



"We are a community that commits itself to
diversity and sustainability as dimensions of a just
society" --*Lewis and Clark Mission Statement*

MCFT 530 Research Methods and Systemic Practice (2 units)

FALL 2019

Time & Day: Section 1-Monday 9:30am-12:30pm
Section 2- Monday 2:00 pm-5:00pm
Location: York Graduate Center, room 115
Instructor: Joslyn Armstrong, Ph.D.
Office Location: Rogers Hall room 325
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10 am – 12pm, or by appointment via email.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course addresses the essential concepts related to research design and methodology that systems/relational practitioners need to become critical evaluators of research and prepare for conducting research in their own practices, with an emphasis is on becoming an informed consumer of research and evidence-based practice. Students learn to apply research with critical awareness of the links between the process of inquiry, construction of knowledge, and cultural equity. Focus is on understanding each component of the research process, qualitative and quantitative designs, program evaluations, measurement issues and data analysis as well as the legal, ethical, and contextual issues involved in the conduct of clinical research and program evaluation.

Prerequisites: None

Credits: 2 semester units (30 hours contact)

MCFT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course promotes the following student learning outcomes:

SLO 3.1 Students are able to discern the implications of the sociopolitical context within which research is produced and applied.

SLO 3.2 Students draw on the research literature relevant to family therapy in case planning.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course students will:

1. Understand research and program evaluation methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, relevant to MFT and mental health services. (CC 6.1.2)
2. Understand the legal, ethical, and contextual issues involved in the conduct of clinical research and program evaluation. (CC 6.1.3)
3. Recognize informal research processes involved in therapy, own biases relative to research. (CC 6.2.1)
4. Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice. (CC 6.1.1, 6.3.1)
5. Read current MFT and other professional literature and use the literature to inform clinical practice. (CC 6.3.1, 6.3.2)
6. Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation in the literature. (CC 6.3.3)
7. Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application. (CC 6.4.1)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Creswell, J. & Poth, C. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (4th Ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage. ISBN: 9781506330204

Williams, L., Patterson, J., & Edwards, T. M. (2014). *Clinician's guide to research methods in family therapy: Foundations of evidence-based practice*. Guilford Publications. ISBN: 9781462515974

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS:

American Psychological Association (2015). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Lebow, J. (2018). *Research for the psychotherapist: From science to practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. (4th Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mertens (2019). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology. Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods*. (5th Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Communication: If you would like to schedule a face-to-face meeting, then please feel free to email me for an appointment or attend my weekly scheduled office hours. If you send an email to me, you can expect an answer in about 24 hours during the week. Generally, if you email me during the weekend, it is best to assume that I will not respond until Monday morning.

OVERVIEW AND EXPECTATIONS

This course will include a combination of readings, lectures, an exam, and small assignments—all intended to facilitate understanding of course concepts as well as extend information from the texts. The small group and discussions, and exam will require students to use critical thinking as well as apply strategies to their own practice of research.

My Commitment to You:

I am committed to assisting you by creating a safe, respectful and professional learning environment to be able to learn critical course material over the semester. I encourage you to discuss the course content and exam with me any time during the semester. **My office is open to you by appointments only.** I also encourage you to offer your feedback throughout the course. I highly value your input.

Responsibilities of the Student:

This course will require due diligence on the student's behalf. Student must read assigned chapters and review all supplemental material provided on Moodle, or via email. You will be held responsible for knowing any changes made to the class schedule, weekly reading materials, or class assignments/test that will be in the announcements on Moodle or via email. In order to earn a satisfactory score in this course, the student must complete all small group assignments and the exam with high marks and remain engaged in the in-class format. ***Please remember you do not deserve any score than the one you earn no matter “how much you think you worked really hard” in the course, it is up to you to make your aspirations a reality.*** Remember you are the sole owner of your academic experience; you must take responsibility for everything you do or not do in this course.

Course Objective	MCFT Student Learning Outcomes	AAMFT Core Competencies & AMFTRB task statements	Evaluated by
1. Understand research and program evaluation methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, relevant to MFT and mental health services	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.1.2	Research article critiques Final exam
2. Understand the legal, ethical, and contextual issues involved in the conduct of clinical research and program evaluation.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.1.3	Research article critiques Final exam
3. Recognize informal research processes involved in therapy, own biases relative to research.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.2.1	Research article critiques

4. Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.1.1 CC 6.3.1	Research article critiques
5. Read current MFT and other professional literature and use the literature to inform clinical practice.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.3.1 CC 6.3.2	Research article critiques Final exam
6. Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation in the literature.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.3.3	Research article critiques Final exam
7. Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application.	SLO 3.1 SLO 3.2	CC 6.4.1	Research article critiques Final exam

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

This class will emphasize learning by doing. Students will actively engage in reading family therapy-related research, reflect on the research design process and the context in which findings were created, and consider implications for practice. Your course grade will be based the following assessments.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Because class participation and discussion are essential for your learning, regular attendance is expected for this course. Students are expected to attend class regularly and be on time. Participation is counted as involvement in class and in class assignments. Therefore, it is imperative that you attend class unless otherwise informed by Dr. Armstrong. In the event you are absent, it is your responsibility to bring in documented information that is considered University worthy. If you do not present your documentation on the day you return to class, you will not be allowed to make up any in-class activity---NO EXCEPTIONS. Only the days indicated on the excuse will be accepted as verification of an excused absence. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence for the semester. Any absences above the allowed amount will result in deduction from participation points.

