

Lewis & Clark College
Graduate School of Education & Counseling: Department of
Counseling, Therapy, & School Psychology

CPSY 590-03: Couples Counseling: Fall 2020 - 1 credit

(Remote via Zoom)

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Office Hours: by appt only on Zoom

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Course Days/Times: Thursdays @ 9:30 am - 12:30 pm:

Sept. 17, Sept. 24, Oct. 1, Oct. 8, & Oct. 15

Class Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97785553234>

I want to acknowledge that we're operating in unusual circumstances this term. The current COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all of us in various ways, both big and small, and you are not alone. I've adjusted our course plans to accommodate remote teaching and I anticipate we may have to make additional changes as the term progresses and we learn what is working and what is not working for our class community.

Class Structure:

We will have live (synchronous) lectures as an entire class on Zoom for all 5 meetings, but lecture may or may not go for all 3 hours each time, but we will have Moodle asynchronous participation as well.

Technology:

Per accessibility, I will be recording Zoom lectures for this class. If you are in a shared space, please wear headphones/earbuds. I would like to make this as safe an environment as possible to ask questions and to learn. It is highly encouraged to keep your cameras on, as this keeps folks engaged. Please do not share class recordings with anyone else. If you share this video with folks who are not in the class, we will be having discussions about conduct and consent.

I understand that there are major equity issues in regards to remote learning, and utilizing things like Zoom and wifi are privileges of economics and ability. If there are access issues such as no camera, spotty wifi, sharing wifi in a household, etc, please let me know and we'll discuss privately.

If there is an internet outage, wifi issues, etc, we will have backup plans. See calendar below for specifics.

Books & Required Reading:

There is NO textbook for this class. We will be reading journal articles, listening to podcasts, and more.

Class Description

This class includes an overview of some basic theoretical foundations of Couples Counseling (aka Intimate Relationship Counseling). The focus of learning will be derived from the application of skills and techniques utilized in counseling interventions with intimate partners. Learning will be experienced and demonstrated through lecture, readings, role play and group presentations. Current research and practices will be presented to the whole class for expanded knowledge of intimate partners and couples counseling dynamics.

Essential Goals

Students will be able to:

- Articulate and define couples/intimate partners counseling as a unique theoretical and practiced model of counseling
- Learn various theories to approach couples/intimate partners work with
- Experience the practice of couples/intimate partners counseling through role plays within the classroom setting
- Build awareness of a personal worldview including race, gender, power, and privilege and to create a foundation of accountability when considering the impact of treatment with clients
- Review and examine current research on counseling couples/intimate partners
- Develop increased awareness of self as an essential component in effective therapeutic interactions along with active engagement in an intentional ongoing self-care practice.

Classroom and Professional Values

Emphasis will be placed on developing an empathetic and therapeutic relationship within the counseling context. Ethical principles, self-awareness, broaching difficult conversations, personal counseling style, and practicing inclusivity will be examined through readings, class discussions, reflective assignments, and classroom activities. Recognition of positions of power and privilege, as well as ethical considerations of marginalization and discrimination in counseling interactions will be explored. Students will participate in generating a classroom environment where students support each

other in a respectful, productive and resourceful manner as might be paralleled in the world of work.

Confidentiality and Ethical Guidelines

It is expected that students will follow the ethical guidelines as defined by the [American Counseling Association](#). Guidelines, parameters and boundaries are implemented into assignments and class discussions and it is expected that anything presented by students during class presentations, assignments and discussions will remain confidential to our class (consent culture, y'all!). Failure to follow these guidelines may result in failure of the class. Some of our class topics could bring up personal opinions on politics, religion, bodies, gender, and more. We will be practicing respect for one another as colleagues in the most ethical way. Your final class grade will also be determined by how you conduct yourself in this class, how you engage with others, and how you manage challenges.

Role Plays

There is a recognition that counseling class material and especially role plays might be impactful, emotional or possibly overwhelming for students. Please find ways to self-regulate and implement self-care both within and outside of class time. Please let me know in advance if there are impactful elements of your current life that I should be aware of in support of your participation.

