



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

MCFT 553 Sex Abuse Issues in Marriage, Couple, and Family Therapy

(1 unit)

SUMMER 2022

Instructor: **Joslyn Armstrong, Ph.D.**

Day, Time & Location:

Section 11- Wednesday 12:00pm-4:00pm, York 117

Section 12- Wednesday 5:00pm-9:00pm, York 117

Section 13- Thursday 1:00pm-5:00pm, York 121

Office Hours: by appointments via email

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help family therapists competently address sexual abuse situations from a systemic and relational perspective. This course provides introductory knowledge and skills for the assessment and intervention of sexual abuse. This course will also address ethical and legal issues in working with sexual abuse issues in marriage, couple, and family therapy. The curriculum is informed primarily by feminist and critical multicultural theories and practices.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students in this course will develop a working knowledge of assessing and treating sexual abuse and trauma in the treatment of individuals, couples, children, and families from a relational/systemic perspective. This includes developing adequate safety and intervention plans.

A note about the nature of this course: Given the sensitive and challenging nature of the material discussed in class, it is important that we develop an atmosphere of trust and openness in the classroom. The instructor and students will seek to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other, drawing on the guidelines for a relational approach to social justice. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class; however, experiencing discomfort is also part of the process of consciousness-raising and learning. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let the instructor know if something said or done in the classroom is particularly troubling. Some students find it helpful to journal their thoughts and feelings as they explore these sensitive issues.

Prerequisites: None

Credits: 1 semester unit (15 hours contact)

MCFT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO 1.1 Students recognize the impact of power on individuals, families, and communities

SLO 1.2 Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, social systems in people's lived experience

SLO 1.3 Students apply systems/relational theories to case conceptualization.

SLO 2.2 Students' clinical practice demonstrates attention to social justice and cultural democracy.

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

SLO 4.1 Students apply ethical decision-making processes to clinical dilemmas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course students will:

1. Develop a working knowledge of assessing and treating sexual abuse.
2. Distinguish and recognize various phases of human and family development as it relates to power, control, abuse, and coercion.
3. Recognize and apply legal and ethical mandates of the profession to make mandated reports as needed.

READINGS:

1st Class Session:

Curry, T., J., & Utley, E. A. (2018). She touched me: Five snapshots of adult sexual violations of Black boys. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, 28(2), 205-241.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_2087997077

Hill, A. (2006). Play therapy with sexually abused children: Including parents in therapeutic play. *Child and Family Social Work*, 11, 316-324.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_gale_infotracacademiconefile_A158187301

Sorsoli, L., Kia-Keating, M., & Grossman, F. K. (2008). "I keep that hush-hush": Male survivors of sexual abuse and the challenges of disclosure. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 55(3), 333-345.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_57266564

2nd Class Session:

Higgins Kessler, M. R. et al. (2004). Clinical decision-making strategies of marriage and

family therapists in the treatment of adult childhood sexual abuse survivors. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 32, 1-10.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_crossref_primary_10_1080_01926180490255800

Jankowski, P. J., & Martin, M. J. (2003). Reporting cases of child maltreatment: Decision-making processes of family therapists in Illinois. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 23(3), 311-332.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_61535528

McGregor, K., Thomas, D. R., & Read, J. (2006). Therapy for child sexual abuse: Women talk about helpful and unhelpful therapy experiences. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 15(4), 35-59.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_pubmed_primary_17200053

3rd Class Session:

Huff, S., & Rappleyea, D. L. (2019). Understanding and responding to victims of interpersonal sexual violence and sexual assault within committed relationships. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 48(1), 107-125.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_proquest_journals_2328857220

Love, H. A. (2019). Sexual assault: The therapist, supervisor, and self. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 31(2-3), 66-77.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_informaworld_taylorfrancis_310_1080_08952833_2019_1633839

4th Class Session:

Gill, A. (2018). Survivor-centered research: Towards an intersectional gender-based violence movement. *Journal of Family Violence*, 33, 559-562.

https://primo.lclark.edu/permalink/f/1v7iusn/TN_cdi_gale_infotracacademiconefile_A557886061

RECOMMENDED:

Haines, S. (2008). *Healing Sex: A Mind-Body Approach to Healing Sexual Trauma*. Cleis Press; (2nd Ed).

Bailey, C. E. (2005). *Children in therapy: Using the family as a resource*. W.W. Norton publisher; (1st Ed). Ch. 6-7 (pp.137-164).

COVID POLICY

Please read and carefully review LC's guidelines for reopening at

<https://www.lclark.edu/news/2020-plans/health-and-safety>

In the event of Dr. Armstrong contracting COVID-19: If Dr. Armstrong were to exhibit symptoms of the Coronavirus, then class will resume in an online format, where she limits her physical interactions with students. In the event of Dr. Armstrong's death due to Coronavirus, all direction and teaching of the course will be at the discretion of Dr. Kim (Program Director) and the MCFT faculty.

OVERVIEW AND EXPECTATIONS

Communication: If you would like to schedule a face-to-face meeting, then please feel free to email me for an appointment. If you send an email to me, you can expect an answer in about 48 hours during the week. Generally, if you email me during the weekend, it is best to assume that I will not respond until Tuesday morning.

