P 770 BASIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Christian Theological Seminary

Fall 2009
Instructor: Matthias Beier, M.Div., Ph.D.
Tuesdays, 2:15 – 5:00 pm
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Catalogue Course Description
A study of the basic research methodologies in individual and marriage and family therapy.

Purpose of the Course
This course will provide a review of research methods applicable in pastoral psychotherapy and marriage and family therapy. Students will develop competency in thinking empirically about the process, effectiveness and outcome of therapy interventions, learn to conceive of ethically responsible and culturally sensitive empirical research designs, use research to inform needs assessment and evidence-based practice, become familiar with program evaluation science, and evaluate and develop their own conceptual and operational understanding of the unique aspect of spirituality in counseling research. The course will introduce concepts and methods of quantitative and qualitative research and familiarize students with basic skills in evaluating research literature.

Licensure and Accreditation Standards

Mental Health Counselor Licensure
This course is designed to meet some of the licensure requirements for Licensed Mental Health Counselor in Indiana. In addition, it meets some of the requirements for Licensed Professional Counselor and/or Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor in other states.

CACREP Course Standards
This class meets the following course content for CACREP:
“8. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION—studies that provide an understanding of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation, including all of the following:
   a. the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession;
   b. research methods such as qualitative, quantitative, single-case designs, action research, and outcome-based research;
   c. statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation;
   d. principles, models, and applications of needs assessment, program evaluation, and the use of findings to effect program modifications;
   e. the use of research to inform evidence-based practice; and
   f. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for interpreting and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation studies.”
Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure
This course meets partial course requirements for marriage and family therapy licensure in Indiana and other states. The multiple choice exams in this class are designed to help prepare the student to take the national licensure exam for marriage and family therapy.

MFT Core Competencies Addressed in this Course:
- Know the extant MFT literature, research, and evidence-based practice (6.1.1)
- Understand research and program evaluation methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative, relevant to MFT and mental health services (6.1.2)
- Understand the legal, ethical, and contextual issues involved in the conduct of clinical research and program evaluation (6.1.3)
- Recognize opportunities for therapists and clients to participate in clinical research (6.2.1)
- Read current MFT and other professional literature (6.3.1)
- Use current MFT and other research to inform clinical practice (6.3.2)
- Critique professional research and assess the quality of research studies and program evaluation in the literature (6.3.3)
- Determine the effectiveness of clinical practice and techniques (6.3.4)
- Evaluate knowledge of current clinical literature and its application (6.4.1)

Course Requirements
1. Class attendance is required and essential for building cumulative knowledge and skills necessary to understand and apply research concepts and methods. In case an absence from a class period is unavoidable due to illness, contact the instructor by e-mail prior to class. In case the absence is due to an emergency, contact the instructor within 24 hours of the absence. Typically, if a student misses more than two class meetings, the course grade normally received will be reduced by one full letter grade for each additional absence. According to Seminary policy, no student may receive credit for a course if she or he misses more than 25% of the class sessions.
2. Thoughtful and constructive participation in class discussion reflective of the required reading assignments and in response to questions from the instructor or peers. Participation will include individual and group work. (10% of final grade)
3. Class Presentation: Each student will make one 10-minute presentation to the class on one of the required or recommended readings of a day. Sign up will occur on the first day of class. A 1-2 page written summary of the presentation is due on the date of the presentation to the instructor and each student. (20% of final grade)
4. Midterm Exam: in-class multiple choice and essay exam assessing grasp of key concepts and ideas of research and required readings to date. (30% of final grade)
5. Final Exam: 15-20 page, double-spaced paper. (40% of final grade)
The final paper should develop a hypothetical research proposal on a clinically relevant topic of your choice and a research strategy utilizing adequate methods.
The process for completing the final paper will proceed in two steps:
STEP I: Finalize the research topic by week 8 (Oct. 27) and present a written 2-3 page topic proposal in class for peer review in small groups. The topic should briefly
address all elements of a research design, indicate any ethical and cultural aspects of the design and show integration of psychological and spiritual concerns.

STEP II: By Dec. 15 (week 14): The final research design is due; it should contain all standard elements of a research design, whether quantitative or qualitative, including the following: research question and/or research hypothesis, literature review, research method, sample, ethical issues, informed consent form, cultural issues, data collection procedures, method of data analysis, timetable, qualifications and experience of researcher/research team, conjectured theological and therapeutic implications of different outcomes.


