

**PSY5190 COUPLES AND FAMILY COUNSELING 1**  
**Reformed Theological Seminary—Orlando**  
Fall 2022  
2 Credit Hours

**Instructor**

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**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: By appointment

**Class meeting time**

August 24—November 30

Wednesdays 2pm–4pm

**Course Description**

This course provides a broad understanding of marriage and family theories and a systemic approach to conceptualizing and counseling with families and couples. Students will gain an acquaintance with the emergence of systems counseling as a discipline within the field of psychology, with a broad introduction to the study of the family as a culturally influenced, ongoing, interacting social system and with an awareness of central conceptual and therapeutic issues of importance to counselors.

**Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)**

Students will demonstrate comprehension of the following:

CO1. History and development of marriage, couple, and family counseling (2.F.5.b)

CO2. Understand General Systems Theory and its relation to counseling (2.F.5.b)

CO3. Become familiar with concepts and techniques of established models of family therapy. (2.F.5.b)

CO4. Understand transgenerational dynamics and family system transactions (2.F.5.b)

CO5. Understand the Family Lifecycle (2.F.5.b)

CO6. Examine his/her family experience through genogram construction (2.F.5.b)

**Methods of Instruction**

This course will be taught in the following format: traditional classroom using lecture, small group interaction, and video observation.

**Assignments (Student Performance Evaluation Criteria)**

A1. **Required reading (20%)**

A2. **Quizzes (20%)**

A3. **Three-generational genogram (40%)**

A4. **Family sculpture and presentation (20%)**

**A1. Required Reading**

Record the percentage of the required reading you completed by Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 p.m. on your Canvas account.

**A2. Quizzes**

There will be a weekly quiz given beginning on August 24<sup>th</sup> and ending November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The quizzes will be based on the required reading for the lecture topic being covered in class that day, and the material covered in the class that day. The quizzes will consist of 5 multiple-choice questions. The quizzes will be available to take on Canvas at 4:00pm after each class. Quizzes must be completed by 11:59pm the following Tuesday. There is no make up for missed quizzes. No outside resources (including people) may be used while taking the quizzes. You are on your honor to abide by this requirement.

### **A3. Three-Generation Family Genogram**

Construct your three-generation family genogram and write an interpretation of it.

1. You will use a free software program called Genopro to construct your three-generation family genogram. You will receive instructions about how to install this software on your computer. Make sure this software is installed prior to the first class and bring this computer to the first class where instructions will be provided on how to use it to construct a genogram.
2. In constructing your genogram, use 3 or more “layers” to underscore different family information. Additional layers can be added, if desired, to highlight particular family dynamics. The three or more layers will make the genogram clearer to read and help in the interpretative process. Your genogram must be constructed using the proper symbols and structure. Directions for the proper genogram construction can be found in the software ~~program, and program and~~ will be reviewed in the first day of class.
  - a. The first layer should be a three-generation family tree (paternal and maternal grandparents; parents; yourself) with demographic information. If you are or were married, do not include your present or former spouse’s family of origin.
  - b. The second layer should be the same three generation family tree but with the addition of descriptive information for the most significant family members.
  - c. The third layer should be the same three-generation family tree as the first layer with the addition of relationship descriptors.
3. Write an interpretation of your family genogram. Use the interpretative categories described in the McGoldrick & Gerson text listed below to help you identify and highlight family patterns and issues in your genogram. A summary of this interpretive format will be discussed in class, and an outline of the interpretative categories can be downloaded from Canvas. Use this outline to write your paper. Your responses should be written in bullet point form. Use APA format for the paper.
4. Electronic copies of your genogram file (“your name.gno”; e.g., JillSmith.gno) and your interpretation should be uploaded to your Canvas account by September 14 by 11:59pm.

### **A4. Family Sculpture and Presentation**

The goal of the family sculpture is to create a sculpture that is a figurative depiction encapsulating the relational dynamics of your family at a formative time frame in your life. This sculpture allows you to reflect on your family system’s characteristics and may give you a different perspective on your family system and your role in your family. There is no right or wrong way to do a family sculpture. Use your imagination.