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 with me any time during the semester. **My office hours are 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 readings 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 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 assignments and readings, and remain engaged in the virtual classroom format. 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. Develop a working knowledge of assessing and treating sexual abuse.	SLO 1.1 SLO 1.2 SLO 1.3 SLO 3.2	CC 1.2.1 CC 2.1.4 CC 2.3.1 CC 2.4.2 CC 4.1.1 CC 4.3.2	Self-of-therapist paper Toolkit of Resources groups

2. Distinguish and recognize various phases of human and family development as it relates to power, control, abuse, and coercion.	SLO 1.1 SLO 1.2 SLO 1.3 SLO 2.2 SLO 4.1	CC 1.2.1 CC 2.1.1 CC 2.3.1 CC 3.1.1 CC 5.1.4	Self-of-therapist paper Toolkit of Resources groups
3. Recognize and apply legal and ethical mandates of the profession to make mandated reports as needed.	SLO 2.2 SLO 3.2 SLO 4.1	CC 4.5.3 CC 5.1.1 CC 5.1.2 CC 5.1.4 CC 5.4.1	Self-of-therapist paper Toolkit of Resources groups

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

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

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION (20 points)

Because class participation and discussion are essential for your learning, regular class attendance is expected for this course. Students are expected to attend class weekly meetings 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. Distracting behavior in class is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Other unacceptable behaviors include arriving late or leaving early, except in cases when there is a valid reason for doing so, also being on your phone or being distracted via computer.

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 sex abuse, 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.

2. TOOLKIT OF RESOURCES FOR SA GROUPS (30 points)

Students will be in Toolkit Groups for each class session. There will be 5-6 total groups with 3 students in each group. Groups will create a 1-3-page infographic of resources for a group, target population, or specific demographic that are impacted by Sex Abuse. The group must provide a list of resources for the categories given in the guidelines. Groups will be graded on and topic connectedness to Sex Abuse, variety of resources they provide, and visual representation. Any suspicions of violations to the Academic Integrity policy will be reported (please review the policy below). Guidelines for the facilitation groups are attached below. Only 1 person in the group will submit the Infographic on the Moodle discussion board.

3. SEX ABUSE SELF-OF-THE-THERAPIST PAPER (50 points)

Students will explore a clinical case example of Sex Abuse. Students will discuss their case conceptualization of Juan, the individual, couple, familial, and systemic vulnerability

present. The paper will address the necessary self-of-the-therapist work that the student would need to do in their work with Juan and its implications on their perceptions of abuse and assault within clinical practice. The paper will be a minimum of 3 pages and a maximum of 4 pages, double spaced, 12 pt font, a Word document, and Arial/Calibri/Times New Roman/Sans Serif font. A rubric and guidelines for the assignment are attached below. Late papers will receive a 10% point deduction for every day it is late. Papers will be submitted through Moodle. Any suspicions of violations to the Academic Integrity policy will be reported (please review the policy below).

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Class Participation	20
Toolkit of Resources for SA Groups	30
Self-of-Therapist Paper	50
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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.

Late papers and assignments: Any assignments turned in late (without previous permission) will automatically receive a 10% reduction in grade for every day late.

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.

DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT

- Option 1: 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.

- Option 2: If you require academic accommodations please contact the Student Support Services Office in Albany Quadrangle (503-76-7192 or access@lclark.edu). Once you complete the intake process and the Accommodations Agreement, you may Request to Send your Accommodations Letter. Student Support Services staff will then notify faculty of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Each student should decide for him/herself/themself 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.

LINKS TO LEWIS & CLARK GRADUATE SCHOOL ESSENTIAL POLICIES

This course adheres to the general policies outlined in the catalog and student handbook of the Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. This includes full adherence to the following policies:

- Nondiscrimination: go.lclark.edu/gsec-nondiscrimination
- Standards for professional student conduct and academic integrity: go.lclark.edu/gsec-conduct
- Sexual misconduct: go.lclark.edu/titleIX.

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 mute your video to take the call.

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

Sections 1 (553.11) & 2 (553.12):

Session	Day	Date	Lecture Review	Readings
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1	Wed	July 6th	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Child Sex abuse & Elder abuse	On Moodle
2	Wed	July 13th	Lecture: Assessment, Treatment & Clinical Interventions for Sex Abuse/Assault	On Moodle
3	Wed	July 20th	Lecture: Sexual Assault & Consent Assignment: SA Self-of-therapist paper due on Moodle by 11:30pm	On Moodle
4	Wed	July 27th	Lecture: Self-of-Therapist & Sex abuse; Intersectional Populations & Sex abuse Assignment: Toolkit of Resources for SA groups due on Moodle by 11:30pm	On Moodle

Section 3 (553.13):

Session	Day	Date	Lecture Review	Readings
1	Thurs	July 7th	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Child Sex abuse & Elder abuse	On Moodle
2	Thurs	July 14th	Lecture: Assessment, Treatment & Clinical Interventions for Sex Abuse/Assault	On Moodle
3	Thurs	July 21st	Lecture: Sexual Assault & Consent Assignment: SA Self-of-therapist paper due on Moodle by 11:30pm	On Moodle
4	Thurs	July 28th	Lecture: Self-of-Therapist & Sex abuse; Intersectional Populations & Sex abuse Assignment: Toolkit of Resources for SA groups due on Moodle by 11:30pm	On Moodle

Guiding questions to prepare for MCFT 553 class discussion

As you do the assigned readings, reflect on the following questions and make notes on your responses. Be prepared to share your perspectives in class.

