POSTMODERN THERAPIES — P-745
Spring 2008
Room 168
Tuesday 2:15-5pm

Professor: Suzanne M. Coyle, Ph.D.
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Office 238
931-2349
Office Hours: By appointment

Catalogue Description
Philosophical and theoretical foundations of postmodern therapies including solution-focused, narrative, and collaborative therapies and implications for other family therapies.

Course Purpose
This course will explore the paradigm shifts in the marriage and family therapy through postmodern thinking. Philosophical and religious belief systems will be analyzed through the epistemology of postmodern thinkers. The student will examine his/her worldview as affected by postmodernism. After an exploration of postmodern therapeutic approaches, the student will reflect on their impact on his/her theoretical orientation as well as how the field of marriage and family therapy has been impacted by postmodernism.

Course Method
Experiential exercises as well as film clips will introduce each class session whenever possible to enable the student to reflect upon his/her own experiences in a postmodern context. Lecture by the professor will be supported through periodic PowerPoint presentations and class discussion. Videos of master therapists will illustrate the different theoretical approaches. The professor will periodically demonstrate different therapeutic techniques with opportunity for students to practice those techniques through role plays and small groups. Diversity concerns of ethnicity, culture, and spirituality will be emphasized throughout the class.

Student reflection teams will make class presentations as assigned by the professor. These presentations should not repeat basic theoretical tenets already discussed by the professor but demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical model as applied to clinical practice with sensitivity to ethnic/cultural/spiritual issues.

Reading assigned texts and written assignments will support the classroom learning. The written assignments include reflection papers, outline of student
presentation, clinical case, student presentation, and a major theoretical paper or project. Detailed descriptions of the written assignments will be distributed. No exam will be given.

As possible, the course may have guest lecturers in class, conferences calls with postmodern clinicians, and an optional off-campus clinical training. BlackBoard may be utilized in the class as well.
Written Assignments

Reflection papers  The reflection papers (2-3 double-spaced pages) will focus on the interaction between postmodern thinking and the student’s personal-professional world view. Paper #1 (due February 5) will focus on the student’s worldview in response to film vignettes. Paper #2 (due February 12) will focus on Foucault. Paper #3 (due February 26) will focus on social constructionism and Gergen.

Reflection team presentation  The topic for this presentation will be assigned to the group by the professor prior to the presentation. Presentation dates are March 11, April 1, and April 15. The team will address a theoretical concept in a clinical context that clearly demonstrates knowledge of the assigned readings. All students will receive the same grade.

Clinical case  Students will select either a clinical vignette or current client(s) and write a clinical presentation (7-10 double-spaced pages) from either solution-focused, narrative, or collaborative approaches. This assignment can be completed from March 25-April 29.

Major paper/project  A major research paper of 15-20 pages or a project is due on May 6. A one page description/outline of the paper/project will be submitted to the professor on April 1 or as desired.

Class Expectations

Class attendance is mandatory. In an absence due to illness or an emergency, the professor or teaching assistant must be notified either prior to the class or within 24 hours after the class. Absences exceeding the Seminary policy on class attendance as outlined in the student handbook may adversely affect the grade. Some class meeting times may be renegotiated with the class due to the professor’s participation in profession conferences. Class topics may also be renegotiated.

Class participation is an important part of class. Reading and reflection upon the week’s assignment is essential for informed participation. Questions are always welcome and are critical for the learning process.

Grading Guidelines

The final grade is based largely on the written assignments with the assumption that reading the assigned material will support good writing. Exceptional class participation may improve a grade whereas exceptionally poor engagement in class will adversely impact the grade. A grading rubric for each written assignment will be distributed to the class with the detailed description of the written assignment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Reflection papers (5% for each paper)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection team presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical case</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major paper/project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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MFT Standards Met

MFT Core Competencies

In December 2004, American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy developed MFT core competencies that represent the minimum competence for a licensed marriage and family therapist to demonstrate. The core competencies taught in this class are as follows:

Admission to Treatment:
Standard 1.1.1 — Understand system concepts, theories, and techniques that are foundational to the practice of marriage and family therapy.
Standard 1.1.2 — Understand theories and techniques of individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy.
Standard 1.1.4 — Understand the risks and benefits of individual, marital, couple, family, and group psychotherapy.
Standard 1.2.1 — Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics (e.g. gender, age, socioeconomic, status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, larger systems, social context).

Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis:
Standard 2.1.1 — Understand principles of human development; human sexuality; gender development; psychopathology; psychopharmacology; couple processes; and family development and processes (e.g., family, relational, and system dynamics).
Standard 2.1.6 — Understand the strengths and limitations of the models of assessment and diagnosis, especially as they relate to different cultural, economic, and ethnic groups.
Standard 2.3.3 — Apply effective and systemic interviewing techniques and strategies.
Standard 2.3.6 — Assess family history and dynamics using a genogram or other assessment instruments.

Treatment Planning and Case Management:
Standard 3.1.1 — Know which models, modalities, and/or techniques are most effective for presenting problems.
Standard 3.3.1 — Develop, with client input, measurable outcomes, treatment goals, treatment plans, and after-care plans with clients utilizing a systemic perspective.
Standard 3.3.4 — Structure treatment to meet clients’ needs and to facilitate systemic change.
Standard 3.5.3 — Write plans and complete other case documentation in accordance with practice setting policies, professional standards, and state/provincial laws.
Therapeutic Interventions:
Standard 4.2.1—Recognize how different techniques may impact the treatment process.
Standard 4.3.4—Generate relational questions and reflexive comments in the therapy room.
Standard 4.4.1—Evaluate interventions for consistency, congruency with model of therapy and theory of change, cultural and contextual relevance, and goals of the treatment plan.
State MFT Licensure

This course helps meet requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist in Indiana and other states.

Required Readings on Reserve


Supplemental Journals

The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work

Journal of Marital and Family Therapy

Journal of Systemic Therapy

Selected Websites

General

www.california.com
www.masterswork.com

Solution-focused

www.brief-therapy.org
www.sfbta.org
www.meaningmaterrrs.co.uk

Narrative
www.dulwichcentre.com.au
www.narrativetherapychicago.com

Collaborative
www.collaborativetherapy.com
www.harleneanderson.org
Schedule

Foundations of Postmodernism
January 22 — Entering the Postmodern World

January 29 — Philosophical and Religious Reflections on Postmodernism
Reading: Downing — Introduction, pp. 15-29, Chapters 2 and 4

February 5 — Philosophical/Religious (cont.)
Reading: Downing — Chapter 5 and 6; Foucault readings as assigned
DUE: Reflection Paper #1

February 12 — Philosophical/Religious (cont.)
Reading: Gergen
DUE: Reflection Paper #2

February 19 — READING PERIOD

Relational Selves through Solutions, Stories, and Conversations
February 26 — Bridge to Postmodern Therapy
Reading: Beels; Milan systemic in Gehart and Tuttle; Anderson and Gehart, Chapter 6
DUE: Reflection Paper #3

March 4 — Solution-focused Therapy
Reading: O’Connell — Chapters 1-5

March 11 — Solution-focused (cont.)
Reading: O’Connell — Chapters 6, 8-10; Solution-focused in Gehart and Tuttle
DUE: Reflection Team Presentation

March 18 — EASTER RECESS

March 25 — Narrative Therapy
Reading: White — Chapters 1-3

April 1 — Narrative (cont.)
Reading: White — Chapters 4-6; narrative in Gehart and Tuttle
DUE: Reflection Team Presentation
DUE: Proposal for paper/project

April 8 — Collaborative Therapy
Reading: Anderson and Gehart — Preface, Chapters 1-5
April 15 — Collaborative (cont.)
Reading: Anderson and Gehart—Chapters 7-12, 20; collaborative in Gehart and Tuttle
DUE: Reflection Team Presentation

Integrating Theory and Practice
April 22 — Challenges to Postmodern Therapies
Reading: Assigned readings on reserve

April 29 — Implications of Postmodern Therapies for MFT and Large Systems
Reading: Anderson and Gehart, Chapter 24; Coyle
DUE: Deadline for Clinical Case

May 6 — Final Exam Period
DUE: Major Paper/Project