (for example: membership, co-therapy relationships, worker role, countertransference, cultural/racial/gender/sexual orientation factors, young children in the interview, resistance, confidentiality, multigenerational factors, etc.)

Presentations and discussion should be approximately 1 1/2 hour in length. Groups should distribute a specialized topical bibliography, and may use explanatory handouts. **Videotaping** (VHS format) the interview(s) for in-class review is strongly encouraged. Presentations are scheduled for **June 26 and July 1** (30% of course grade).

4. **Class attendance/participation**: Because of the accelerated nature of the first summer term, it is imperative that class members be prepared for, attend, and actively participate in class sessions. This is doubly important since the simulated family groups will conduct meetings during the latter portion of each class session in order to practice skills and techniques associated with clinical family work. (20% of course grade.)