

**SAMPLE ONLY  
NOT CURRENTLY IN USE**

**Nova Southeastern University  
Master of Human Services in Child Protection  
Syllabus**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will focus on the fundamental concepts of family structure and interpersonal family dynamics that impact family functioning including communication and cultural diversity. Examination of the different types of family structures and the complexities associated with the different types. Students will examine the nature of interpersonal conflict, investigate various conflict interventions, analyze, and assessment of conflicts. Utilization and exposure to various conflict assessment tools will introduce the student to aspects of the assessment process. A core theme of the course is the issue of how the scholar/researcher/practitioner links theory to practice. Students will be introduced to the theoretical aspects of family systems functioning and investigate through practice the most effect application of theories introduced consequently, tying theory to practice, it is proposed that “thinking is doing.” Having students practice theoretical applications provides for an opportunity of growth and development that may not be ascertained by a completely didactic experience. Systemic ideas and core principles of family therapy will be discussed. Working and refining skills of interviewing will be essential to the student’s educational process. Major counseling theories will be introduced to the student. This information will be expanded upon using the WEBCT format. Discussions will be substantive in content and allow for open communication amongst members. Students will gain knowledge in counseling and collaborating with families for problem resolution.

**COURSE RATIONALE**

The rapid and dramatic changes and developments in society have altered the way we view family relationships and increased conflict in the family system; as well as the approaches utilized by helping professionals in strengthening and rebuilding families. Having the ability to identify and facilitate increased family functioning is integral in the field of family services. Identification of and facilitation of resource acquisition are necessary in the role of the caseworker. This course will introduce concepts related to the family and issues that may arise in the field (abuse, neglect, substance use/abuse) and the importance of meeting the needs of the family in such a way as to increase the likelihood of service delivery, acquisition, and better family functioning. A clinician’s awareness of cultural variations in families has important application in the treatment process such as recognizing family crisis points, differentiating functional from dysfunctional behavior and treatment goals and intervention which are culturally appropriated. A set of competencies acquired by the clinician in the areas of

interpersonal skills and conflict resolution skills provide families with a greater opportunity for stabilization and empowerment for future problem resolution.

## **II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will be introduced to the different family types (single parents, intact, same sex, blended, and intact) and nuances associated with each. Interactions of the different family styles will be investigated and examined. Commonalities and differences will be explored.
2. Engagement of families involved in difficult situations will be explored and effective communication techniques examined. Strength based interviewing will also be introduced.
3. Techniques and utilizing the basic skills for bridging the interpersonal gaps in families to including communication, listening and assertion skills.
4. Diversity among families including assessing and engaging families of different cultures and ethnicities. Identification and acknowledgement of differences will be discussed and explored in depth. Specific interventions will be discussed in relation to the differences of families, focusing on communication, cultural differences, conflict resolution, and parenting.
5. Using Wehr's conflict map or Wilmot and Hocker's conflict assessment guide, students will explore the different types of conflicts and assess the family strengths and develop solutions to situations from information obtained while doing assessments.
6. Utilizing appropriate techniques for resolving conflicts techniques will be reviewed and those appropriate techniques to help families develop the skills to resolve conflicts.
7. The Student will
  - Have knowledge about the basic theories of family counseling.
  - Understand basic system theories.
  - Understand key components of healthy families.
  - Demonstrate the ability to assess family strengths and weaknesses.
  - Understand family life cycles.
  - Understand the impact of disabilities on families.
  - The impact of divorce and remarriage on family members.
  - Be aware of the differences between families from different cultural, ethnic, and religious groups.
  - Demonstrate the ability to consult and intervene with families.
  - Understand the impact of family violence on family members.
  - Demonstrate and teach structured parenting skills.

## V. COURSE ACTIVITIES

Course activities will include: study of assigned text chapters, on-line study outlines, lecture notes, and lecture supplements. Additional e-reading assignments may accompany selected text chapters.

Regular activities will be posted on the course “Discussion Area” (Bulletin Board). In addition, there will be weekly “live chat” discussions with the instructor and colleagues. Students will communicate with the instructor by e-mail concerning any questions or problems regarding the course.

