



LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELING
CPSY 590-04: Decolonization and counseling
Spring 2014

When: 4/25/2014 and 4/26/2014

Where: York Graduate Center, Room 116

Instructor: Pilar Hernández-Wolfe, Ph.D, LMFT

Office Hours: Thursday 3 to 5 pm and by appointment

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Contemporary helping professions have advanced our ways of addressing individual and interpersonal problems. They have contributed to redefining normalcy, integrating culture and social context in treatment, alleviating distress and maladjustment, and addressing normal developmental issues associated with physical, emotional and mental problems. However, to the extent that these professions are embedded in systems of thought and practice that maintain ethnocentric foundations in regards to science, research, health and models of practice, they will continue to have an oppressive impact, even if unintended, on some of the very people they aim to help. This course offers an alternative foundation for understanding and approaching trauma, identity, resistance/resilience and counseling through the integration of the decolonization framework developed by the Latin America modernity/coloniality collective project and the Transformative Family Therapy approach.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course draws on family therapy, family systems, and family studies literature as far as therapy is concerned. Since the 1990s family therapy approaches emphasizing power, history, and context have been more fully articulated. The feminist contributions to the critique of family therapy models helped advanced the field tremendously by putting issues of power and gender at the forefront of the discussion. Although some of these models address the impact of social realities connected to gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, few address the systematic ways in which the intersectionality of these factors shapes family and community. In different but not unrelated ways, both postmodern and decolonization approaches have studied family processes by decentering ethnocentric (western, heterosexual, White) conceptions of family life. There are yet other therapy approaches that have gained popularity amongst scholars and practitioners,

and they provide us with a refreshing view of how to think about and undertake the task of healing, for example, social justice approaches such as the Just Therapy, Feminist, Psychology of Liberation, and decolonization approaches. These approaches acknowledge that all research is moral and political, and affirm that all inquiry should be ethical, performative, healing, transformative, and participatory. Decolonization approaches would add that inquiry should explicitly address decolonization. In this course, students will find a borderlands' perspective on mental health to assist new generations of Latino/as and of those involved in Latino culture and Latin America in understanding how the colonization of the Americas is still tied to current issues of migration, identity, trauma and resistance, and how practices of well-being have emerged out of the wound of coloniality. It addresses wellbeing through the integration of a decolonization paradigm, borderlands theory, and social justice approaches in couple and family therapy. Day one will offer a metaframework to approach helping relationships from a liberation-based perspective and day two will review interventions that can be used in a variety of settings

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the following concepts: colonization, coloniality, decolonization, liberation-based healing, intersectional identities, resilience, resistance, epistemic location, epistemologies of the South, and borderland thinking.
2. Examine the impact of historical and intergenerational migration, displacement and trauma.
3. Gain a critical understanding of the role of social location issues in counseling.
4. Learn the foundations of the Transformative Family Therapy model.

TEACHING METHODS

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized during this course in order to achieve the above objectives. Among those methods will be assigned readings, class discussions, experiential activities, and lectures. Students will watch videos clips and engage in group learning tasks.

READINGS:

Readings are to be completed for the day indicated. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss the ideas and concepts discussed in the readings. The textbook must be read in its entirety by the first day of class.

CPSY Departmental Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases,

the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation (30 pts)

- Full attendance to both days of class is required for a passing grade
- Giving attention to the instructor and/or other students when they are making a presentation.
- Demonstrating ability to recognize and use subtle non-verbal communication cues to assess your impact on your peers and participate in class.
- Demonstrating ability to be open about discussing the impact of your comments on your peers.
- Coming to class prepared (having read the assignment for the day)
- Contributing to in-class discussion based on the topics of discusses and the readings assigned. Contributions may include how you feel about the material but merely articulating your feelings is not sufficient. You are expected to put those feelings in context of your thoughts and analysis of the material.
- Engaging in group discussions with attention and energy.
- Asking questions of the instructor and/or other students regarding the material examined in that class.
- Providing examples to support or challenge the issues talked about in class.
- Making comments or giving observations about topics in the course, especially those that tie in the classroom material to "real world" problems, or try to integrate the content of the course.
- Dealing with other students and/or the instructor in a respectful fashion.
- Active listening. Students will be asked questions related to the course's readings randomly in class by other students and by the instructor. Your participation in small group discussions is also required.

2. Reaction paper – 70 pts – (8 to 10 pages, double space, due on 5/1)

Based on your readings from the textbook, “Latinos, Latin Americans, Borderlands, and Decolonization: Rethinking Mental Health,” select the topic that impacted you most and discuss why this particular topic generated such resonance. Please include in your analysis the following topics: a) your understanding of the relationship between your social location and epistemic location; b) an analysis of your participation in systems of oppression and systems of liberation; c) a one paragraph description of a foundational idea/belief that will guide your work as a therapist.

3. **APA format.**

All papers should be typed APA style with all references appropriately cited, must be edited and checked for correct grammar. See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

TEXTBOOKS:

Required:

Hernandez-Wolfe, P. (2011). *Latinos, Latin Americans, Borderlands, and Decolonization: Rethinking Mental Health*. Laham, MD: Jason-Aronson.

FINAL GRADING

A = 93-100

B = 83-87

C = 73-77

A- = 90-92

B- = 80-82

C- = 70-72

B+ = 88-89

C+ = 78-79

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.

SPECIAL NEEDS/ ACCOMMODATIONS

Please see me individually at the beginning of the semester if you require any special accommodations as a result of a documented disability.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

The Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) requires the program to have “established policies for informing applicants and students regarding disclosure of their personal information” (COAMFTE Standard 140.02, 2003). Each student should decide for him/herself what information to disclose. Students are advised to be prudent when making self disclosures. The program cannot guarantee confidentiality of student disclosures given the group environment, although personal comments should be considered private and confidential – and remain only in the classroom – unless an exception to confidentiality applies.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones must be silenced and text messaging is not allowed during class time. If there is an emergency you may exit the class to use your cell.