



"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 2023

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

Time & Day:

Section 1- 6/22-6/29, Thursday 9:30am-5:30pm

Section 2- 7/6-7/13, Thursday 9:30am-5:30pm

Section 3- 7/20-7/27, Thursday 9:30am-5:30pm

Location: York, room 116

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. The instructor and students will seek to foster an environment in which each person is able to hear and respect each other, drawing on the guidelines for a relational approach to social justice and repair. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class; however, experiencing discomfort/feeling uncomfortable 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:

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_infotracademiconefile_A158187301

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

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_5726656

Fitzgerald, M. (2020). An overview of child maltreatment for systemic therapists. *Family Therapy Magazine*, 19(2). [An Overview of Child Maltreatment for Systemic Therapists - Family Therapy Magazine \(aamft.org\)](https://www.aamft.org/family-therapy-magazine/2020/02/01/an-overview-of-child-maltreatment-for-systemic-therapists)

2nd Class Session:

Adrienne Maree Brown in *BitchMedia* (2018). "I want you but I am triggered." Finding Pleasure when trauma and memory collide. <https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/i-want-you-im-triggered/finding-pleasure-when-trauma-and-memory-collide>

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

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

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Nadine Burke Harris, PhD. (2021) *The deepest well: Healing the long-term effects of childhood trauma and adversity*. Mariner Books.

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

Bessel van der Kolk. M.D. (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Penguin Publishing group.

Jor- El Caraballo. (2022). *The shadow work workbook: Self-care exercises for healing your trauma and exploring your hidden self*. Adams Media.

Stephanie Foo. (2022) *What my bones know: A memoir of healing from complex trauma*. Random House Audio.

Lindsay C. Gibson, PsyD. (2015). *Adult children of emotionally immature parents: How to heal from distant, rejecting, or self-involved parents*. New Harbinger Publications

Natalie Y. Gutiérrez, LMFT. (2022). *The pain we carry: Healing from complex PTSD for*

people of color. New Harbinger Publishing.

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

Susan M. Johnson, LMFT, PhD. (2005). *Emotionally focused couple therapy with trauma survivors: Strengthening attachment bonds*; (1st Ed). Guilford Press.

Judith Lewis Herman. (2015) *Trauma & recovery*. Basic Books.

Renee Linklater. (2014). *Decolonizing trauma work: Indigenous stories and strategies*. Fernwood Publishing.

Resmaa Menakem. (2017) *My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies*. Central Recovery Press.

Gretchen L. Schmelzer, PhD. (2018) *Journey through trauma: A trail guide to the 5-phase cycle of healing repeated trauma*. Avery publisher.

David A. Treleaven. (2018) *Trauma-sensitive mindfulness: Practice for safe and transformative healing*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Jenny Wang, PhD. (2022) *Permission to come home: Reclaiming mental health as Asian Americans*. Balance publishers.

Mark Wolynn. (2017) *It didn't start with you: How inherited family trauma shapes who we are and how to end the cycle*. Penguin Publishing group.

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 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.

Attendance: Class attendance is expected and required as stated in the student handbook. There is no make up for any excused, missed class time. Missing more than 10% 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 hours for a 30-hour class (2 credits) or **1.5 hours for a 15-hour class** (1 credit.).

Assignments: All assignments are due by 11:30 pm on the due date. Late assignments will generally not be accepted. Assignments will lose 10% of the points for each day late unless an extension is approved in advance, or a disability accommodation plan is already in place. All assignments must be successfully completed to pass the class. All written work is to be typed, double spaced, and adhere to APA style 7th edition guidelines unless otherwise stated.

Readings and Discussion: All assigned readings are to be completed prior to the beginning of class. There are many ways you can work to make this class fun and engaging. This class is often discussion-based, so please do all the reading to the best of your ability. I want you to interact with the texts and come with informed opinions, so perhaps highlight, and take some notes, and find connections with your personal experiences and others'. Fun and engaging discussions also depend on your willingness to take risks, which will help cultivate a climate of openness and intellectual humility

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.

Cell phones & Computers: 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 step outside of the classroom. Computers must only be used for class material only (ex: taking notes, searching up information pertaining to class topics) and other usages are considered a distraction from class session.