Class Methods

The overall teaching methodology of this course integrates didactic lectures, class discussion, student presentations, peer review of work in progress in small groups, readings, written assignments, and exams.

Didactic lectures: The instructor will lecture based on the assigned readings and additional material related to each class session’s topic using PowerPoint presentations.

Class discussion: Class discussion is an important part of this class. Understandings of readings, clarification of concepts, and engaging possibilities of applying the material are greatly facilitated through discussion. It may take place in the class as a whole or in small groups.

Class presentation: Presentations will highlight the main point of a required or recommended reading for the day’s class, clarify key concepts introduced and, whenever possible, illustrate the reading with an example from your own practice or experience. The instructor may engage the presenter in dialogue around the material during the presentation. The class will have 5 minutes to respond and ask the presenter questions after each presentation.

Small group peer review: Serves to review initial research proposals and to give and receive feedback for further development of the research design.

Readings: Reading is critical to mastery of the material in this course. Student reading groups are encouraged in order to help the understanding of any difficult reading.

Written assignments: Written assignments include a summary of one’s own presentation to the class, an initial research proposal topic due at week 8, and the term paper for the final exam.

Exams: The midterm exam will consist of a mixed multiple choice and essay exam assessing grasp of key concepts and ideas of research and required readings to date. The final exam will consist of a final 15-20 page research design developed over the course of the class.
Grading Rubric
Grades will be determined by the number of points accumulated out of a total of 100 possible points.

A: 93 - 100 points  
A-: 90 - 92 points  
B+: 87 - 89 points  
B: 83 – 86 points  
B-: 80 – 82 points  
C+: 76 – 79 points  
C: 72 – 75 points  
C-: 68 - 71 points  
B+: 87 - 89 points  
B: 83 – 86 points  
B-: 80 – 82 points  
C+: 76 – 79 points  
C: 72 – 75 points  
C-: 68 - 71 points  
B+: 87 - 89 points  
B: 83 – 86 points  
B-: 80 – 82 points  
C+: 76 – 79 points  
C: 72 – 75 points  
C-: 68 - 71 points

Class Schedule

MODULE 1
Week 1 Sep. 1  Introduction: An Overview
No Required Reading
Further Recommended Reading:

MODULE 2
PASTORAL COUNSELING RESEARCH: DISTINCTIONS, APPROACHES, CONCEPTS

Week 2 Sep. 8  Distinguishing levels of experience in research: Psychological, Existential and Spiritual Dimensions
Required Reading: Presenter 1: ______________ Presenter 2: ______________
Beier, M., pp. 10-13, 33-130, 131-135: biological, psychosocial, existential-philosophical and theological dimensions of human experience; the symbolic process; searching for criteria for the health or sickness of religion: for example, the dynamic of fear vs. trust
Further Recommended Reading:
VandeCreek, Bender & Jordan, pp. i-xiv, 1-19
Week 3 Sep. 15 Generating Worthwhile Research Ideas

**Required Reading:** Presenter 1:_________________ Presenter 2:_________________

Asmundson, Norton & Stein, Ch. 1, 2 & 3.
Beier, M., 145-173, 209-271

**Further Recommended Reading:**
VandeCreek, Bender & Jordan, Ch. 3
Rubin, Ch. 1

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**MODULE 3**
INTRODUCTION TO QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Week 4 Sep. 22 Stages & Concepts of Research Design; Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research

**Required Reading:** Presenter 1:_________________ Presenter 2:_________________

Asmundson, Norton & Stein, Ch. 4 &53.

**Further Recommended Reading:**
Rubin, Ch. 2
Sprenkle et.al. Ch. 1: Sprenkle & Piercy, Pluralism, Diversity, and Sophistication in Family Therapy Research, pp. 3-18.
Sprenkle et.al., pp. 19-37: Ch. 2, McWey, James, & Smock, A Graduate Student Guide to Conducting Research in Marriage and Family Therapy.

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**MODULE 4**
QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Week 5 Sep. 29 Quantitative Methods

**Required Reading:** Presenter 1:_________________ Presenter 2:_________________

Asmundson, Norton & Stein, Ch. 7 & 8.

**Further Recommended Reading:**
VandeCreek, Bender & Jordan, Chs. 4-6, pp. 33-57
Rubin, Ch. 11
Week 6  
Oct. 6  
Quantitative Methods (cont.)

