CO 614: FAMILY SYSTEMS THEORY  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary–Charlotte  
Professor: Vickey L. Maclin, PsyD  
Summer 2014  
July 14-18, 2014

CONTACT INFORMATION:  
Professor: Vickey L. Maclin, PsyD  
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office hours: before or after class 1/2-hour, or by appointment  
snail-mail: P.O. Box 2102; Chesapeake, VA 23327

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
This course is intended to introduce students to family systems theory and the application of the various family systems models to counseling. A number of theoretical models will be reviewed and students will gain knowledge of each model’s assumptions, methods, strengths, and weaknesses. Additionally each model will be evaluated in relation to various biblical/theological understandings of the purpose and functioning of families.

RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION STATEMENT:  
Article 3: To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry. The Church and the seminary share the goal of seeing knowledge, skills and attitudes integrated in the person who ministers. Both in traditional degree programs and in continuing education, a combination of careful training and supervised experience in ministry are educational practices essential to achieving that goal.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CURRICULUM:  
CO614 Family Systems Theory, relates to the broader MACC in the following ways:

1. It builds on theory and knowledge gained about individuals and their families from courses including CO610 (Advanced Developmental Psychology), CO500 (Introduction to Counseling), and CO6715 (Psychopathology) by providing basic understanding of systems theory. It enhances the individual perspective of these courses by providing theory and knowledge about family systems models of psychotherapy, and provides students with a context in which to develop understanding of how these apply to assisting clients with presenting issues.

2. It prepares students for their clinical training (CO867, CO868 and CO869) by providing them with models and instruments of family therapy, and the rationales behind them, so that when they enter into practice with clients presenting for treatment, they have models which they can implement to assist these clients with presenting issues. CO614 is a prerequisite for both the Family Therapy course as well as the Marital Therapy course.

3. It provides the content students are required to master in order to become licensed professional counselors and/or licensed marriage and family therapists, and contributes to the students’ ability to meet the curricular requirements for licensure, which is one of the key distinctives of the MACC degree at GCTS.
COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. To gain an understanding of the history and evolution of family systems theory.
2. To understand assumptions, terminology, and therapeutic approaches of the major family systems theories.
3. To critically evaluate each theory with particular emphasis on the interaction of biblical/theological concepts with each theory’s stated or implied views about individual and family functioning.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Successful completion of the course will focus on: class attendance, reading, written evaluation of the readings, a class presentation, and a final exam. All writing assignments should be completed in APA style.

1. REQUIRED TEXT READING: (15% of final grade-50 points)

The following three texts constitute the required reading assignment:


After completing the required reading, each student will need to submit a double-spaced, 1000 to 1500 word reaction paper (4-5 pages in length with 1-inch margins). The reaction paper should be a reaction to all three required texts. Be certain that the paper is written as a Reaction and not a Summary of the books. You can offer comments about the books and what was written in them, but you should focus the paper on a reaction to what was written in the texts. In this paper, students will discuss what they consider useful/helpful and not useful/helpful about the required reading. It is expected that students will display a good understanding and comprehension of the material.

DUE DATE: This assignment should be submitted electronically on Sakai in the assignment area no later than 11:55 pm on August 16.

2. READING GUIDELINES
To become conversant with the pertinent issues related to family therapy in the counseling field, students are expected to read from a variety of sources to complement areas of understanding. Books may be chosen from the bibliography attached to this syllabus. The student may select other scholarly and clinical sources as long as they are professional references and clearly fall into the categories and issues that are relevant to the course. All readings should be recorded in a log that will become an annotated bibliography. Readings should be selected from the following sources:
1. The brief bibliography attached to this syllabus or the more extended bibliographies found in
the required reading textbooks.
2. Journals and periodicals in the fields of professional, clinical, or Christian counseling as well as marriage and family therapy.
3. Literature of relevant, functional, and applicable value provided these sources reflect obvious significance to family therapy issues in counseling.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: (15% of final grade-50 points)
Students are expected to do an annotated bibliography of additional readings from materials referenced in the required reading, and/or students may choose books/articles related to family systems from other sources. Students may also view video materials of sufficient depth and relevance. After completing these readings, students will be required to submit a double-spaced, 800 to 1000 word (3-4 pages) annotated bibliography that will critically analyze the additional readings. Must read a minimum of 700 pages to satisfy this requirement.

The student will include the following components in the annotated bibliography, using APA style format with 1-inch margins:
1. Author(s), title of the book, chapter, or journal article, publisher and year of publication
2. Number of pages read by source (total pages read should also be tallied on first page)
3. Brief summary of the central ideas and concept presented. Journal articles can be summarized in a paragraph (at least 200 words), and books can be summarized in one-half to one page, typed double-spaced.
4. If the resource was a videotape, indicate a page number equivalency (1 hour = 33 pages; 6 hour maximum).

Grading will be as follows:
A = 700+ pages read
B = 630-699 pages read
C = 560-629 pages read
D = 450-599 pages read
DUE DATE: This assignment should be submitted on Sakai electronically in the assignment area no later than 11:55 pm on August 23.