Students are responsible for applying course information and concepts to assigned work at any time. Technology integration and syllabus designations include the following:

1. E-mail (with or without attachments)
2. Discussion and chat forums
3. READ text reader, online links to reading, digital journals and texts
4. COMPLETE AND SUBMIT assignments to be completed and turned in
5. ATTEND synchronous events to attend online
6. REVIEW assignments for the student to look over for chat, forum, or exams

## VI. REQUIRED MATERIALS

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bolton, R. (1986). *People skills: How to assert yourself, listen to others, and resolve conflicts*. New York, New York: Simon and Shuster.

Nichols, M. P. & Schwartz, R. C., (2004). *Family Therapy Concepts and Methods* (6<sup>th</sup> ed) New York, New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Olson, D. H. & DeFrain, J. (2006). *Marriages and Families: Intimacy, Diversity, and Strengths*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed). Minnesota, Minneapolis: McGraw Hill.

NOTE: Check the course textbook list for updates. <http://www.nsubooks.bkstore.com/>

## III. CALENDAR OF WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS

Week	Topics	Class Activities & Assignments
1	Introduction/Overview of Family Therapy: Thinking Systemically about Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of readings chapters 1-2 from the Family Therapy Book.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will identify and discuss the different theories of family therapy and their perception of the importance of family therapy and what they identify as the most effective means of initiating therapy.</li> <li>• Read the following article:</li> </ul> <p>Miller, R. B., Anderson, S., &amp; Keala, D. K. (2004) Is Bowen theory valid? A review of basic research. <i>Journal of Marital and Family Therapy</i>, 30(4). 453 – 467.</p>
2	Understanding Families discussion of readings Chapters 5-6	<p><b>Discussion of problems in families that have created difficulties. Choose 3 or 4 family situations from your agency and discuss what caused them to be referred for services and intervention strategies.</b></p>
3	Basic techniques and fundamental concepts in Family Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of readings chapters 3-4 from the Family Therapy Book.</li> </ul> <p>Students will look at fundamental concepts and basic therapeutic techniques. Using active listening and interviewing techniques.</p> <p><b>ACTIVITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will identify the steps of the group process and post on the main discussion board how these steps are integral in working with families. What ways do practitioners employ skills with the families that are referred for services? What skills are identified as being needed to effectively develop a rapport with families?</li> </ul>
4	Family Therapy Concept and Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of chapters 1-4</li> <li>• Discussion of chapter 2 in People Skills text</li> </ul>
5	Skills for Bridging the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify, observe and analyze a family's</li> </ul>



		with the families receiving services?
8	Understanding Cultural Diversity and its' impact on family dynamics and interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify characteristics of two different ethnic or cultural groups.</li> <li>• Compare similarities and differences of the two reviewed groups</li> <li>• Discuss values and morals of the groups.</li> <li>• Discuss family dynamics.</li> <li>• Identify strengths of the chosen families</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are required to observe two families of different ethnicity and/or race and compare and contrast including, but not limited to; the values, customs, family expectation, interactions, role etc. of the families.</li> <li>• <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment Due week 9. A paper discussing the two families. (Incorporate information from texts and supplemental sources).</b></li> </ul>
9	Understanding the Nature of Conflict	<p>Class discussion will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the cycle of conflict</li> <li>• Power in Conflict</li> <li>• Wilmot and Hocker Conflict Assessment</li> <li>• Discussion will focus on the Wilmot &amp; Hocker Chapters 2-4.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITY:</b></p> <p><b>Discuss in detail a situation that exemplifies the Cycle of Conflict. Analyze the cycle, discuss the outcome, make recommendations that you would have used to deescalate the situation. (This could be an agency or personal situation)</b></p> <p><b>MAJOR RESEARCH FINAL Due week 12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Find a topic of interest related to families and the child welfare system. Complete an in depth assessment of the causative factors, look at inherent problems, define and formulate solutions.</b></li> </ul>
10	Conflict Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion will focus on assessing and regulating conflicts, and third party intervention in resolving conflicts. Wilmot and Hocker - Chapters 8-10</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and regulation of conflict</li> <li>• Problem Solving Skills</li> <li>• Third Party Interventions in resolving conflicts</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITY:</b>  <b>Post on the discussion board the causes of conflict and ways to alleviate or defer difficult situation. The conflict can be adult to adult, adult to child, child to child, supervisor to subordinate, etc. Look at the various components and analyze the outcomes.</b></p>
11	Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Interpersonal Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will discuss the fundamentals and of process of forgiveness in interpersonal relationships.</li> <li>• Wilmot and Hocker Chapter-10.</li> <li>• Process of Forgiveness</li> <li>• Interpersonal relationship Skills</li> <li>• Present conflict assessment</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITY:</b>  <b>Choose a family from your agency that is either almost completed the program or has completed the program. Using the information provided above Post on the discussion board ways that the family has incorporated some of the concepts.</b></p>
12	Diverse forms of Families	<p>Issues and forms of families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separation</li> <li>• Divorce</li> <li>• Remarriage</li> <li>• Step Parenting</li> <li>• Gay and Lesbian families</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITY: Using one of the above family situations post on the discussion board (using information from selected articles ) identify some of the concerns or issues dealt with by the family and ways the literature suggests to overcome difficulties.</b></p>
13	Report Writing for Families	<p>Case documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review various styles of documentation</li> <li>• Develop a plan(select one) of action based on case studies on pages 24-26 in the Understanding Family text.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTIVITY:</b></p>