1. From what perspectives (personal, academic, and clinical locations) are the authors writing?

How does this shape their work and contributions to equity in family therapy?

2. What ideas/concepts in this reading
 - a. Resonate with my previous knowledge and experience?
 - b. Stimulate new thoughts or questions for me?
3. How is my response to this reading informed by my personal experience within my intersecting social locations?
4. What specific practice implications are relevant to me given my social location, privilege/marginalization, and process of professional development?

Toolkit of Resources for SA Groups Guidelines

- Must last a minimum 1 page and maximum 3 pages Infographic design
- Groups will compose of 3 people per group making up 5-6 total groups
- Groups cannot have the same toolkit target groups.
- Groups are allowed to use assigned readings for the class session listed on Moodle to support their Infographic
- Groups will choose a group, target population, or specific demographic to center the focus of their resources to that are affected by sex abuse or sexual assault or elder abuse. Groups are also allowed to take an intersectional approach. For example: immigrant, undocumented, gender, racial/ethnic groups, disability, LGBTQIAA+, SES, elders, etc.
- Groups can also choose a special topic that can be involved in sex abuse, sexual assault, or elder abuse. Groups are allowed to take an intersectional approach. For example: veterans, substance use, process addiction, social media, mindfulness, etc.
- Group will provide the contact numbers, websites, and links to all resources in the Infographic. After choosing a group, then their resource toolkit or manual will provide at least 2 differing resources for at least 6 out of the 9 of these categories:
 - City, state, or national resources or hotlines
 - Websites to contact for assistance
 - Non-profit organizations & community organizations
 - Counseling services
 - Trainings

- Books
- Podcasts
- Articles (peer-reviewed or non-empirical)
- Miscellaneous
- Each group will submit or post their final Infographic on the assigned discussion board on Moodle

Sex Abuse Self-of-the-Therapist Paper Guidelines & Rubric

- **Case Conceptualization:** clearly and concisely state your interpretations of Juan as your client. Discuss what relevant factors in Juan's cultural background (race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, SES, education, religion/spiritual affiliation, etc.) influenced how he presents as your client presently if they apply. Discuss all the different levels of sex abuse or Juan's vulnerability to sex abuse or assault was present (individual, couple, familial, contextual, systemic) in his situation if they apply. Discuss a systemic perspective on what larger systems may have contributed to the abuse, harm, and assault Juan had experienced and/or inflicted as well. Discuss your perspective of how trauma is visible or present for Juan or how you would discuss trauma responses with Juan. For example: what relevant factors tie into a trauma-responses DSM diagnosis for Juan or how would you integrate a discussion of trauma with client. Discuss any strength(s)/support/liberations present within Juan's experience or personhood as well. Discuss the strength(s), support available, and resiliencies present for Juan and his personhood- begin to think about what are some factors to keep in mind for yourself based on your social location in working with this client? I want you to move past talking about the difficulty you would have in connecting with him because your social location and background is different from his own (that will be most clients). I want you to speak more of how do you plan to join and build trust/connection with client given your social location.
- **Self-of-therapist:** discuss your own reflections and thoughts on what self-work you will need to be aware of given Juan's own identities and positioning in society as your client.

Some areas to address in discussing your self-of-the-therapist work: what your first impressions would be of Juan or his case sample, how would you join/relate/connect with Juan, what assumptions/bias/misconceptions/blind spots would you need to address in your work with Juan, how would you address these mishaps, and what relevant sociocultural factors related to Juan's identity intersecting with your own would influence your therapeutic relationship with him.

Grading Rubric

	Possible points	Points demonstrated
<u>Case Conceptualization:</u>		
Recognize which individual, couple, familial, contextual and/or systemic factors (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, etc.) that are relevant to client experience.	10	
Consider the impact of larger societal systems (e.g., legal system, social services, schools, medical systems, etc.) on clients' health and well-being and vulnerability to abuse or assault	10	
Discuss client resiliencies, strengths, and support available to him	8	
<u>Self-of-therapist:</u>		
Discuss their own self-of-therapist work around how their social location, and their history and background will affect their connection or rapport building with client- what would get in the way and what will help to build that connection with client.	10	
Discuss how therapist will confront any bias, assumptions, blind spots, misconceptions about client and connected to abuse or assault client has experienced	10	
Paper is clearly written and organized, meets page requirements (4 pages maximum, double-spaced, 12 pt font, Word document), few grammar errors, concise	2	
TOTAL	50	