Evaluation of Professional Qualities

Each student will be evaluated in the demonstration of self-awareness, empathetic presence, ethical considerations, effectiveness of oral and written communication, and openness to feedback. This includes the expectation for completion of all assignments as well as a respectful and earnest attitude towards classmates, instructor and future clients. Judgments about what constitutes satisfactory performance will be made by the class instructor which if not satisfactory might result in an incomplete or failure of the class. If there are concerns about a student's work a meeting with the instructor will be scheduled to discuss the dynamics and potential outcomes during the course of the semester.

Students with Disabilities Policy

If you have questions about this policy or navigating the process, please let me know. Lewis & Clark College is committed to serving the needs of students with disabilities. Professional staff in the office of Student Support Services ensure that students with disabilities receive all the benefits of a comprehensive selection of services, and a formal Student Disability Grievance Procedure provides prompt and equitable resolution of any complaints arising out Lewis & Clark College's responsibilities under the ADA Amendments Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other pertinent federal, state, and local disability anti-discrimination laws.

Lewis & Clark Disability Statement:

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 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. Please see the Student Support Services website for more information: http://www.lclark.edu/offices/student_support_services/rights/disability_policy/

A Word About Language

We will be discussing this more when create our class norms. Please be aware that many of your classmates come from marginalized backgrounds based on a variety of identities; they are not enrolled in this class to experience this further. If a person requests that you, or we as a group, use or not use specific terms to describe them or their family, please respect this. This is a skill that will also serve you well as you proceed through your career.

Assignments

1. Moodle Discussions

There is a large emphasis in counseling to understand where others folks are coming from, to learn by listening/reading, and to have potentially difficult conversations. Each week, you will have a discussion question on Moodle (it changes each week). You have a few days after class to complete this and **have until the Sunday night of that week at 11:59 pm to complete your discussion posts**. For example, a discussion during Week 1 (starts 9/17) would be due Sunday 9/20 at 11:59 pm PST.

Please **post one discussion answer, AND comment on someone else's discussion answer each week**. This is NOT social media, and we will not be trolling one another or attacking one another. Your professional behavior is also being graded (see below sections). We are all coming from different backgrounds and different levels of knowledge. We are all learning something new everyday. **Each post and reply should be about 5-15 sentences each.**

2. Special Topics Presentation:

On the last day of class, we will have ~10 minute presentations from each student in class. The topics for these student presentations are specific topics that clients in intimate partner relationships/couples could bring into counseling and won't be fully covered in our regular class lectures.

You can find the Google **sign up** [HERE](#) with your clark gmail ID. If a topic you would like to cover is not on there, please add it **and email me** also. Please do not duplicate topics (only one student should cover each topic).

Topics can include, but are not limited to: Kink & BDSM, LGBTQ families, religion differences (inter-religious couples), multiracial/interracial partners, child rearing, prepare enrich/premarital, infertility, infidelity, the role of technology in relationships, sexual health, mental health in relationships, manipulation & abuse, body diverse couples, substance & alcohol abuse, divorce & coparenting, couples with disabilities, couples during COVID19.

Your presentation can either be an informational flyer or very short powerpoint. We will only have time for about 10 minutes per student.

3. Attendance & Participation

Participation is important, so this includes speaking up about your ideas or questions in class, completing class discussion forums, and watching all class videos/podcasts. Learning remotely is very different, but please do not have other windows open or become distracted by technology or people around you while in online class; please contribute to the learning process and environment by actively participating in class discussions.

In addition to traditional class & Moodle participation, we will also have **voluntary participation** in class for **role plays**. You don't *have* to participate, but I will *strongly encourage* you all to step outside of your comfort zones and try this. You will be seeing clients one day and the best time to attempt, make mistakes, and learn is in the safety of a grad school class where no real clients are present. There will be multiple opportunities for this with case studies/vignettes that the professor has created.

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Moodle Discussions (10 points per week)	40
Special Topics Presentation (last day)	25
Attendance & Participation (10 points per week)	50
TOTAL	115

Grading Scale (Total possible: 100%):

93 – 100 = A; 90 – 92 = A-; 83 – 86 = B; 80 – 82 = B-; 77 – 79 = C+; 73 – 76 = C; 70 – 72 = C-; 69 and below = F

Grading of Assignments: These assignments will be graded on your ability to:

- Accurately synthesize and represent learned content
- Deeply articulate learned content
- Demonstrate excellence in representing chosen assignments / materials / techniques

Late work will be accepted, with the reduction of possible point value of one letter grade increment per day the late assignment is turned in.