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	Clinical case conceptualization paper Theory-based treatment plan
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	Clinical case conceptualization paper

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	Clinical case conceptualization paper Theory-based treatment plan
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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 (15 points)

Students will rate their own participation on Moodle about how they have participated in the course based on the criteria of frequency, preparation, engagement, contribution, and self/other awareness. Please refer often to the rubric below for participation for guidelines on how you are to assess yourself in this area.

2. CLINICAL CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION PAPER (35 points)

Students will choose 1 case example to complete a clinical conceptualization on out of the 3 case examples available. The case examples detail an individual, couple, or family dealing with either childhood sexual abuse or sexual assault. Their conceptualizations must include an overall interpretation of the case, but also integrate a family therapy theory model(s), as well as consider implications for trauma-informed care, and legal mandates and considerations for the AAMFT ethical code. Lastly, students will attach a GIF to their paper that visually represents the case, or self-of-the-therapist issues that may arise for them with the case example.

Turn in & Grading:

Paper will be submitted on Moodle. The paper will be a minimum of 3 pages and a maximum of 5 pages, single spaced, 12 pt font, a Word or PDF document, and Arial/Calibri/Times New Roman/Sans Serif font. Any suspicions of violations to the Academic Integrity policy will be reported (please review the policy below). A rubric and guidelines for the assignment are attached below. Late papers will receive a 10%-point deduction for every day late.

3. THEORY-BASED TREATMENT PLAN PAPER (50 points)

Students will create a treatment plan for the Antwone Fisher film as if Antwone was their client. The treatment plan will discuss their family therapy model(s) of choice, how the model fits with the issues that brought Antwone to therapy, a clinical assessment given the issues that Antwone presents (sex abuse and systemic violence), and students will create a treatment plan of 3 treatment goals with objectives and technique/interventions. Students will need to consider how their family therapy model considers the implications of abuse of case example within their treatment plan.

Turn in & Grading:

Paper will be submitted on Moodle. The paper will be a minimum of 3 pages and a maximum of 6 pages, single spaced, 12 pt font, a Word or PDF document, and Arial/Calibri/Times New Roman/Sans Serif font. Any suspicions of violations to the Academic Integrity policy will be reported (please review the policy below). A rubric and guidelines for the assignment are attached below. Late papers will receive a 10%-point deduction for every day late.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Class Participation	15
Case Conceptualization paper	35
Theory-based Treatment Plan 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/themselves 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.

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

Section 1 (553.11)

Session	Day	Date	Lecture Review	Readings
1	Thurs	June 22nd	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Childhood Sexual Abuse & Reporting CA	On Moodle
2	Thurs	June 29th	Lecture: Sexual Assault & Trauma-Informed Care	On Moodle
	Thurs	July 13th	Assignment: Theory-based Treatment Plan paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	

	Thurs	July 13th	Assignment: Case Conceptualization paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	
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Section 2 (553.12)

<u>Session</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Review</u>	<u>Readings</u>
1	Thurs	July 6th	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Childhood Sexual Abuse & Reporting CA	On Moodle
2	Thurs	June 13th	Lecture: Sexual Assault & Trauma-Informed Care	On Moodle
	Thurs	July 27th	Assignment: Theory-based Treatment Plan paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	
	Thurs	July 27th	Assignment: Case Conceptualization paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	

Section 3 (553.21)

<u>Session</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lecture Review</u>	<u>Readings</u>
1	Thurs	July 20th	Introductions & Syllabus Review Lecture: Childhood Sexual Abuse & Reporting CA	On Moodle
2	Thurs	July 27th	Lecture: Sexual Assault & Trauma-Informed Care	On Moodle
	Thurs	August 10th	Assignment: Theory-based Treatment Plan paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	
	Thurs	August 10th	Assignment: Case Conceptualization paper due by 11:30pm on Moodle	

Day 1 Class Structure (subject to change):

9:30am-12:00pm: Learn about child sexual abuse and reporting child abuse

12:00pm-1:00pm: Lunch

1:15pm-5:30pm: Clinical Role-plays/case examples, class participation & discussion

Day 2 Class Structure (subject to change):

9:30am-12:00pm: Learn about adult sexual assault/rape and trauma-informed care

12:00pm-1:00pm: Lunch

1:15pm-5:30pm: Clinical Role-plays/case examples, class participation & discussion