3. CLASS PRESENTATION: (25% of final grade-100 points)
Students are encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of one of the family systems theories through preparation and presentation of class discussion of a selected theory. Presentations will be done in groups of 3-4 students per presentation. Students will sign-up for their top three choices of theories the first day of class and final group assignments will be made by the instructor and communicated via email the first evening after class. Half the presentations will be done on Thursday, July 17 and half will be done on Friday, July 18. The presentations should be for about 20 to 25 minutes. One person from each group should email the group’s presentation to Dr. Maclin no later than 5 pm the day before their presentation is scheduled. The presentations will be uploaded to Sakai for class access. The presentation should include: a bibliography of significant writings, a brief history of the theory, and how the theory could be used in the context of Christian counseling. Students are encouraged to be strong “advocates” for their theory and be creative with their presentation. The presenters are
encouraged to engage the class in a lively discussion about their model. Theories from which students may choose are the following:

1. Bowenian family therapy
2. Strategic family therapy
3. Structural family therapy
4. Object Relations/Psychodynamic family therapy
5. Experiential family therapy
6. Solution-focused family therapy
7. Cognitive-Behavioral family therapy
8. Narrative family therapy
9. Play therapy-family therapy
10. Behavioral family therapy
11. Gestalt family therapy
12. Family therapy related to gender, culture, economic class and race

NON COUNSELING STUDENTS:
Non-counseling students may opt out of the presentation of a family systems theory, and instead prepare a research paper on the relevance and application of systems theory to the local church. This paper will be 8-10 pages, written in APA format, double spaced, and must include at least 5 professional references.

DUE DATE: The paper should be submitted via an email attachment of a word document to Dr. Maclin (vmaclin@gordonconwell.edu) by August 30.

4. ATTENDANCE: (10% of final grade-50 points)
Attendance for all class sessions is mandatory. If you are unable to attend all class sessions then the student should contact the instructor and arrange for possible make-up assignments.

5. FINAL EXAM: (35% of final grade-150)
There will be one final exam that students will complete while being proctored. Students should obtain a Proctor and that person should contact Anna Gruntz when they are ready to take the exam, if they will be taking it on campus. If the student is taking the exam off campus their proctor should contact Dr. Maclin (vmaclin@gordonconwell.edu) to receive the username and password. The exam will be available on Sakai by August 1 and should be completed by 11:55 on August 31. The exam will cover material from the texts for the class, as well as material from the class presentations. During the class students will be informed of information that should be included in their study time. NO STUDY GUIDE will be given—this information will be communicated each class period, so students should be certain to note this information when it is mentioned during class.

DUE DATE: September 5, 2014 submitted electronically in the Sakai after proctor opens the exam. NON-COUNSELING students should have proctor contact the instructor to be sent the exam via email and the Proctor Sheet.

GRADING OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS
Assignments submitted late will be penalized 1-point for each day the assignment is late. Excessive or insufficient length will be penalized a letter grade per page over/under limits. Failure to use APA format will be penalized up to one letter grade, depending on the errors.
Assistance with correct APA format is available online in Counseling Central, under Program Documents (see also http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/). Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offense at GCTS. Please note the guidelines at http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html to avoid committing plagiarism.

ATTENDANCE
The style and format of this course is essentially that of a senior seminar that anticipates maximum class input and reflective discussion from the student. The student is expected to attend all class sessions and participate fully in the classroom experience. Case study presentations and class discussions will be a significant part of the final grade.

GRADING CRITERIA
The final grade will reflect the combined efforts of the student as derived from the following sources:
1. Attendance 10%
2. Annotated Bibliography 15%
3. Required Text Reading 15%
3. Class Presentation 25%
4. Final Exam 35%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment (hrs)</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Time On Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation Preparation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study time for Exam</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

Students will keep a record of time spent on each course-related task, and will submit a final report, via email attachment to vmaclin@gordonconwell.edu. It should be as the one above, with actual hours spent on each task listed in the last column of the table. Please be certain to put your name on your Log sheet when it is submitted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-10:00</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
<td>Cybernetics, social constructionism, post-modernism</td>
<td>Bowen Family Systems Therapy</td>
<td>Introduction to Contemporary Oriented &amp; Postmodern models</td>
<td>Family therapy with racial, ethnic, economic minorities</td>
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<td>10:15-11:00</td>
<td>General systems theory and fundamental concepts of family therapy</td>
<td>Discussion of Systems theory and Biblical perspectives; how to do theological and biblical critique</td>
<td>Object Relations Therapy</td>
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<td>11:15-12:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Family Therapy</td>
<td>Case Presentations &amp; Discussions</td>
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<td>Case Presentations &amp; Discussion</td>
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<td>12:00-1:15</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<td>1:15-2:30</td>
<td>Early models and techniques; communications analysis; Discussion of worldviews of psychology in historical perspective</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychodynamic and Intergenerational models</td>
<td>Structural Family Therapy</td>
<td>Case Presentations &amp; Discussions</td>
<td>Case Presentations &amp; Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45-3:30</td>
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<td>Narrative family therapy</td>
<td>Emotion Family Therapy</td>
<td>Cognitive Behavioral Family Therapy</td>
<td>Systems Theory in the Church</td>
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<td>3:45-4:30</td>
<td>Solution Focused Family Therapy</td>
<td>Experiential Family Therapy</td>
<td>Play Therapy Family Therapy</td>
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</tbody>
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


skills in family therapy (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

**Syllabus Addendum**

**Academic Standards**
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

**ADA Policy**
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

**Cancellation of Class**
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancellation occurs the day of the
scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

**Extension Policy**
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s *Academic Calendar*, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

**Grades**
Grades are posted online within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

**Returned Work**
Work submitted through Sakai will be returned via Sakai since no hard copies will be turned in. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with any hard copy work submitted if you wish to have it returned.