Discourteous or disruptive behavior in class is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes, frequent coming and going during class, and/or talking during lecture or while another student has “the floor,” cell phone use, ringing, vibrating, or handling. Other unacceptable behaviors include arriving late or leaving early, except in cases when there is a valid reason for doing so. Being unable to find parking is NOT a valid excuse for being late, so please plan accordingly.

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION (30 points)

All assigned readings must be completed in advance of the class in which they are to be discussed. Every student is responsible for coming to class prepared to participate in a meaningful discussion. Classroom group discussions are opportunities to bring up questions about the assigned readings, further your understanding of the concepts in lectures, integrate course material into your understanding of research, and integrate material into your clinical practice. Thus, students are expected to read all required readings and supplemental readings and actively participate in class discussions and small group activities. Students are allowed one unexcused absence that is not on the university-approved list for the semester and all university-approved excused absences must be reported to Dr. Armstrong. There will be a 10% deduction for any unexcused absence after the allotted policy.

2. RESEARCH ARTICLE CRITIQUES (30 points)

Students will work in groups to critique research studies relevant to the therapy practice, family studies, and marriage and family therapy fields. Students will share their critiques with their peers in a larger class discussion format. Students will be expected to “chart” their critiques of empirical articles as they evaluate the merits of an article’s components related to purpose, sampling, methodology, statistical analysis, findings, conclusions, and clinical application. Students will be evaluated on their critical evaluation, knowledge of methodological issues for quantitative and qualitative studies, and their suggestions for improvement in the outlined areas.

3. FINAL EXAM (40 points)- Students will independently complete an online final exam. The final exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions from course concepts and methodologies from both quantitative and qualitative methodologies as well as critically analyze an empirical article from both methodologies. Students will be allowed to use lectures, class notes, and textbooks and supplemental readings from the semester to complete the exam. The exam is timed and must be taken in one setting. Any suspicions of violations to the Academic Integrity policy will be reported (please review the policy below).

4. Extra Credit (2 points)- Students can volunteer to participate in a class research study. Students will receive hands-on experience as participants and evaluators of an example research study designed for the course to showcase various concepts and methodologies. For their participation, students will receive extra credit points on top of their participation and total class points. This is designed not to penalize any students who do not want to participate but still remain engaged in class material.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Class Participation	30
Research article critiques	30
Final Exam	40
Extra Credit	2
Total	100

Final Grading

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%
B + = 88-89%	B = 83-87%
B- = 80-82%	C+ = 78-79%
C = 73-77%	C- = 70-72%

According to Graduate School policy, grades lower than B- may not apply to graduation. Students earning a C+ or lower will need to repeat the course.

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 maybe seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Each member of the Lewis & Clark community is responsible for the integrity of their individual academic performance. As each act of dishonesty harms the entire community, each student, faculty, or staff member is expected to encourage academic integrity by reporting potential violations of this policy to the Office of the Dean of the College. Through these actions, we are committed to maintain standards of academic integrity.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE/ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones must be silenced/remain off, and text messaging is not allowed during class time. If there is an emergency that requires your immediate attention, please exit the class to use your cell.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading), this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice throughout the semester.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND SCHEDULE

Any changes to the reading schedule will be announced at least 24 hours prior

Reading Abbreviations: **Mert** – Mertens, 2020; **W** – Williams et al., 2014; **C** – Creswell & Poth, 2018; **Merr** – Merriam & Tisdell, 2016 **A**: Online Article

Session	Day	Date	Lecture Review	Readings
1	M	Sept. 9th	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Choosing a Research Topic Guest Lecture: Searching for Literature & Zotero	Mert: Ch. 1 C: Ch. 2, 6 Merr: Ch. 4
2	M	Sept. 16th	Lecture: Creating a Research Study & Overview of a Research Paper	Mert: Ch. 3 W: Ch. 13 & 14
3	M	Sept. 23rd	Lecture: Quantitative Research- the Basics	Mert: Ch. 4-6, 11 W: Ch. 2, 5, 9-11 A
4	M	Sept. 30th	Lecture: Quantitative Research- Reliability & Validity	W: Ch. 3-4, 8
5	M	Oct. 7th	Lecture: Evaluating Quantitative Research	A
6	M	Oct. 14th	Lecture: Qualitative Research- Introducing the 5 Approaches	Merr: Ch. 1-3, 8 C: Ch. 1, 4, 7-8 W: Ch. 6
7	M	Oct. 21st	Lecture: Qualitative Research- Reliability & Validity	Merr: Ch. 9 C: Ch. 10
8	M	Oct. 28th	Lecture: Evaluating Qualitative Research	A
9	M	Nov. 4th	Lecture: Critiquing Research	A
10	M	Nov. 11th	Lecture: Critiquing Research	A
11	M	Nov 18th	Final Exam due by 11:30pm	