

TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL

**The Chapel
Akron, Ohio
Fall 2009**

CM 6572 Marriage and Family Counseling

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Thursdays 5:30-9 pm
September 3-December 10**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help the student acquire an understanding of marriage and family counseling theories and techniques. A special emphasis is placed on the importance of a theology of marriage that is biblically sound and practical in application. This course provides an experiential and cognitive introduction basic to any counseling setting or helping relationship with marriage and family counseling in a pastoral setting as the focus. We will do an overview of systems theory and its implication for problem formulation, maintenance, and resolution. We will discuss family communication, interaction, structures, boundaries and family development. We will examine premarital counseling, divorce, remarriage and blended families. The goal is to prepare ministry staff who will do pastoral counseling. The course focuses on Biblical and theological reflection in identifying and dealing with marital and family difficulties from a ministry perspective. Finally, the course will discuss the role of the church in matters related to the family and marriage. (3 credit hours)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are stated in terms of learning outcomes. Following this course, the student will:

- 1. Achieve a greater awareness of personal spiritual formation as both a personal necessity and goal of Christian counseling.**
- 2. Develop a biblical, theological framework within which to understand marriage, family, divorce, remarriage and blended family issues.**
- 3. Extend the basic counseling skills course to develop particular pastoral counseling skills related to marriage and family care.**

4. Critically evaluate various marriage and family counseling theories and work to develop a personal working paradigm of how to help others experiencing marital and family conflicts.
5. Gain awareness of root causes, generational influences, symptoms and remedies for addressing typical marriage and family issues.
6. Learn to evaluate marital and family struggles and develop appropriate solutions consistent with a pastoral setting.
7. Apply a comprehensive yet general pastoral care model to a variety of marital and family counseling situations.
8. Apply the principles of the solution-focused and hope-focused (Worthington) approach to marital and family counseling.
9. Understand the components of a personal, marital and lifestyle case history.
10. Review how one makes informed decisions about referrals to mental health professionals.

TEXTBOOKS

REQUIRED: (Assigned readings throughout the term)

House, H. Wayne. (1990). *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Sande, Ken (2004). *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Stahmann, Robert F. & Hiebert, William J. *Pre-marital & Re-marital Counseling. The Professional's Handbook*. (1997). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Inc.

Worthington, Everett L. (1999). *Hope-focused marriage counseling: A guide to brief therapy*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

OPTIONAL:

Adams, Jay E. (1980). *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library (Zondervan Publishing House).

Collins, Gary R. (1993). *The Biblical basis of Christian counseling for people helpers*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.

Gurman, Alan S. & Jacobson, Neil S. (2002). *Clinical Hand book of Couple Therapy (3rd Ed.)*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press

METHODOLOGY

Didactic lecture and small discussion and pastoral counseling skill practice groups will be employed in class sessions. Small group exercises involving role plays and case studies serve to apply the lecture and discussion ideas. Additional articles will be assigned during the term. Students will do outside reading and writing as part of the classroom experience.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

1. Read the assigned textbooks and type a three to four page critique of each required book. These books have been selected to challenge each student in their own personal and spiritual development. The critique must include key insights, personal relevance, and implications for yourself in your role as a pastoral counselor and the people you work with. See below for due dates on Text Papers
2. Students will compile a personal genogram (3 generations) and a personal lifestyle inventory (one of two forms). This process allows you to understand the intergenerational influences of your own family of origin, personal developmental history and marriage (if applicable). The book critiques and personal lifestyle inventory papers will be due as assigned below and contribute 35% of the course grade.
3. Interview (either in person or by phone) one pastor in your locale. Use the interview guide provided below or create your own:
 - a. Name of pastor and church. Ask the following:
 - b. How much marital and/or family counseling do you do per week on average? What are the typical concerns presented in marital/family counseling?
 - c. What is your church's practice on pre-marital, marital and re-marital counseling? Does your church have a marriage mentoring program?
 - d. What resources do you most often use in your ministry role as counselor?
 - e. Describe your referral practices. How do you decide to refer? To whom do you refer?
 - f. What is your training in counseling?
 - g. Write up the results of this survey in a three to four page paper along with your subjective view of the interview. This paper is due by week 10 and contributes 20% of the course grade. **STUDENTS WILL MAKE A BRIEF 10 MINUTE ORAL PRESENTATION OF THEIR FINDINGS IN CLASS.**
4. Complete assigned readings (to be announced) by their due date and be prepared for discussion in class. Reading of the articles will largely be on the honor system.

5. The text and other assigned readings should be done prior to class so that students are prepared to enter into the class discussions and related small group exercises.
6. Four objective quizzes will assess the student’s understanding of the counseling models, lectures, texts, assigned readings, theological perspectives and the specific marriage and family helping techniques. The format of the quizzes is primarily multiple-choice and short answer questions. Quizzes will contribute 25% of the total grade.
7. A prevailing assumption in this class is that effective counselors: (1) engage in the practice of counseling, (2) are open to feedback from others regarding their work, and (3) incorporate feedback into subsequent work. Thus, attendance at all classes is expected. Since attendance and active participation are so critical in this course experience, the assigned grade for this aspect of the course will comprise 20% of the final grade.

Summary:	Text reviews and Lifestyle paper	35%
	Pastoral interview/paper	20%
	Quizzes	25%
	Attendance/participation/skills	<u>20%</u>
		100%

SESSIONS

1. Attend each scheduled class period. Please bring your Bible to each class.
2. Present the results of your pastoral interview project to the class and professor. These will take place on a scheduled basis.
3. Be actively involved in small group discussions and role plays dealing with the materials from the lectures, texts and additional readings.

Week	Date	Reading	Quiz/Due Schedule
1	9/3/09	Introduction House 9-70	
2	9/10/09	House 73-147	
3	9/17/09	House 151-212	Quiz #1
4	9/24/0	House 216-267	Text Critique 1 due
5	10/1/09	Worthington pp ix-71	Quiz #2
6	10/8/09	Worthington pp75-127	
7	10/15/09	Worthington pp 128-194	Quiz #3
8	10/22/09	Worthington pp 195-284	Text Critique 2 due
9	10/29/09	Sande 1-73	
10	11/5/09	Sande 75-137	Lifestyle & Interview
	Paper due		
11	11/12/09	Sande 201-297	Text Critique 3 due
12	11/19/09	Stahman ch 1-5	
	11/26/09	NO CLASS THANKSGIVING	
13	12/3/09	Stahman ch 6-11	Text Critique 4 due
14	12/10/09	Final Review - Class Debriefing	Quiz #4

NOTE: (Syllabus is subject to revision. Class presentations will be scheduled.)