

Webster University

Family Counseling

SOCS 5290.01

Fall 1, 2004

Professor: **Becky Mulvihill McKenna, Ph.D.**

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Session:

Fall, 2004: There will be **8 sessions**, beginning **August 23rd** and ending **October 11th**. All classes will meet **Monday evenings** from **5:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**. These classes will be held at Webster University Main Campus: **Webster Hall - Room #326** (Phone -Ed. Dept.: 968-7490).

Course Description:

This course will provide students with the opportunity to explore their assumptions about "the family" and how it develops in a social context. The course is designed to give students an opportunity to obtain a beginning understanding of selected theories and principles of family counseling. There will be a combination of theoretical and practical information with opportunities for students to gain insights in the variety of approaches will be used, including "out-of-class experiences," video-presentations, guest speakers, didactic and experiential activities.

Course Rationale:

We are all a representative of a family system. The family, as an institution, is the foundation of building a healthy society. More often, healthy families produce individuals who are more able to contribute to society. In this postmodern era, there are many challenges that influence the development of a family system. Gender role changes, new family constellations, poverty, class-ism, and abuse issues (e.g., physical, sexual, & substance abuse) are some examples of the challenges many families encounter. This course is offered to help the student begin to think about methods of evaluating family functioning and how he or she could use this information as a professional helper.

Course Objectives:

1. To gain a beginning understanding of systems theory and family counseling principles.
2. To be able to demonstrate basic communication skills for working with students or clients and their families.
3. To be able to recognize, assess, and intervene with students and their families in need of specialized individual attention.
4. To demonstrate an awareness of community services that are available to individuals and families and ways to access these resources.
5. To become sensitized to issues in the changing family.

Course Requirements:

Textbook:

McKenry, P. & Price, S. (Eds.). (1994). Families and Change: Coping With Stressful Events. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

ISBN: 0-8039-49260-X

NOTE:

The student is required to complete activities 1 & 2. The student will also choose one additional assignment from activities 3-5.

During the final class, the student will either give an oral presentation of one of their lesson plans (from activity #1), or the student's choice from activities 3-5.

1. Curriculum Project. The student will develop eight lesson plans on a topic related to family counseling or family development that could be incorporated into your classroom. As you think about your role as an educator, what aspect of the family could you help your students to focus on that may improve their family functioning or general well-being? Plans should contain: 1) title 2) rationale, 3) goals or outcomes, 4) reflect a specific area of the family and subject area, 5) grade and age level, 6) materials needed, 7) activity and

procedure, 8) any follow-up, extension activities, or evaluations, and 9) any references used or needed to develop this plan. A sample of your lesson plans may be presented orally in the last class.

2. Journal. Keep a journal (1 entry minimum, 2-3 entries per week preferred). This is your opportunity to express your thoughts and feelings about any issue related to class activities, readings, assignments, etc.. It will be turned in twice, but not graded.

3. Written Case Presentation. The student will choose an individual or family client case that he or she has worked with (or use a published case or make up a client case.). The case should be presented using the following format (or a similar one that includes the following): 1) Introduction, 2) describe the presenting concerns, 3) summarize the client's family history, 4) discuss in detail how a family theorist of your choice might explain the case and what interventions they might suggest, and finally, 5) recap what you have learned from this experience.

4. Interview a Family/Child Therapist or Family-Oriented Agency. The purpose of this interview is to identify types of 1) target populations, 2) problems encountered, 3) methods and services utilized, 4) eligibility criteria, 5) mission statement, etc.. Be sure to include any information that would be helpful if giving this person/agency as a referral source.

5. Current Issues Paper. Write a 5-6 page paper (not counting references) on a particular topic related to family counseling issues. The references for you paper should come from professional journals, books, current news articles, "expert" interviews, etc.. The paper should center around information that would benefit you in your understanding of the issue and in working with persons you may be teaching or counseling. Your paper should be in APA style (see Webster University APA style sheet).

6. Class Participation. Participate in as many ways as you can. This is an environment which will allow us to take risks, to try new things, to see things in different ways, and to confront ourselves in a non-threatening community.

Final Projects:

Final projects/papers will be returned to students in the following manner:

Students should provide a self-addressed envelope (appropriate size and postage) to the instructor so project/paper can be returned. **Please note:** Papers will not be available for pick up from the School of Education Office.

Class Schedule:

WEEK 1: *Topic: Warm-up exercises; "get to know you"
August 23 exercises, discussion of syllabus, and course requirements. Video: "Going Home, A Family Systems View of Change."

*Class discussion.

*Read: Text: Ch. 1; Handout: Ch.s 1 & 3

WEEK 2: *Topic: Systems, Family Life Cycle Development and
August 30 Genograms.

*Read: Text: Ch.s 4 & 6; Handout: Ch. 6

WEEK 3: *Topic: Minuchin Family Therapy--The Structural
Sept 6 Approach.

*Read: Text: Ch. 14; Handout: Ch. 9

WEEK 4: *Topic: Helping Families Confront Violence, Abuse
and
Sept 13 Grief.

*Speakers:

- Ernie Eddleman, Family Counselor,
Fortress Outreach Center

- Susan Wynne, Director of Counseling,
Maryville University

WEEK 5: *Read: Text: Ch.s 7,8,9,13
Sept 20 *Topic: Gay and Lesbian Issues in Families and
 Schools.
 *Speakers:
 - Karen Fish, Parent and Speaker
 PFLAG and GLSTN members

 *Read: Text: Ch.s 2 & 5

- WEEK 6: *Topic: Understanding the Challenges of Divorced
and Remarried Families.
Sept 27 *Speakers:
 - Susan Bartlett, Counselor,
 "Kids in the Middle"
 - Bonnie Rudden, Counselor,
 Private Practice

 *Read: Text: Ch.s 3, 10, & 11

- WEEK 7: *Topic: The Impact of Substance Abuse on Family
Oct 4 Development.
 *Speakers:
 - Mike Powers, Substance Abuse Counselor,
 Hyland Center
 - Susan Wynne, Director of Counseling,
 Maryville University
 - Rob Weiss, Substance Abuse Counselor,
 Impact

 *Read: Text: Ch.s 12 & 15

- WEEK 8: *Oral Presentations and Wrap Up!
Oct 11