1. Decide what family you want to sculpt. You may sculpt your family of origin, or, if you are married and have children, your family of procreation.
2. Pick a time period on which to focus (e.g., your preteen years; your junior year in high school; when your children were four and six years old, etc.)
3. Select objects and/or pictures for all persons/things you wish to include. Objects and/or pictures should be made for all persons and things who or which had/have a significant effect on the family. Think in terms of shape, size, color, texture, etc.
4. Arrange the objects and/or pictures so that they express the past family relationships and dynamics as you understand them now. Consider the meaning of the size, shape, color, texture, and proximity of the objects and/or pictures to one another. When you are satisfied with the arrangement, secure them in place. (Note: a piece of paper with a few magazine clips or photographs attached to it does not meet the level of creativity expected for this project.) Photographs of example sculptures will be provided.

5. This sculpture will not be turned in, but will be presented to the class per the course schedule. You will have 20 minutes for your presentation.
6. Address the following in your presentation:
  - a. Identify the time period in your life that is represented by your sculpture.
  - b. Identify who or what the objects and/or pictures are (age, sex, relationship to you, why included), why you arranged them as you did, the meaning of any connecting or boundary lines, and any special uses of size, shape, color, texture, proximity.
  - c. Describe the family dynamics depicted in your sculpture.
  - d. What were the roles of your family members?
  - e. How did you respond to these dynamics during the time period of the scene?
  - f. How has your response to these dynamics changed since then (if applicable), and/or how would like to see it changed?
  - g. How have you sought to “honor your father and mother,” and love the other family members depicted in your paper sculpture.

### **A5. Course Evaluation**

Course evaluations are crucial for assessing and improving the MAC program. Therefore, each MAC course includes an assignment to complete an anonymous online course evaluation. You will verify whether you have completed the evaluation through a quiz in Canvas. This will not count toward your grade, but it is necessary for successful completion of the course.

### **Required Course Materials:**

M1. Nichols, M. P. (2019). *The essentials of family therapy* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0135168097

Taibbi, R. (2015). *Doing family therapy: Craft and creativity in clinical practice* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). NY: Guilford. ISBN: 978-1462521203

### **Optional Materials:**

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), New York: W. W. Norton. This text is available on reserve in the library.

## **Course Process and Schedule**

### **Course Process**

Part 1: Introduction to Family Therapy. The initial block of lecture material will consider the place of systemic counseling among major approaches to psychology and the emergence of marriage and family (systemic) counseling as a discipline.

Part 2: Systems Theory. This block will examine macro (general) systems theory, concepts emerging from it and its application to families, particularly to changes in a typical family life cycle. Class exercises will allow students to practice skills related to learning about and changing relationship systems.

Part 3. Transgenerational transmission. This section of the course will examine transgenerational transmission of individual and family functioning patterns. Video and class examples will be used to acquaint students with the construction of a therapeutic genogram. Each student will construct a personal family genogram (A2) and present a family sculpture in class (A3).

Part 4. Major approaches. Family systems are complexly organized and amenable to a wide variety of approaches to promoting change. This portion of the course will review selected major theoretical

approaches and their strategies for promoting change. Class exercises will practice skills and interventions related to various theories.

Part 5. The final portion of the course will review an initial family therapy session.

### Course Schedule

Lecture	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignments Due	CACREP Standard
L1	8/24	Constructing and interpreting a genogram		Quiz 1	(2.F.5.b)
L2	8/31	Introduction Emergence of Systemic Counseling Systems theory and concepts 1	N. Ch. 1-2 T. Ch. 1-2	Quiz 2	(2.F.5.b)
L3	9/7	Systems theory and concepts 2	N. Ch. 4 T. Ch. 3-4	Quiz 3	(2.F.5.b)
L4	9/14	Systems theory and concepts 3 Family life cycle	T. Ch. 5-6	Quiz 4	(2.F.5.b)
L5	9/21	Family therapy process and techniques	N. Ch. 3 T. Ch. 7	Quiz 5	(2.F.5.b)
L6	9/28	Bowen family system therapy	N. Ch. 5 T. Ch. 8	Quiz 6	(2.F.5.b)
	10/5	Structural family therapy	N. Ch. 7 T. Ch. 9	Quiz 7	(2.F.5.b)
L7	10/12	No Class - Reading Week			
L8	10/19	Experiential family therapies	N. Ch. 8 T. Ch. 10	Quiz 8	(2.F.5.b)
L9	10/26	Internal family systems therapy	T. Ch. 11	Quiz 9	(2.F.5.b)
L10	11/2	Narrative and Solution-focused therapy	N. Ch. 11-13 T. Ch. 12	Quiz 10	(2.F.5.b)
L11	11/9	Family therapy demonstration: Clinical Video	T. Ch. 13-14		(2.F.5.b)
L12	11/16	Presentation of family sculptures		Family Sculpture	(2.F.5.b)
L13	11/30	Presentation of family sculptures		Family Sculpture Reading Quiz	(2.F.5.b)

