



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

**LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION AND COUNSELING**

MCFT 502: INTRODUCTION TO MCFT

Sections 3

FALL 2022

Time & Day: 09/08/2021-10/06/2021 Lecture Thursday 1:00PM - 4:00PM

Location: York Room 121

Instructor: Stace Parlen, LMFT.

Office Hours: By appointment

E-Mail: sparlen@lclark.edu

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Survey of current issues relating to ethics, professional identity, and practice in the field of marriage and family models, and utilization of these models in developmental and therapeutic practice.

MCFT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course promotes the development of the following MCFT Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO1.1: Students recognize the impact of power on individuals, families, and communities.

SLO1.2: Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, social systems in people's lived experience.

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

SLO: 4.2 Students provide competent service according to the AAMFT code of ethics and core competencies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The following specific course objectives are in keeping with the AAMFT Core Competencies. At the end of this course, students will:

1. Understand the history and philosophy of family therapy. Gain awareness of how theory and practice are socially constructed, emerging from specific sociopolitical, historical contexts. (CC 1.1.1; KS 1,2)
2. Know the role of family therapists in a variety of practice settings and in relation to other helping professionals. (CC 1.1.3)
3. Become aware of the ethical standards of AAMFT and state laws - how these are developed and how they generally apply to practice (Specific knowledge of application of laws and ethics is expected in MCFT 510). (CC 1.5.10; 5.3.1; 5.4.1)
4. Know the structure and operations of professional organizations that support and regulate the practice of family therapy (e.g., the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, American Family Therapy Academy, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy).
6. Begin developing a professional identity as a family therapist.
7. Gain knowledge of required competencies, national exams, and licensure requirements.
8. Become familiar with major journals in the field and how to research information about therapy.

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 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.

COVID POLICY

<https://www.lclark.edu/news/covid-19-response/health-and-safety/>

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you have a disability that may affect your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Office of Student Accessibility 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. Because our course delivery will be a hybrid this fall, it is particularly important that you talk to me soon about accommodations and needs. Student Accessibility Services is available via email (access@lclark.edu) or by phone (503-768-7192). While they aren't answering the phone directly, if you call and leave a message, they will call you back. You can also make an appointment on line via their website: (www.lclark.edu/offices/student_support_services/).

PARTICIPATION IN THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Students are required to attend and actively participate in all scheduled class meetings. This includes being on time, being prepared, following through on group projects, and otherwise engaging with colleagues as fellow professionals. Becoming a counselor/therapist involves looking closely at ourselves, our values, beliefs, and biases. This can be a very personal, and sometimes emotional, process. Treating colleagues with respect, listening deeply to their experiences, and being open to diverse world views encourages a collaborative milieu of care in which we can all challenge ourselves and each other to critically examine and develop our skills and perspectives. In order to prepare for each class, students should carefully read and study all assigned materials to be ready to discuss, debate, and apply the content of readings. Class discussion and interaction with colleagues are fundamental to the process of learning to be a therapist and all sessions include necessary information. Therefore, if you must miss a class, fellow students and the instructor may ask you to contribute to learning community in another way. According to the Lewis & Clark Counseling Psychology attendance policy, missing 3 or more hours of a 1 credit course may result in a failing grade. For this course, any absence of more than one hour requires a makeup assignment. If you must be absent or late, please email the instructor at least several hours prior to class.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

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.

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.

College-Wide Conduct Policies:

Please see https://graduate.lclark.edu/student_life/handbook/college_policies/

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance, participation and disposition (30 pts)

- 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. **Braiding Sweet grass assignment. Read "Braiding sweet grass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer. (20 pts).** The purpose of this assignment is to understand systems thinking and the meaning of "all my relations" from a decolonization perspective. This framework will be explained in class.

Please send via email to sparlen@lclark.edu on or before or on August 24, 2022.

Reflect on the following questions:

(a) Point of departure.

A point of departure in research or in a system of thought involves the assumptions or premises or question from and on which the system of thought proceeds forward. It is where you take off from, it is the mindset from which ideas have their foundation. Use “Braiding sweet grass” and the story of Skywoman to:

- Explain your understanding of the chapter (1/2 pages)
- Explain what changes in how we relate to each other and other beings if we do not consider ourselves the center of the universe, but a part of it. (1 page)
- Offer a clear and concrete example from your own personal life, your family or community comparing and contrasting how relationships and consequences of our actions change depending on our point of departure in addressing a situation (give an example). (2 pages)

(b) Basket making (2 pages)

Use basket making as a metaphor to illustrate how you and others (family, friends, partners) engage in constructing a project, ritual or a kind of relational activity that may or may not have included non-human beings. Be specific

(c) Honorable harvest and reciprocity (2 pages)

- Explain what reciprocity means from the author’s perspective
- Compare and contrast the manner in which your culture and society’s practices of giving and taking, and Indigenous ways of looking at reciprocity.

(d) Becoming naturalized to place (2 pages)

- List and explain five or more specific steps that you would take to become naturalized to place, with the understanding that you do not own this land and that you have to coexist with other humans and non-human beings.

(e) Using Braiding sweet grass as your inspiration, describe your family and include all you consider as – all your relationships – (2 pages)

3. **Assigned reading reflections (20 pts) (1 page typed)**

After completing the readings for each class, identify two themes or ideas that stood out for you. Select and provide a quote illustrating each theme that stood out for you. Offer your own reflection about what these ideas mean to you: you may discuss dilemmas, resonance with your life experience, agreement/disagreement with a rationale, impact in your views, emerging questions, and struggles with particular points of view with a rationale, ethical implications and practical applications. Bring your typed reflection to class.