**Required Reading:**  Presenter 1:_______________ Presenter 2:_______________

Asmundson, Norton & Stein, Ch. 9 & 10.


**Further Recommended Reading:**


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Oct. 13  
READING WEEK – NO CLASS

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**MODULE 5**

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Week 7  
Oct. 20  
Qualitative Methods

**Required Reading:**  Presenter 1:_______________ Presenter 2:_______________

Asmundson, Norton & Stein, pp.87-89.


**Further Recommended Reading:**

VandeCreek, Bender & Jordan, Chs. 8-12, pp. 71-121

Rubin, Ch. 10

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Week 8  
Oct. 27  
Qualitative Methods (cont.): Grounded Theory; Phenomenology

**Required Reading:**  Presenter 1:_______________ Presenter 2:_______________

Sprenkle et.al., pp. 41-62: Ch. 3, Echevarria-Doan & Tubbs, “Let’s Get Grounded: Family Therapy Research and Grounded Theory.”

**Further Recommended Reading:**

Sprenkle et.al., pp. 63-84: Ch. 4, Dahl & Boss, “The Use of Phenomenology for Family Therapy Research: The Search for Meaning.”

Sprenkle et.al., pp. 85-99: Ch. 5, Piercy & Hertlein, “Focus Groups in Family Therapy Research.”

Sprenkle et.al., pp. 100-118: Ch. 6, Mendenhall & Doherty, “Action Research Methods in Family Therapy.”

[2-3 p. Initial Research Topic Due]
MODULE 6
ETHICAL & CULTURAL ISSUES OF COUNSELING RESEARCH

Week 9  Nov. 3  Culture & Ethics in Mental Health Research
Required Reading:  Presenter 1:__________________ Presenter 2:__________________
Matsumoto, D., pp. 1-32.
Asmundson, Norton & Stein, Ch. 6.
Further Recommended Reading:
Psychoanalytic Dialogues, 10, 231-245.
Young, J. L. et. al. (2003). The Integral Role of Pastoral Counseling by African-American Clergy in Community Mental Health. Psychiatric Services 54(5), 688-692

MODULE 7
CASE STUDIES; OUTCOME & PROCESS RESEARCH

Week 10  Nov. 10  Case Studies
Required Reading:  Presenter 1:__________________ Presenter 2:__________________
Further Recommended Reading:

Week 11  Nov. 17  Outcome Research
Required Reading:  Presenter 1:__________________ Presenter 2:__________________
Further Recommended Reading:
Rubin, Ch. 4
Sprenkle et.al., pp. 297-317; Ch. 16, Lyness, Walsh, & Sprenkle, “Clinical Trials in Marriage and Family Therapy Research.”

Midterm Exam


Nov. 23-29 THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 12 Dec. 1 Process Research

Required Reading: Presenter 1:________________Presenter 2:____________________


Further Recommended Reading:


MODULE 8
PROGRAM EVALUATION

Week 13 Dec. 8 Program Evaluation Studies

Required Reading: Presenter 1:________________Presenter 2:____________________


Week 14 Dec. 15 Final Exam Final Paper Due
READING LIST

Required books and the first three listed recommended books are available for purchase at the CTS bookstore. All articles and book chapters will be posted on the course web page on InsideCTS in the section Course Documents.

Required Readings:

Books


Book Chapters:


Journal Articles


**Key Research Literature Resources:**

Full Text Electronic library resources at CTS Library: [http://www.cts.edu/Library](http://www.cts.edu/Library)

**Journals** (some are available full text electronically through the CTS library):
- American Journal of Pastoral Counseling
- Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion
- Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology
- Journal of Counseling Psychology
- Journal of Pastoral Counseling
- Journal of Religion and Health
- Pastoral Care and Counseling
- Pastoral Psychology
- Pastoral Sciences
- Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion
- The Qualitative Report

**Recommended Readings:**

**Books**

**Additional Books:**


**Book Chapters:**


Jones, E. E. (2000). *Therapeutic Action: A Guide to Psychoanalytic Therapy.* Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson. Ch. 1, Modes of Therapeutic Action (pp. 1-35); Ch. 5, Interaction Structures in the Transference-Countertransference (pp. 157-208); Ch. 7, Studying Psychoanalytic Therapy (pp. 251-270); Ch. 8, Case Studies (pp. 271-313); Appendix: The Psychotherapy Process Q-set (PQS) Coding Manual (pp. 315-361).


**Journal Articles**