14	Case Plan	<p><b>Discuss the documentation style of your agency. Whether formal or informal. Discuss the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the process used by your agency.</b></p> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p><b>Students are to give an oral presentation based on their case plan developed during week 13. The presentation should provide an overview of the problem, intervention strategy, and possible outcome.</b></p>
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#### **IV. DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS and their RUBRICS**

- 20% Paper - Students will be required to observe two families of different ethnicity and/or race and compare and contrast including, but not limited to; the values, customs, family expectation, interactions, roles, etc.
- 20% Paper - Students will be required to prepare and submit an analysis of a family's communication pattern in the context of the assigned reading in the People Skills text in 5-8 pages.
- 40% Final Research Paper - Students will be required to analyze a basic conflict in a family following the conflict assessment guide short version of either Wehr's conflict map (pp. 202, Wilmot & Hocker) or Wilmot and Hocker conflict assessment guide (pp. 204, Wilmot & Hocker). This paper will contain 15-20 pages with concentration on used or proposed intervention.
- 20% Weekly Postings to discussion boards and quizzes

#### **VIII. STANDARDS**

North American Certification Project (NACP) Competencies for Professional Child and Youth Work Practitioners. <http://www.acycp.org/cyc%20competencies%20.pdf>

The Council for Standards in Human Service Education **and the** National Organization for Human Services <http://www.cshse.org/standards.html>

#### **IX. CLASS POLICIES**

- A. Attendance:** Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all class discussions. Students are required to complete all assigned readings and make class presentations on selected assigned readings. This presentation will include a summary of the readings and a set of thought provoking questions to lead class discussions. All late assignments will affect your grade by a letter for each day beyond the due date unless otherwise approved by the instructor.
- B. Plagiarism Policy, Graduate Studies Work** that is submitted for credit must be the original work of the student.
- Assignments that are not the original work of the student are considered plagiarized and in violation of the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility.
  - Plagiarism occurs when another person's work, words, or ideas are represented as one's own without the use of a school-recognized method of citation (e.g., copied from another source such as an author or another student without properly acknowledging the actual writer/author).
  - Plagiarism also occurs when knowingly giving or allowing one's own work to be copied or otherwise duplicated by another for academic credit, or when resubmitting one's own work for academic credit.
  - Additional information pertaining to original work/plagiarism and the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility can be found in the Fischler School of Education and Human Services catalog at [http://www.schoolofed.nova.edu/fgshome/catalog/student\\_policies\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.schoolofed.nova.edu/fgshome/catalog/student_policies_procedures.pdf)

### **Writing Across Curriculum**

- B. This course includes written assignments that make up at least one half of the final course grade.**
- Written assignments can include, but are not limited to, abstracts, bibliographies, case studies, computer programs, essays, journal entries, lesson plans, literature reviews, project proposals, project reviews, reaction papers, research papers, seminar summaries, and technology reports.
- C. Americans With Disabilities Act**
- <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
- Nova Southeastern University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with a disability.
  - The Fischler School's ADA Policies and Procedures, and the necessary forms for requesting disability-related accommodations, can be obtained by contacting the FSEHS Office of Student Judicial Affairs at 954-262-8617 or 1-800-986-3223, ext. 8617, or via e-mail at [seldines@nsu.nova.edu](mailto:seldines@nsu.nova.edu). Undergraduate students should contact the undergraduate disability services representative at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences at 954-262-8405 or 1-800-986-3223, ext. 8405.

