



LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY THERAPY
MCFT 516 – 03 – Family Life Cycle
SPRING 2024

When:	Mondays 9 am-12 pm, January 12th to March 15th, 2024
Where:	York Graduate Center, Room 115
Instructor:	Justin Rock, LPC
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Office Location:	By Appointment
E-Mail:	rock@lclark.edu
Phone:	503-310-6217
Credits:	2

Catalog Description:

Family interaction processes and development within cultural contexts. Topics include: family development, diverse family forms, patterns and dynamics of family interaction, and the impact of social context and culture on family life.

Credits: 2 semester hours.

Course Description:

The objective of this two-credit course is to delve into the multifaceted influences of culture and social diversity on the growth and development of children, individuals, and families. This course provides an exploration of diverse developmental trajectories throughout the human life span. For therapists to effectively support their clients, a comprehensive understanding of individual, familial, and systemic developmental dynamics is essential, along with an awareness of socio-cultural and broader systemic factors that shape clients' behaviors, perspectives, and emotions.

This course is structured to enhance students' comprehension of prevalent challenges encountered at various life stages, highlighting how social standing and context significantly shape developmental experiences. The curriculum is informed by significant demographic shifts in recent times. The extended human lifespan has implications for family dynamics, with individuals assuming varied roles such as parents, grandparents, and adult children for longer periods. While the course encompasses the entire life span, there will be a particular focus on family and systemic considerations in the later stages of life, reflecting a deeper exploration of lived experiences and their contextual influences.

COURSE OBJECTIVES, LEARNING OUTCOMES, and CORE COMPETENCIES

Course Objective	MCFT Student Learning Outcomes	AAMFT Core Competencies	Evaluated by
Demonstrate knowledge of the biological, psychological, and sociological theories of human development.	SLO1.2	1.1.1; 2.1.1; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions, case study final paper
Show knowledge of the constant interplay between cultural factors and child development.	SLO1.1 SLO 1.2 SLO 2.2	1.2.1; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions
Understand both micro- and macro-social forces, as well as intra-and inter-personal dynamics that affect development.	SLO1.1 SLO 2.2	2.3.6; 2.3.8	Class participation and weekly reactions, family life cycle and older adults paper
Recognize the theoretical underpinnings of the life cycle/stage paradigm and the life course paradigm.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3	1.1.1; 2.2.3; 4.1.1	Class participation and weekly reactions Final case study
Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of possible developments across the life span.	SLO1.1 SLO 2.2	1.11; 1.2.1;	Class participation and weekly reactions
Acknowledge social constructionist influences on social location issues and how they affect development.	SLO1.1	1.2.1	Class participation, case study final paper, and weekly reactions
Comprehend how systemic issues affect the life course.	SLO1.1	1.2.1	Class participation and weekly reactions
Contrast the interplay of the therapist's development with that of the clients'.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3	3.4.5	Weekly reactions; case study final paper
Understand how families cope with normative and non-normative changes across the life span.	SLO 1.3 SLO 4.3		Class participation
Describe later life issues and apply gerontological theories to clinical work.	SLO 1.2 SLO 4.3	2.3.6; 2.3.8; 4.1.1	Family life cycle, class participation, weekly reflection, case study paper.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. Lewis & Clark does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, sex, religion, age, marital status, national origin, the presence of any physical or sensory disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and their implementing regulations. 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.

DISABILITY SERVICES 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 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 (AND OTHER POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGICAL DISTRACTIONS)

Cell phones (and other notification tech beep-bop machines) ought be silenced for the intention of bringing our focus and attention to the class and one another to co-create a learning community during our class time. If there is a need to have other relationships monitored during our time together, please let the community know so we are aware of the context of the external connection or step outside the learning community.

TEACHING METHODS:

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized during this course in order to achieve the above objectives. Among those methods will be assigned readings, class discussions, experiential activities, and lectures. Please refer to my teaching statement at the end of the syllabus.

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.

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 may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

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CLASS PREPARATION

You must complete all assigned readings and watch any assigned video prior to attending class. This will allow us to focus on application of readings in class. 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.

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.

Required Texts:

McGoldrick, M., Carter, B., & Garcia Preto, N. (2016). *The expanding family cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives*. Fifth Edition. NY, NY: Pearson.

Wall Kirmmerer. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teachings of plants*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions.

Required Articles:

Articles are listed on Moodle site for each week with the relevant link.

Required Audio/Visual:

Roosevelt, Henry (Director). (2023, June 19). *Take Care of Maya* [Documentary]. Netflix.