Clinical Case Conceptualization Paper Rubric

Criteria	Possible points	Points demonstrated
Overall conceptualization demonstrates an understanding or broader lens into the impact of the abuse onto the client system. Conceptualization highlight the relational and/or systemic implications of the abuse and its influence within the system's functioning.	8	
Conceptualization is grounded in family therapy model(s) about the connection to the abuse on client system, and provided a clear explanation using treatment model on the system's functioning and processes due to the abuse. Treatment goals and interventions are addressed.	10	
Student showcases a developing understanding and awareness into how trauma-informed care would be practiced using case. Trauma-informed care is discussed in a reflective and critical way.	5	
Legal and AAMFT ethical standards consider the complexes of the case example but also the responsibilities of the therapist.	5	
GIF/Meme and the explanation to demonstrate either thoughts about the overall case or connect to an aspect of self-of-the-therapist.	5	
Paper is concise, clearly written and organized, meets page requirements (5 pages maximum, 12 pt font, Word document), with few grammar errors.	2	
TOTAL	35	

Theory-based Treatment Plan for Case Example Paper Rubric

Criteria	Points Possible	Points Demonstrated
Presents family therapy model(s) with an appropriate justification for model fit that highlights model's worldview, and ethos that connects well to Antwone's case.	10	
Clinical assessment is grounded in family therapy model(s), and Antwone's experiences of abuse and lived experiences are explained thoroughly using model that shows relational and systemic understanding.	10	
Legal and AAMFT ethical standards are addressed that consider the layers of Antwone's experience/case but also the responsibilities of the therapist.	7	
Treatment plan has 3 total goals, two objectives per goal, and at minimum 3 techniques per objective.	2	
Treatment goals are concise, in terms/language client will understand, and connect to the presenting issues of Antwone's case	7	
Objectives are connected to the txt goal, and showcase a clear connection to how the treatment goal will be met.	7	
Techniques are evidenced from family therapy models and showcase clear purpose and intention from therapist to implement with client.	5	
Student has demonstrated a proficiency and understanding of family therapy model(s) throughout the treatment plan. Txt plan is concise, clearly written and organized, meets page requirements (4 pages maximum, 12 pt font, Word document), with few grammar errors.	2	
TOTAL:	50	

Class Participation Rubric

AREA	DISTINGUISHED (3)	PROFICIENT (2)	EMERGING (1)	UNACCEPTABLE (0)
Frequency (3 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates contributions (in small or large group) more than once in a class period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates contributions (in small or large group) more than once in a class period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates contributions occasionally (in small or large group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely, or does not contribute during class
Preparation (3 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading completed and prepared to discussion level; On time and able to arrive or become present soon after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading mostly completed or prepared to discussion level; Mostly on time and able to arrive or become present soon after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading seldom completed or prepared to discussion level; Infrequently on time and/or present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely, or does not prepare or complete readings and is not on time and/or present
Engagement (3 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently builds on others' comments instead of offering only individual comments; Consistently stays actively engaged in dialogue, and takes responsibility for own thoughts and reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally builds on others' comments instead of offering only individual comments; Mostly actively engaged in dialogue, and largely takes responsibility for own thoughts and reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrequently builds on others' comments; Infrequently engaged and/or does not take responsibility for thoughts and reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely, or does not build on others' comments and is rarely engaged
Contributions (3 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willing to be unsure or risk partially formed ideas; Comments thoughtful or insightful, and deepen dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally risks partially formed ideas; Comments frequently thoughtful or insightful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually does not risk partially formed ideas; Comments sometimes thoughtful or insightful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments rarely, or comments not relevant to discussion
Self/Other Awareness (3 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balances frequency of own comments with others; Actively creates and invites space for quieter students; Expresses frequent verbal appreciation for others in learning community Acknowledges missteps and perspective shifts and credits person who facilitated shift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly balances frequency of own comments with others; Occasionally creates or invites space for quieter students; Expresses occasional verbal appreciation for others in learning community Sometimes acknowledges missteps and perspective shifts or credits person with shift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty balancing frequency of own comments with others; Dominates class discussion, or interrupts others; Does not usually express verbal appreciation and/or does not acknowledge missteps or perspective shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently shuts down other students, or otherwise creates a hostile classroom environment for others Does not express verbal appreciation or acknowledge missteps or perspective shifts