- To ensure that reasonable accommodations can be provided in a timely manner, all forms and documentation must be completed and on file in the FSEHS Office of Student Judicial Affairs a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of classes for any given semester. Certain accommodations may involve other professionals and specialists, and therefore, may require considerable time to implement.

D. Last Day to Withdraw from Course

- In order to withdraw from a course it is NOT enough to stop attending class or to inform the instructor of your intention to withdraw.
- Refer to the refund section of the appropriate catalog: Graduate:  
[http://www.schoolofed.nova.edu/fgshome/catalog/student\\_policies\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.schoolofed.nova.edu/fgshome/catalog/student_policies_procedures.pdf)  
Undergraduate:  
<http://www.undergrad.nova.edu/catalog/html/index.cfm?template=9>
- For further assistance, contact your Academic Advisor.

E. Course/Instructor Evaluation

- It is expected that all students will participate in the online Course/Instructor Evaluation at or near the end of the course.
- Notices of Course/Instructor Evaluation access are sent to registered students by NSU email.

**X. GRADING CRITERIA**

A. Grading Rubric <http://www.fgse.nova.edu/gtep/students/gteprubrics.html>

B. Grading Scale:

A	91-100	4.0
B+	86-90	3.5
B	80-85	3.0
C	70-79	2.0
F	No Credit	

C. Course Assignments and their percentage of the final grade

Assignment	%	Due Week #
Class Participation	10	1-14
Family Communication Paper	25	6
Cultural Diversity Paper	25	9
Assessment Paper (major research paper)	35	12
Case Management Plan Presentation	5	14
Total:	100	

## **XI. LIST OF SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

### **A. Books**

Ingoldsby, B., Smith, S. & Miller, J. (2004). *Exploring family theories*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Olson, D., & DeFrain, J. (2006). *Marriages and Families: Intimacy, Diversity, and Strengths*, with PowerWeb Univ of Nebraska- Lincoln.

Skolnick, A., & Skolnick, J. (2003) *Family in transition*. Allyn & Bacon, Boston, MA.

Walsh, F. (2003) *Changing families in a changing world: Reconstructing family normality*. In F. Walsh, Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Guildford Press, New York, N.Y.

### **B. Articles**

#### **IS BOWEN THEORY VALID? A REVIEW OF BASIC RESEARCH**

[Richard B Miller](#), [Shayne Anderson](#), [Davelyne Kaulana Keala](#). [Journal of Marital and Family Therapy](#). Upland: [Oct 2004](#). Vol.30, Iss. 4; pg. 453, 14 pgs

#### **Integrating cultural variables into drug abuse prevention and treatment with racial/ethnic minorities**

[Felipe Gonzalez Castro](#), [Eduardo Hernandez Alarcon](#). [Journal of Drug Issues](#). Tallahassee: [Summer 2002](#). Vol.32, Iss. 3; pg. 783, 28 pgs

#### **ARTICLES BY TOPIC WITH LINK TO ONLINE ACCESS**

(STUDENTS MUST BE ACTIVE IN THE NSU SYSTEM TO ACCESS ARTICLES VIA THE ONLINE LIBRARY)

#### **SUBSTANCE USE/DEPENDENCE ARTICLES**

##### [Integrating cultural variables into drug abuse prevention and treatment with racial/ethnic minorities](#)

Felipe Gonzalez Castro, Eduardo Hernandez Alarcon. Journal of Drug Issues. Tallahassee: Summer 2002. Vol. 32, Iss. 3; p. 783 (28 pages)

##### [Screening and assessing co-occurring disorders](#)

Lee A Underwood, Sally H Falwell. Corrections Today. Lanham: Jun 2002. Vol. 64, Iss. 3; p. 22 (2 pages)

##### [A systems approach to substance abuse identification and intervention for school counselors](#)

Glenn W Lambie, Laurie J Rokutani. Professional School Counseling. Alexandria: Jun 2002. Vol. 5, Iss. 5; p. 353 (7 pages)

##### [Parenting services for families affected by substance abuse](#)

Jane Moore, Norma Finkelstein. Child Welfare. Washington: Mar/Apr 2001. Vol. 80, Iss 2; p. 221 (18 pages)