4. **Brief Interview – due October 5 and 6- (30 pts)**

As part of this coursework, you will interview a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) in your local community, and write a 5/6 page paper about his/ her academic and clinical training in grad school, clinical practice and professional involvement in the local community. You may locate an LMFT in your local community by visiting AAMFT website: <http://www.therapistlocator.net/SearchUS.asp>. A list of our recent MCFT graduates will also be provided in class, if you prefer to contact them instead. A suggested question guide can be found at the end of the syllabus.

While the paper must be submitted on Oct 5 or 6, the interview must be conducted before the last class as we will discuss your experience the last day of class.

5. FBI CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK & COURSE COMPLETION:

All students must go through the FBI record request process. Those who fail to turn in the application material will receive an INCOMPLETE for this course until FBI application material has been submitted.

GRADING

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

“A” grades will be reserved for particularly outstanding work. Grades on the border may be determined by attendance and demonstration of completing readings prior to each class session.

TEXT/READINGS

Murphy, M.J. & Hecker, L. (2009). Ethics and professional issues in couple and family therapy.

NY: Routledge.

Wall Kirmmerer, R. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass*. Canada: Milkweed Editions.

AAMFT website

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. You are responsible for all of the assigned readings, whether or not they are discussed in class. Please note that there are more readings assigned for some topics than for others, and that additional readings may be added during the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – Introduction, History & Paradigms in Family Therapy

Topics:

Braiding sweetgrass and relational thinking discussion.
 Course design and overview
 Social construction of family therapy theory
 Paradigms as a metaphor for systems of thought/practice
 History of family therapy as defined in Western societies

WEEK 2 – Regulation and Competence in the MCFT Profession

Topics:

Becoming a family therapist
 Professional organizations & journals
 Core Competencies & Standards of Practice
 Codes of Ethics & State Laws
 MCFT Student Handbook
 Licensure

Readings:

Murphy & Hecker Ch.1

Tasks:

Review and read materials from the following websites:
 MFT National Exam <https://amftrb.org/your-exam-roadmap/>
 Licensure Requirements: <https://www.oregon.gov/oblpc/Pages/Apply.aspx>
 American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy www.aamft.org
 Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education
<https://www.coamfte.org/>
 Print the AAMFT Code of Ethics and bring to class
https://www.aamft.org/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx

WEEK 3 – Professional Identity and Roles

Topics:

Therapist roles
 Collaboration with multiple systems
 Therapists as advocates
 Professional writing

Readings:

Murphy & Hecker Chapter 16

WEEK 4 – Power, Culture & Practice

Topics:

Social, economic, political & cultural forces influencing service delivery
Practicing therapy for social change

Readings:

Murphy & Hecker Ch 6

Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass, “maple nation: a citizen guide,” “the honorable harvest,”
“people of corn, people of light;” “collateral damage”

WEEK 5 – Values, Meaning & Self of the Therapist

Topics:

Therapist self-care
Morality and therapy
Intuition, experience, feelings and other “tools”
Values, biases, beliefs

Readings:

Murphy & Hecker Ch. 5

Sample Interview Guide

- How many years of experience do you have as an MFT?
- What populations have you worked with and for how long?
- Looking back, what led you to become a family therapist?
- Where there transformational experiences while you were in training?
- How did you think of therapeutic change when you started to practice and what do you think now?
- Tell me about your professional identity as an MCFT?
- How do you see the MFT profession vis-à-vis other mental health professionals?
- What challenges do you see there for MFTs developmentally and professionally?
- Where do you see the MFT profession needs to address to grow more in the state and in the country?
- **What ethical/legal dilemmas do you think I’ll be most likely to encounter as an intern/new professional? This item from your interview will be used in your ethics class. Please expand on this question. This item will be requested in your ethics class for an assignment.**
- Please add other questions to inquire about the profession in your state/city

Course Objective	MCFT Student Learning Outcomes	AAMFT Core Competencies & AMFTRB task statements	Evaluated by
1. Understand the history and philosophy of family therapy. Gain awareness of how theory and practice are socially constructed, emerging from specific sociopolitical, historical contexts.	SLO1.1 SLO1.2 SLO 3.1	CC 1.1.1	Class participation and discussion of course lectures; Braiding sweetgrass assignment; weekly reflections
2. Know the role of family therapists in a variety of practice settings and in relation to other helping professionals.	SLO 4.2 SLO 4.3	CC 1.1.3	Class participation, weekly reflection papers
3. Become aware of the ethical standards of AAMFT and state laws - how these are developed and how they generally apply to practice (Specific knowledge of application of laws and ethics is expected in MCFT 510).	SLO 4.3	CC 1.5.10; 5.3.1; 5.4.1	Class participation, weekly reflection papers
4. Know the structure and operations of professional organizations that support and regulate the practice of family therapy (e.g., the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, American Family Therapy Academy, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy).	SLO 3.1	CC 5.5.3	Class participation, weekly reflection papers
5. Begin developing a professional identity as a family therapist.	SLO 1.1 SLO 4.3		LMCFT interview
6. Gain knowledge of required competencies, national exams, and licensure requirements.	SLO 4.3		Class participation, weekly reflection papers
7. Become familiar with the major journals in the field and how to research information about therapy.	SLO 3.1		Class participation, Weekly reflection papers