### Policies and Important Information

**Written Work Format.** All written work must conform to current American Psychological Association (APA) style unless otherwise specified. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online, for example: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html). Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

**Disability Accommodation Policy.** If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor prior to the start of this course. You must

provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. The instructor and student will discuss the available accommodations for the course. If the student with a disability does not disclose that s/he has a disability, then the student is agreeing to take full responsibility for any related consequences that may occur.

**Access to Research Database.** RTS provides MAC students with access to the Ebscohost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library, or from your home computer by following the link below and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/>

**Submission of work.** All assignments should be submitted on the Canvas course webpage.

**Late work.** All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be deducted 1/3 letter grade for each late day.

**Return of work.** All work will be returned to students via Canvas.

### Grading Scale

A (97-100)	B- (86-87)	D+ (75-77)
A- (94-96)	C+ (83-85)	D (72-74)
B+ (91-93)	C (80-82)	D- (70-71)
B (88-90)	C- (78-79)	F (Below 70)

**Attendance Policy.** Regular attendance is expected and required. Excessive absences (more than 1 class meetings) will result in the loss of points equal to one letter grade per absence. If serious illness or an emergency prevents a student from attending any class, please notify the instructor before the class begins. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any materials handed out or presented during the missed class from a classmate.

**Class Participation.** Students are expected to participate in all components of the class. Each student is expected to read all the assigned materials in advance for each class and have prepared written comments and questions for class discussion. Contributions should reflect knowledge of the reading assignments or other sources.

### Student Learning Outcome Table

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in the Course Schedule of this syllabus.

Course Objective	Lecture(s)	Material(s)	Assignment(s)	CACREP Standard(s)
CO1. History and development of marriage, couple, and family counseling	L2	M1, M2	A1, A2	2.F.5.b
CO2. Understand General Systems Theory and its relation to counseling	L2-4	M1, M2	A1, A2	2.F.5.b
CO3. Become familiar with basic concepts and techniques of	L6-10	M1, M2	A1, A2	2.F.5.b

established models of family therapy.				
CO4. Understand transgenerational dynamics and family system transactions	L3-4, 6	M1, M2, M3	A1, A2	2.F.5.b
CO5. Understand the Family Lifecycle	L4	M1, M2	A1, A2	2.F.5.b
CO6. Examine his/her family experience through genogram construction	L1	M1, M2	A3	2.F.5.b
CO7. Demonstrate skills pertinent to family	L5, 11-13	M1, M2, M3	A3, A4	2.F.5.b



### Course Objectives Related to MAC\* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: PSY5190 Couples and Family Counseling 1

Professor: Scott Coupland

Campus: Orlando

Date: Fall 2022

<b>MAC* Student Learning Outcomes</b> <i>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i>		<b>Rubric</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Minimal</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>	<b>Mini-Justification</b>
<b>Professional Counseling Orientation &amp; Ethical Practice</b>	Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.	Minimal	Framework for understanding family relationships and patterns is presented.
<b>Social &amp; Cultural Diversity</b>	Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.	Minimal	Family theories and their application are addressed in light of cultural groups.
<b>Human Growth &amp; Development</b>	Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas.	Moderate	The family life cycle as a theory of family development is presented.
<b>Career Development</b>	Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making.	None	

<b>Counseling &amp; Helping Relationships</b>	Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans.	Minimal	Models of family therapy and their application are presented.
<b>Group Counseling &amp; Group Work</b>	Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness.	None	
<b>Assessment &amp; Testing</b>	Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.	None	
<b>Research &amp; Program Evaluation</b>	Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling.	Minimal	Readings address research findings related to the efficacy of various family therapy approaches.
<b>Clinical Mental Health Counseling</b>	Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling.	Moderate	Students learn to apply systems-based concepts in working with families.
<b>Integration (Biblical/Theological)</b>	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices.	Minimal	Theological categories are considered in the discussion of system theory and therapies.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Moderate	The genogram and sculpture assignments required students to apply the course material to their lives.