Articles and other materials may change or be added during the course. All materials will be updated and listed on Moodle for the course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Participation (20 pts)

- Attending all classes and engaging with others in class.
- 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)
- Engaging in group discussions with attention and energy. Asking questions of the instructor and/or other students regarding the material examined in that class.
- Contributing to in-class discussion based on the topics of discussion and the assigned readings. Contributions include how you feel, think, react and utilize the material. You are expected to practice engaging with the material and others from a therapeutic stance in alignment with your theoretical orientation.
- 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 becoming a therapist and working with clients directly, or try to integrate the content of the course. Working in alignment with theoretical orientations that are either personally held or attempted to be understood/experienced.
- Engaging in all class activities with the intention of becoming and building a better therapist and thus engaging in conflict, tension, disagreements, etc. from a therapeutic stance as a therapist.

NOTE: All assignment due dates will be specified on Moodle. Student requests for extensions must be determined with your professor prior to the due date. (Please ask sooner rather than later. Ideally, at least 24 hours before the due date.)

2. Who I was/am/becoming Project (35 pts)

Due: March 15th

The purpose is to explore and widen your horizons of your familial development and thus this project will unfold differently for each of you. This project is process oriented and thus this description is meant to define the process, not the end product of the project.

This will be an ongoing project throughout the term with three final parts to be turned in and shared with classmates at the end of the term. Each week will include personal write ups (in class and out of class) to explore your own situatedness as a part of your family's development.

The three parts of the project are:

1. Weekly Write ups - Each week there will be a prompt provided regarding the material covered to explore yourself, your own family of origin, the stories that are told and possible alternate stories that can be told. (10 pts)
2. Written Summation - From the weekly write ups, a final write up will be turned in at the end of the term and shared with fellow students. Details of this will be provided later in the term. (10 pts)

3. Self Defined Project - You will define and complete a final project that best expresses what insights you have gained and where you have grown both personally and professionally in your own part of family development. (15 points)

3. Case Study (35 pts)

Due: Mar 22nd

The purpose of this assignment is to write a comprehensive case study spanning 6 to 10 pages, centered on a clinical vignette that addresses life course issues, with a particular focus on aging. This case study is an opportunity to interlace the insights from "Braiding Sweetgrass" and the narrative from the Netflix documentary 'Take Care of Maya' with your personal journey and theoretical framework as an emerging therapist.

In your paper, begin by examining a significant transition within a family life cycle, as illustrated in 'Take Care of Maya.' Use this real-world example to apply and contrast the metaphors and themes from "Braiding Sweetgrass." Explore how these metaphors either align with or diverge from the family's experiences in the documentary, especially in the context of aging and life course development.

Further, integrate the ideas, concepts, theories, and interventions discussed in class and the readings. How do these academic and theoretical elements blend with the biocentric perspectives from "Braiding Sweetgrass" and the familial dynamics portrayed in 'Take Care of Maya'? Reflect on how your evolving self-of-the-therapist work and your theoretical stances on development interact with these narratives.

Your paper should not only provide an analytical and contrasting view of these various elements but also culminate in a systemic assessment from your unique therapeutic viewpoint. Consider how you, as the therapist are becoming, would understand and approach the family's situation, particularly focusing on aging and life course issues.

This assignment aims to deepen your understanding of family life cycles through a multifaceted lens, enriched by diverse perspectives, personal therapeutic philosophy, and a focus on aging.

Grading of the case study will be based on:

Criteria of Grading	Points
APA Format	2
Analysis and/or exploration of family systems from theoretical and epistemological orientation taken in paper	5
Integration of Braiding Sweetgrass and Case Study	3
Integration of Self-of-Therapist and Case Conceptualization	7
Coherence of theoretical orientation and epistemological stance of paper as a whole	5

Taking a position on understanding and approaching the family's situation	5
Application of developmental concepts, stages, life cycles as appropriate given the theoretical orientation of the paper	5
Conclusion - lessons learned, reflection, confirmation, questions to be asked, what to explore next	3

This paper must be uploaded into taskstream. Due on March 22nd.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

A: 94-100%	B-: 75-79%
A-: 90-93%	C+: 70-74%
B+: 85-89%	C: 66-69%
B: 80-84%	C-: < 65%

COURSE OUTLINE

Class 1	Introduction, overview of course	Ch1 (no assignments due before class)
Class 2	Gender: women, men and the life cycle	<i>written reflection</i>
Class 3	Social class	Ch 4, 5 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 4	Sexuality	Ch 2, 6 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 5	LGBT & the family life cycle	Ch 7 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 6	Spirituality	Ch 8 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 7	Migration	Ch 12 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 8	Couples and parenthood	Ch 14, 15 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 9	Adolescence	Ch 16 <i>written reflection</i>
Class 10	Midlife: launching children Aging	Ch17 <i>written reflection</i>