Absences: Per Lewis & Clark Graduate School Policy: Missing more than 10% of class time (1.5 hours for this 15 hour class, so half of one class), may result in **failure** of this class and can have financial consequences. We understand that emergencies happen, but if you are sick, being in a remote class makes it easy to just listen in. If you do miss class for an emergency, we will discuss makeup work.

Fall 2020 Course Schedule (*subject to change)

Week & Date	Class Content	Reading Due	Moodle Discussion Due
Week 1: Sept. 17	Introductions, Syllabus Foundations of Partner/ Systems Work Power, Privilege, Calling In Ethics: Boundaries, triangulation, referring out, paperwork, etc.		Case study on Moodle: How would you handle & broach this situation with clients? (Topic: power dynamics, racism, calling in, & challenging)
Week 2: Sept. 24	Gottman Therapy: Guest Speaker: Cante Nakanishi, LMFT Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT)	Makinen, Judy A, & Johnson, Susan M. (2006). Resolving Attachment Injuries in Couples Using Emotionally Focused Therapy. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> , 74(6), 1055-1064.	Esther Perel podcast: (LINK HERE) choose ONE to listen to & post a summary & reflection on it (her style, the session content, etc.)

Week 3: Oct. 1	High Conflict Relationships: Guest Speaker: Tever Nickerson, LPC Social Constructionist: Narrative & Solution Focused	Hawkins, Lindsey G, Eggleston, Dane, & Brown, Cameron C. (2018). Utilizing a Narrative Therapy Approach with Couples Who Have Experienced a Traumatic Brain Injury to Increase Intimacy. <i>Contemporary Family Therapy</i> , 41(3), 304-315.	Case conceptualization on Moodle: Client demographics, concerns/issues, goals, marginalization or privilege, life stage, info needed, application of theory
Week 4: Oct. 8	Divorce & Co-Parenting Intergenerational: Bowen & Genograms Role Plays	Cook, Jennifer M, & Poulsen, Shruti S. (2011). Utilizing Photographs with the Genogram: A Technique for Enhancing Couple Therapy. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies</i> , 30(1), 14-23. AND Swainson, Mary, & Tasker, Fiona. (2005). Genograms Redrawn. <i>Journal of GLBT Family Studies</i> , 1(2), 3-27.	Case treatment plan on Moodle: Problems, goals, interventions using one theory
Week 5: Oct. 15	Student Presentations Final burning questions	_____	_____

List of recommended books in working with couples/intimate partner relationships:

[The Heart of Couple Therapy: Knowing What to Do and How to Do It Illustrated Edition, by Ellen F. Wachtel \(Author\), Paul L. Wachtel \(Epilogue\)](#)

[Genograms: Assessment and Treatment 4th Edition, by Monica McGoldrick \(Author\), Randy Gerson Ph.D. \(Author\), Sueli Petry Ph.D. \(Author\)](#)

[The State Of Affairs: Rethinking Infidelity - a book for anyone who has ever loved, by Esther Perel \(Author\)](#)

[Mating in Captivity: Unlocking Erotic Intelligence by Esther Perel](#)

[Hold Me Tight: Your Guide to the Most Successful Approach to Building Loving Relationships by Sue Johnson](#)

[Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find - and Keep - Love, by Amir Levine \(Author\), Rachel Heller \(Author\)](#)

[The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts by Gary Chapman \(Author\)](#)

[The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work: A Practical Guide from the Country's Foremost Relationship Expert - by John Gottman PhD \(Author\), Nan Silver \(Author\)](#)

[The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy: Creating Connection \(Basic Principles into Practice Series\) by Susan M. Johnson \(Author\)](#)

[Focused Genograms 2nd Edition by Rita DeMaria \(Author\), Gerald R. Weeks \(Editor\), Markie L. C. Twist \(Editor\)](#)

[The Internet Family: Technology in Couple and Family Relationships 1st Edition by Katherine M. Hertlein \(Author\)](#)

[Applying Critical Social Theories to Family Therapy Practice \(AFTA SpringerBriefs in Family Therapy\) 2015th Edition- by Teresa McDowell \(Author\)](#)

[Socioculturally Attuned Family Therapy 1st Edition - by Teresa McDowell \(Author\), Carmen Knudson-Martin \(Contributor\), J. Maria Bermudez \(Contributor\)](#)