[Combining child welfare and substance abuse services: A blended model of intervention](#)

Catherine McAlpine, Cynthia Courts Marshall, Nancy Harper Doran. Child Welfare. Washington: Mar/Apr 2001. Vol. 80, Iss. 2; p. 129 (21 pages)

[Effects of court-ordered substance abuse treatment in child protective services cases](#)

Barbara Rittner, Cheryl Davenport Dozier. Social Work. New York: Mar 2000. Vol. 45, Iss. 2; p. 131 (10 pages)

[Parent Training via CD-ROM: Using Technology to Disseminate Effective Prevention Practices](#)

Donald A. Gordon. Journal of Primary Prevention. New York: Winter 2000. Vol. 21, Iss. 2; p. 227

[Evaluating training needs for home-based family therapy: A focus group approach](#)

Jerome F Adams, Peter E Maynard. The American Journal of Family Therapy. New York: Jan-Mar 2000. Vol. 28, Iss. 1; p. 41 (12 pages)

[A directory of programs that work](#)

Anonymous. Corrections Today. Lanham: Aug 1996. Vol. 58, Iss 5; p. 124 (8 pages)

[Preparing practitioners for child welfare practice with substance-abusing families](#)

Tracy, Elizabeth M, Farkas, Kathleen J. Child Welfare. Washington: Jan 1994. Vol. 73, Iss. 1; p. 57

## **DIVERSITY**

[Culturally Diverse Parent-Child and Family Relationships](#)

Edna Comer. Clinical Social Work Journal. New York: Fall 2002. Vol. 30, Iss. 3; p. 331 (5 pages)

[Interprofessional Practice with Diverse Populations](#)

Marcie Parker. Journal of Comparative Family Studies. Calgary: Autumn 2002. Vol. 33, Iss. 4; p. 578 (3 pages)

[Cultural competency as skilled dialogue](#)

Isaura, Barrera Robert M Corso. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education. Austin: Summer 2002. Vol. 22, Iss. 2; p. 103 (11 pages)

[Black mothers/Black sons: A critical examination of the social science literature](#)

Lawson Bush. Western Journal of Black Studies. Pullman: Fall 2000. Vol. 24, Iss. 3; p. 145 (11 pages)

[Gay stepfamilies: A triple-stigmatized group](#)

Roni Berger. Families in Society. New York: Sep/Oct 2000. Vol. 81, Iss. 5; p. 504 (13 pages)

[Social Work Practice with Families: A Diversity Model](#)

Daniel Lai. Family Relations. Minneapolis: Apr 2000. Vol. 49, Iss. 2; p. 229 (1 page)

[Families with daughters, families with sons: Different challenges for family relationships and marital satisfaction?](#)

Inge Seiffge-Krenke. Journal of Youth and Adolescence. New York: Jun 1999. Vol. 28, Iss. 3; p. 325 (18 pages)

[Strengthening Aging Families: Diversity in Practice and Policy](#)

N Jane McCandless. Journal of Comparative Family Studies. Calgary: Autumn 1998. Vol. 29, Iss. 3; p. 607 (2 pages)

[Understanding Diverse Families: What Practitioners Need to Know](#)

Mary Kay DeGenova. Journal of Marriage and the Family. Aug 1997. Vol. 59, Iss. 3; p. 778 (1 page)

C. Journals:

*Journal of Family Issues*  
*Journal of Marriage and Family*  
*Journal of Family Psychology*  
*Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*  
*Journal of Comparative Family Studies*  
*The Journal of Social Psychology*  
*Journal of Counseling and Development*  
*Journal of Family Issues*  
*Families in Society*  
*Journal of Family Violence*  
*Social Science Quarterly*  
*Family Relations*  
*Child Welfare*  
*Journal of Counseling and Development*  
*American Journal of Psychotherapy*  
*American Psychologist*  
*Family Process*  
*Child Abuse and Neglect*  
*Developmental Psychologist*

D. Websites:

[www.ncfr.org](http://www.ncfr.org)  
[www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)  
[www.familysupportamerica.org](http://www.familysupportamerica.org)  
[www.ansellcasey.org](http://www.ansellcasey.org)  
[www.njis.org](http://www.njis.org)  
[www.hhs.org](http://www.hhs.org)  
[www.nnic.org](http://www.nnic.org)